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THE WORKS OF JONATHAN  
EDWARDS VOLUME 2

*by Jonathan Edwards*

**Books For The Ages**

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A  
CAREFUL AND STRICT INQUIRY  
INTO THE  
MODERN PREVAILING NOTIONS  
OF THAT  
FREEDOM OF WILL,

*Which is Supposed to be Essential to Moral Agency, Virtue and  
Vice, Reward and Punishment, Praise and Blame.*

It is not of Him that willeth. (~~8125~~ Romans 9:26)

## PREFACE.

MANY find much fault with the calling professing Christians, that differ one from another in some matters of opinion, by distinct names; especially calling them by the names of particular men, who have distinguished themselves as maintainers and promoters of those opinions: as the calling some professing Christians Arminians, from Arminius; others Arians, from Arius; others Socinians, from Socinus, and the like. They think it unjust in itself; as it seems to suppose and suggest, that the persons marked out by these names received those doctrines which they entertain, out of regard to, and reliance on, those men after whom they are named, as though they made them their rule; in the same manner as the followers of Christ are called Christians, after his name, whom they regard and depend upon as their great head and rule, — whereas, this is an unjust and groundless imputation on those that go under the fore-mentioned denominations. Thus (say they) there is not the least ground to suppose, that the chief divines who embrace the scheme of doctrine which is, by many, called Arminianism, believe it the more, because Arminius believed it: and that there is no reason to think any other, than that they sincerely and impartially study the holy Scriptures, and enquire after the mind of Christ, with as much judgment and sincerity as any of those that call them by these names; that they seek after truths, and are not careful whether they think exactly as Arminius did; yea, that in some things they actually differ from him. This practice is also esteemed actually injurious on this account, that it is supposed naturally to lead the multitude to imagine the difference between persons thus named and others to be greater than it is; yea, as though it were so great, that they must be, as it were, another species of beings. And they object against it as arising from an uncharitable, narrow, contracted spirit, which, they say, commonly inclines persons to confine all that is good to themselves and their own party, and to make a wide distinction between themselves and others, and stigmatize those that differ from them with odious names. They say, moreover, that the keeping up such a distinction of names has a direct tendency to uphold distance and disaffection, and keep alive mutual hatred

among Christians, who ought all to be united in friendship and charity, however they cannot in all things think alike.

I confess, these things are very plausible. And I will not deny, that there are some unhappy consequences of this distinction of names, and that men's infirmities and evil dispositions often make an ill improvement of it. But yet I humbly conceive these objections are carried far beyond reason. The generality of mankind are disposed enough, and a great deal too much, to uncharitableness, and to be censorious and bitter towards those that differ from them in religious opinions; which evil temper of mind will take occasion to exert itself from many things in themselves innocent, useful, and necessary. But yet there is no necessity to suppose, that the thus distinguishing persons of different opinions by different names, arises mainly from an uncharitable spirit. It may arise from the disposition there is in mankind (whom God has distinguished with an ability and inclination for speech) to improve the benefit of language, in the proper use and design of names, given to things which they have often occasion to speak of; or signify their minds about; which is to enable them to express their ideas with ease and expedition, without being encumbered with an obscure and difficult circumlocution. And the thus distinguishing persons of different opinions in religious matters may not imply, nor infer, any more than that there is a difference, and that the difference is such as we find we have often occasion to take notice of, and make mention of, that which we have frequent occasion to speak of (whatever it be that gives the occasion), this wants a name: and it is always a defect in language, in such cases, to be obliged to make use of a description instead of a name. Thus we have often occasion to speak of those who are the descendants of the ancient inhabitants of France, who were subjects or heads of the government of that land, and spake the language peculiar to it; in distinction from the descendants of the inhabitants of Spain, who belonged to that community, and spake the language of that country. And therefore we find the great need of distinct names to signify these different sorts of people, and the great convenience of those distinguishing words, French and Spaniards; by which the signification of our minds is quick and easy, and our speech is delivered from the burden of a continual reiteration of diffuse descriptions, with which it must otherwise be embarrassed.

That the difference of the opinions of those who, in their general scheme of divinity, agree with these two noted men, Calvin and Arminius, is a thing there is often occasion to speak of, is what the practice of the latter itself confesses; who are often, in their discourses and writings, taking notice of the supposed absurd and pernicious opinions of the former sort. And therefore the making use of different names in this case cannot reasonably be objected against, or condemned, as a thing which must come from so bad a cause as they assign. It is easy to be accounted for, without supposing it to arise from any other source than the exigence and natural tendency of the state of things; considering the faculty and disposition God has given to mankind, to express things which they have frequent occasion to mention, by certain distinguishing names. It is an effect that is similar to what we see arise, in innumerable cases which are parallel, where the cause is not at all blameworthy.

Nevertheless, at first, I had thoughts of carefully avoiding the use of the appellation Arminian in this treatise. But I soon found I should be put to great difficulty by it; and that my discourse would be so encumbered with an often-repeated circumlocution, instead of a name, which would express the thing intended as well and better, that I altered my purpose. And therefore I must ask the excuse of such as are apt to be offended with things of this nature, that I have so freely used the term Armenian in the following discourse. I profess it to be without any design to stigmatise persons of any sort with a name of reproach, or at all to make them appear more odious. If, when I had occasion to speak of those divines who are commonly called by this name, I had, instead of styling them Arminians, called them these ones, as Dr. Whitby does Calvinistic divines, it probably would not have been taken any better, or thought to show a better temper or more good manners. I have done as I would be done by in this matter. However, the term Calvinistic is, in these days, among most, a term of greater reproach than the term, Arminian, yet I should not take it at all amiss to be called a Calvinist, for distinction's sake; though I utterly disclaim a dependence on Calvin, of believing the doctrines which I hold, because he believed and taught them, and cannot justly be charged with believing in every thing just as he taught.

But, lest I should really be an occasion of injury to some persons, I would here give notice, that though I generally speak of that doctrine, concerning

free will and moral agency, which I oppose, as an Arminian doctrine; yet I would not be understood as asserting, that every divine or author whom I have occasion to mention as maintaining that doctrine, was properly an Arminian, or one of that sort which is commonly called by that name. Some of them went far beyond the Arminians; and I would by no means charge Arminians in general with all the corrupt doctrine which these maintained. Thus, for instance, it would be very injurious, if I should rank Arminian divines in general with such authors as Mr. Chubb. I doubt not many of them have some of his doctrines in abhorrence; though he agrees, for the most part, with Arminians in his notion of the freedom of the will. And, on the other hand, though I suppose this notion to be a leading article in the Arminian scheme, that which, if pursued in its consequences, will truly infer, or naturally lead to all the rest; yet I do not charge all that have held this doctrine with being Arminians. For whatever may be the consequences of the doctrine really, yet some that hold this doctrine may not own nor see these consequences; and it would be unjust, in many instances, to charge every author with believing and maintaining all the real consequences of his avowed doctrines. And I desire it may be particularly noted, that though I have occasion, in the following discourse, often to mention the author of the book, entitled “An Essay on the Freedom of the Will in God and the Creature,” as holding that notion of freedom of will which I oppose; yet I do not mean to call him an Arminian, however in that doctrine he agrees with Arminians, and departs from the current and general opinion of Calvinists. If the author of that Essay be the same as it is commonly ascribed to, he, doubtless, was not one that ought to bear that name. But however good a divine he was in many respects, yet that particular Arminian doctrine which he maintained is never the better for being held by such an one, nor is there less need of opposing it on that account; but rather is there the more need of it; as it will be likely to have the more pernicious influence, for being taught by a divine of his name and character; supposing the doctrine to be wrong, and in itself to be of an ill tendency.

I have nothing further to say by way of preface, but only to bespeak the reader’s candor and calm attention to what I have written. The subject is of such importance as to demand attention, and the most thorough consideration. Of all kinds of knowledge that we can ever obtain, the

knowledge of God, and the knowledge of ourselves, are the most important. As religion is the great business for which we are created, and on which our happiness depends; and as religion consists in an intercourse between ourselves and our Maker, and so has its foundation in God's nature and ours, and in the relation that God and we stand to each other; therefore a true knowledge of both must be needful, in order to true religion. But the knowledge of ourselves consists chiefly in right apprehensions concerning those two chief faculties of our nature, the understanding and will. Both are very important; yet the science of the latter must be confessed to be of greatest moment; inasmuch as all virtue and religion have their seat more immediately in the will, consisting more especially in right acts and habits of this faculty. And the grand question about the freedom of the will, is the main point that belongs to the science of the will. Therefore, I say, the importance of this subject greatly demands the attention of Christians, and especially of divines. But as to my manner of handling the subject, I will be far from presuming to say, that it is such as demands the attention of the reader to what I have written. I am ready to own that in this matter I depend on the reader's courtesy.

But only thus far I may have some color for putting in a claim) that if the reader be disposed to pass his censure on what I have written, I may be fully and patiently heard, and well attended to, before I am condemned. However, this is what I would humbly ask of my readers, together with the prayers of all sincere lovers of truth, that I may have much of that Spirit which Christ promised his disciples, which guides into all truth: and that the blessed and powerful influences of this Spirit would make truth victorious in the world.

# A CAREFUL AND STRICT INQUIRY. ETC. ETC.

## PART 1.

*Herein are Explained and Stated Various Terms and Things  
Belonging to the Subject of the Ensuing Discourse.*

### SECTION 1.

#### CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THE WILL.

It may possibly be thought, that there is no great need of going about to define or describe the will; this word being, generally as well understood as any other words we can use to explain it: and so, perhaps, it would be, had not philosophers, metaphysicians, and polemic divines brought the matter into obscurity by the things they have said of it. But since it is so, I think it may be of some use, and will tend to the greater clearness in the following, discourse, to say a few things concerning it.

And therefore I observe, that the will (without any metaphysical refining,) is plainly, that by which the mind chooses any thing. The faculty of the will is that faculty or power, or principle of minds, by which it is capable of choosing: an act of the will is the same as an act of choosing or choice.

If any think it is a more perfect definition of the will to say, that, it is that by which the soul either chooses or refuses, I am content with it; though I think that it is to say, It is that by which the soul chooses: for in every act of will whatsoever, the mind chooses one thing rather than another; it chooses something rather than the contrary, or rather than the want or non-existence of that thing. So, in every act of refusal, the mind chooses the absence of the thing refused; the positive and the negative are set before the mind for its choice, and it chooses the negative; and the mind's making its choice in that case is properly the act of the will; the will's



determining between the two is a voluntary determining, but that is the same thing as making a choice. So that whatever names we call the act of the will by, choosing, refusing, approving, disapproving, liking, disliking, embracing, rejecting, determining, directing, commanding, forbidding, inclining, or being averse, a being pleased or displeased with; all may be reduced to this of choosing. For the soul to act voluntarily, is evermore to act electively.

Mr. Locke says, “The will signifies nothing but a power or ability to prefer or choose;” and in the foregoing page says, “The word preferring seems best to express the act of volition,” but adds, that “it does it not precisely; for (says he) though a man would prefer flying to walking, yet who can say he ever wills it?” But the instance he mentions does not prove that there is any thing else in willing but merely preferring; for it should be considered what is the next and immediate object of the will, with respect to a man’s walking, or any other external action; which is, not being removed from one place to another, on the earth or through the air — these are remoter objects of preference — but such or such an immediate exertion of himself. The thing nextly chosen or preferred when a man wills to walk, is, not his being removed to such a place where he would be, but such an exertion and motion of his legs and feet, etc., in order to it. And his willing such an alteration in his body in the present moment, is nothing else but his choosing or preferring such an alteration in his body at such a moment, or his liking it better than the forbearance of it. And God has so made and established the human nature, the soul being united to a body in proper state, that the soul preferring or choosing such an immediate exertion or alteration of the body, such an alteration instantaneously follows. There is nothing else in the actions of my mind, that I am conscious of while I walk, but only my preferring or choosing, through successive moments, that there should be such alterations of my external sensations and motions, together with a concurring habitual expectation that it will be so; having ever found by experience, that on such an immediate preference, such sensations and motions do actually, instantaneously, and constantly arise. But it is not so in the case of flying; though a man may be said remotely to choose or prefer flying, yet he does not choose or prefer, incline to, or desire, under circumstances in view, any immediate exertion of the members of his body in order to it, because he

has no expectation that he should obtain the desired end by any such exertion; and he does not prefer or incline to any bodily exertion or effort under this apprehended circumstance, of its being wholly in vain. So that if we carefully distinguish the proper objects of the several acts of the will, it will not appear, by this and such like instances, that there is any difference between volition and preference; or that a man's choosing, liking best, or being best pleased faith a thing, are not the same with his willing that thing; as they seem to be according to those general and more natural motions of men, according to which language is formed. Thus, an act of the will is commonly expressed by its pleasing a man to do thus or thus; and a man doing as he wills, and doing as he pleases, are the same thing in common speech.

Mr. Locke says, "The will is perfectly distinguished from desire, which in the very same action may have a quite contrary tendency from that which our wills set us upon. A man (says he,) whom I cannot deny, may oblige me to use persuasions to another, which, at the same time I am speaking, I may wish may not prevail on him. In this case, it is plain the will and desire run counter." I do not suppose that will and desire are words of precisely the same signification: will seems to be a word of a more general significations, extending to things present and absent. Desire respects something absent. I may prefer my present situation and posture, suppose sitting still, or having, any eyes open, and so may will it. But yet I cannot think they are so entirely distinct, that they can ever be properly said to run counter. A man never, in any instance, wills any thing contrary to his desires, or desires any tiling contrary to his will. The aforementioned instance, which Mr. Locke produces, does not prove that he ever does. He may, on some consideration or other, will to utter speeches which have a tendency to persuade another, and still may desire that they may not persuade him; but yet his will and desire do not run counter at all; the thing which he wills, the very same he desires; and he does not will a thing, and desire the contrary, in any particular. In this instance, it is not carefully observed what is the thing willed, and what is the thin, desired: if it were, it would be found that will and desire do not clash in the least. The thing willed on some consideration, is to utter such words; and certainly, the saline consideration so influences him, that he does not desire the contrary; all things considered, he chooses to utter such words, and does

not desire not to utter then. And so as to the thing which Mr. Locke speaks of as desired, viz. that the words, though they tend to persuade, should not be effectual to that end; his will is not contrary to this; he does not will that they should be effectual, but rather wills that they should not, as he desires. In order to prove that the will and desire may run counter, it should be shown that they may be contrary one to the other in the same thing, or with respect to the very same object of will or desire: but here the objects are two; and in each, taken by themselves, the will and desire agree.

And it is no wonder that they should not agree in different things, however little distinguished they are in their nature. The will may not agree with the will, nor desire agree with desire, in different things. As in this very instance which Mr. Locke mentions, a person may, on some consideration, desire to use persuasions, and at the same time may desire they may not prevail; but yet nobody will say, that desire runs counter to desire, or that this proves that desire is perfectly a distinct thing from desire. The like might be observed of the other instance Mr. Locke produces, of a man's desiring to be eased of pain, etc.

But not to dwell any longer on this, whether desire and will, and whether preference and volition, be precisely the same things or no; yet, I trust it will be allowed by all, that in every act of will there is an act of choice; that in every volition there is a preference, or a prevailing inclination of the soul, whereby the soul, at that instant, is out of A state of perfect indifference, with respect to the direct object of the volition. So that in every act, or going forth of the will, there is some preponderation of the mind or inclination one way rather than another; and the soul had rather have or do one thing than another, or than not to have or do that thing; and that there, where there is absolutely no preferring or choosing, but a perfect continuing equilibrium, there is no volition.

## SECTION 2

### CONCERNING THE DETERMINATION OF THE WILL.

By determining the will, if the phrase be used with any meaning, must be intended, causing that the act of the will or choice should be thus, and not otherwise: and the will is said to be determined, when, in consequence of some action or influence, its choice is directed to, and fixed upon, a particular object. As, when we speak of the determination of motion, we mean causing the motion of the body to be such a way, or in such a direction, rather than another.

To talk of the determination of the will, supposes an effect which must have a cause. If the will be determined, there is a determiner. This must be supposed to be intended even by them that say the will determines itself. If it be so, the will is both determiner and determined; it is a cause that acts and produces effects upon itself, and is the object of its own influence and action.

With respect to that grand inquiry, What determines the wills it would be very tedious and unnecessary at present to enumerate and examine all the various opinions which have been advanced concerning this matter; nor is it needful that I should enter into a particular disquisition of all points debated in disputes on that question, Whether the will always follows the last dictate of the understanding. It is sufficient to my present purpose to say, It is that motive which, as it stands in the view of the mind, is the strongest, that determines the will: but it may be necessary that I should a little explain my meaning in this.

By motive, I mean the whole of that which moves, excites, or invites the mind to volition, whether that be one thing singly, or many things conjunctly. Many particular things may concur and unite their strength to induce the mind; and when it is so, all together are, as it were, one complex motive. And when I speak of the strongest motive, I have respect to the strength of the whole that operates to induce to a particular act of volition, whether that be the strength of one thing alone, or of many together.

Whatever is a motive, in this sense, must be something that is extant in the view or apprehension of the understanding, or perceiving faculty. Nothing can induce or invite the mind to will or act any thing, any further than it is perceived, or in some way or other in the mind's view; for what is wholly unperceived, and perfectly out of the mind's view, cannot affect the mind at all. It is most evident, that nothing is in the mind, or reaches it, or takes any hold of it, any otherwise than as it is perceived or thought of.

And I think it must also be allowed by all, that every thing that is properly called a motive, excitement, or inducement, to a perceiving willing agent, has some sort and degree of tendency or advantage to move or excite the will, previous to the effect, or to the act of the will excited. This previous tendency of the motive is what I call the strength of the motive. That motive which has a less degree of previous advantage or tendency to move the will, or that appears less inviting, as it stands in the view of the mind, is what I call a weaker motive. On the contrary, that which appears most inviting, and has, by what appears concerning it to the understanding or apprehension, the greatest degree of previous tendency to excite and induce the choice, is what I call the strongest motive. And in this sense, I suppose the will is always determined by the strongest motive.

Things that exist in the view of the mind, have their strength, tendency, or advantage, to move or excite its will, from many things appertaining to the nature and circumstances of the thing viewed, the nature and circumstances of the mind that views, and the degree and manner of its view; which it would perhaps be hard to make a perfect enumeration of. But so much I think may be determined in general, without room for controversy, that whatever is perceived or apprehended by an intelligent and voluntary agent, which has the nature and influence of a motive to volition or choice, is considered or viewed as good; nor has it any tendency to invite or engage the election of the soul in any further degree than it appears such. For to say otherwise, would be to say, that things that appear have a tendency by the appearance they make to engage the mind to elect them some other way than by their appearing eligible to it, which is absurd; and therefore it must be true, in some sense, that the will always is as the greatest apparent good is. But only, for the right understanding of this, two things must be well and distinctly observed.

**1.** It must be observed in what sense I use the term good: namely, as of the same import with agreeable. To appear good to the mind, as I use the phrase, is the same as to appear agreeable or seem pleasing to the mind. Certainly nothing appears inviting and eligible to the mind, or tending to engage its inclination and choice, considered as evil or disagreeable; nor indeed as indifferent, and neither agreeable nor disagreeable. But if it tends to draw the inclination and move the will, it must be under the notion of that which suits the mind. And therefore that must have the greatest tendency to attract and engage it, which, as it stands in the mind's view, suits it best and pleases it most; and in that sense is the greatest apparent good: to say otherwise, is little, if any thing, short of a direct and plain contradiction.

The word good, in this sense, includes in its signification the removal or avoiding of evil, or of that which is disagreeable and uneasy. It is agreeable and pleasing to avoid what is disagreeable and displeasing, and to have uneasiness removed. So that here is included what Mr. Locke supposes determines the will. For when he speaks of uneasiness as determining the will he must be understood as supposing that the end or aim which governs all the volition or act of preference, is the avoiding or removal of that uneasiness; and that is the same thing as choosing and seeking what is more easy and agreeable.

**2.** When I say the will is as the greatest apparent good is, or (as I have explained it) that volition has always for its object the thing which appears most agreeable, it must be carefully observed, to avoid confusion and needless objection, that I speak of the direct and immediate object of the act of volition and not some object that the act of will has not an immediate, but only an indirect and remote, respect to. Many acts of volition have some remote relation to an object that is different from the thing most immediately willed and chosen. Thus, when a drunkard has his liquor before him, and he has to choose whether to drink it or no, the proper and immediate objects about which his present volition is conversant, and between which his choice now decides, are his own acts in drinking the liquor or letting it alone; and this will certainly be done according to what, in the present view of his mind, taken in the whole of it, is most agreeable to him. If he chooses or wills to drink it, and not to let it alone, then this

action, as it stands in the view of his mind, with all that belongs to its appearance there, is more agreeable and pleasing than letting it alone.

But the objects to which this act of volition may relate more remotely, and between which his choice may determine more indirectly, are the present pleasure the man expects by drinking, and the future misery which he judges will be the consequence of it: he may judge that this future misery, when it comes, will be more disagreeable and unpleasant than refraining from drinking now would be. But these two things are not the proper objects that the act of volition spoken of is nextly conversant about. For the act of will spoken of, is concerning, present drinking or forbearing to drink. If he wills to drink, then drinking is the proper object of the act of his will and drinking, on some account or other, now appears most agreeable to him, and suits him best. If he chooses to refrain, then refraining is the immediate object of his will, and is most pleasing to him. If in the choice he makes in the case, he prefers a present pleasure to a future advantage, which he judges will be greater when it collies, then a lesser present pleasure appears more agreeable to him than a greater advantage at a distance. If, on the contrary, a future advantage is preferred, then that appears most agreeable, and suits him best. And so still the present volition is as the greatest apparent good at present is.

I have rather chosen to express myself thus, that the will always is as the greatest apparent good, or as what appears most agreeable is, than to say that the will is determined by the greatest apparent good, or by what seems most agreeable; because an appearing most agreeable or pleasing, to the mind, and the mind's preferring and choosing, seem hardly to be properly and perfectly distinct. If strict propriety of speech be insisted on, it may more properly be said, that the voluntary action, which is the immediate consequence and fruit of the mind's volition or choice, is determined lay that which appears most agreeable, than the preference or choice itself; but that the act of volition itself is always determined by that, in or about the mind's view of the object, which causes it to appear most agreeable. I say in or about the mind's view of the object, because what has influence to render an object in view agreeable, is not only what appears in the object viewed, but also the manner of the view, and the state and circumstances of the mind that views. Particularly to enumerate all things pertaining to the mind's view of the objects of volition, which

have influence in their appearing agreeable to the mind, would be a matter of no small difficulty, and might require a treatise by itself, and is not necessary to my present purpose. I shall therefore only mention some things in general.

**I.** One thing that makes an object proposed to choice agreeable, is the apparent nature and circumstances of the object. And there are various things of this sort, that have a hand in rendering, the object more or less agreeable; as,

1. That which appears in the object, which renders it beautiful and pleasant, or deformed and irksome to the mind, viewing it as it is in itself.
2. The apparent degree of pleasure or trouble attending the object, or the consequence of it. Such concomitants and consequence being, viewed as circumstances of the objects, are to be considered as belonging to it, and as it were parts of it; as it stands in the mind's view, as a proposed object of choice.
3. The apparent state of the pleasure or trouble that appears, with respect to distance of time; being either nearer or farther off. It is a thing in itself agreeable to the mind, to have pleasure speedily, and disagreeable to have it delayed; so that if there be two equal degrees of pleasure set in the mind's view, and all other things are equal, but only one is beheld as near, and the other far off; the nearer will appear most agreeable, and so will be chosen. Because, though the agreeableness of the objects be exactly equal, as viewed in themselves, yet not as viewed in their circumstances: one of them having the additional agreeableness of the circumstance of nearness.

**II.** Another thing that contributes to the agreeableness of an object of choice, as it stands in the mind's view, is the manner of the view. If the object be something, which appears connected with future pleasure, not only will the degree of apparent pleasure have influence, but also the manner of the view, especially in two respects.

1. With respect to the degree of judgment, or firmness of assent, with which the mind judges the pleasure to be future. Because it is more agreeable to have a certain happiness than an uncertain one; and a pleasure viewed as more probable, all other things being equal, is more agreeable to the mind than that which is viewed as less probable.



2. With respect to the degree of the idea of the future pleasure. With regard to things which are the subject of our thoughts, either past, present, or future, we have much more of an idea or apprehension of some things than others; that is, our idea is much more clear, lively, and strong. Thus, the ideas we have of sensible things by immediate sensation, are usually much more lively than those we have by mere imagination, or by contemplation of them when absent. My idea of the sun when I look upon it, is more vivid than when I only think of it. Our idea of the sweet relish of a delicious fruit is usually stronger when we taste it, than when we only imagine it. And sometimes the idea we have of things by contemplation is much stronger and clearer than at other times. Thus, a man at one time has a much stronger idea of the pleasure which is to be enjoyed in eating some sort of food that he loves than at another. Now, the degree or strength of the idea or sense that men have of future good Or evil, is one thing that has great influence on their minds to excite choice or volition. When of two kinds of future pleasure, which the mind considers of, and are presented for choice, both are supposed exactly equal by the judgment, and both equally certain, and all other things are equal, but only one of them is what the mind has a far more lively sense of than of the other; this has the greatest advantage by far to affect and attract the mind, and move the will. It is now more agreeable to the mind to take the pleasure it has a strong and lively sense of, than that which it has only a faint idea of: the view of the former is attended with the strongest appetite, and the greatest uneasiness attends the want of it; and it is agreeable to the mind to have uneasiness removed, and its appetite gratified. And if several future enjoyments are presented together, as competitors for the choice of the mind, some of them judged to be greater, and others less, the mind also having a greater sense and more lively idea of the good of some of them, and of others a less; and some are viewed as of greater certainty or probability than others, and those enjoyments that appear most agreeable in one of these respects, appear least so in others; in this case, all other things being equal, the agreeableness of a proposed object of choice will be in a degree some way compounded of the degree of good supposed by the judgment, the degree of apparent probability or certainty of that good, and the degree of the view or sense, or liveliness of the idea the mind has of that good; because all together concur to constitute the degree in which the

object appears at present agreeable; and accordingly, volition will be determined.

I might further observe, the state of the mind that views a proposed object of choice, is another thing that contributes to the agreeableness or disagreeableness of that object: the particular temper which the mind has by nature, or that has been introduced and established by education, example, custom, or some other means, or the frame or state that the mind is in on a particular occasion. That object which appears agreeable to one, does not so to another; and the same object does not always appear like agreeable to the same person at different times. It is most agreeable to some men to follow their reason, and to others to follow their appetites: to some men it is more agreeable to deny a vicious inclination than to gratify it, others it suits best to gratify the vilest appetites. It is more disagreeable to some men than others to counteract a former resolution. In these respects, and many others which might be mentioned, different things will be most agreeable to different persons; and not only so, but to the same persons at different times.

But possibly it is needless and improper to mention the frame and state of the mind, AS a distinct ground of the agreeableness of objects from the other two mentioned before; viz. the apparent nature and circumstances of the objects viewed, and the manner of the view: perhaps, if we strictly consider the matter, the different temper and state of the mind makes no alteration as to the agreeableness of objects any other way, than as it makes the objects themselves appear differently beautiful or deformed, having apparent pleasure or pain attending, them; and, as it occasions the manner of the view to be different, causes the idea of beauty or deformity, pleasure or uneasiness, to be more or less lively.

However, I think so much is certain, that volition, in no one instance that can be mentioned, is otherwise than the greatest apparent good is, in the manner which has been explained. The choice of the mind never departs from that which, at that time, and with respect to the direct and immediate objects of that decision of the mind, appears most agreeable and pleasing, all things considered. If the immediate objects of the will are a man's own actions, then those actions which appear most agreeable to him he wills. If it be now most agreeable to him, all things considered, to walk, then he

now wills to walk. If it be now, the whole of what at present appears to him, most agreeable to speak, then he chooses to speak; if it suits him best to keep silence, then he chooses to keep silence. There is scarcely a plainer and more universal dictate of the sense and experience of mankind, than that, when men act voluntarily, and do what they please, then they do what suits then; best, or what is most agreeable to them. To say that they do what they please, or what pleases then, but yet do not do what is agreeable to then, is the same thing as to say they do what they please, but do not act their pleasure; and that is to say, that they do what they please, and yet do not do what they please.

It appears from these things, that in some sense the will always follows the last dictate of the understanding; but then the understanding must be taken in a large sense, as including the whole faculty of perception or apprehension, and not merely what is called reason or judgment. If by the dictate of the understanding is meant what reason declares to be best, or most for the person's happiness, taking in the whole of its duration, it is not true that the will always follows the last dictate of the understanding. Such a dictate of reason is quite a different matter from things appearing now most agreeable; all things being put together which pertain to the mind's present perceptions, apprehensions, or ideas, in any respect; although that dictate of reason, when it takes place, is one thing that is put into the scales, and is to be considered as a thing that has concern in the compound influence which moves and induces the will; and is one thing that is to be considered in estimating the degree of that appearance of good which the will always follows; either as having its influence added to other things, or subjected from them. When it concurs with other things, then its weight is added to them, as put into the same scale; but when it is against them, it is as a weight in the opposite scale, where it resists the influence of other things: yet its resistance is often overcome by their greater weight, and so the act of the will is determined in opposition to it.

The things which I have said, may, I hope, serve in some measure to illustrate and confirm the position I laid down in the beginning of this section, viz. that the will is always determined by the strongest motive, or by that view of the mind which has the greatest degree of previous tendency to excite violation. But whether I have been so happy as rightly to explain the thing wherein consists the strength of motives, or not, my

failing in this will not overthrow the position itself, which carries much of its own evidence with it, and is the thing of chief importance to the purpose of the ensuing discourse; and the truth of it I hope will appear with great clearness before I have finished what I have to say on the subject of human liberty.

## SECTION 3

### **CONCERNING THE MEANING OF THE TERMS NECESSITY, IMPOSSIBILITY, INABILITY, ETC., AND OF CONTINGENCE.**

The words necessary, impossible, etc. are abundantly used in controversies about free-will and moral agency; and therefore the sense in which they are used should be clearly understood.

Here I might say, that a thing is then said to be necessary, when it must be, and cannot be otherwise. But this would not properly be a definition of necessity, or an explanation of the word, any more than if I explained the word must, by there being a necessity. The words must, can, and cannot, need explication as much the words necessary and impossible; excepting that the former are words that children commonly use, and know something of the meaning of, earlier than the latter.

The word necessary, as used in common speech, is a relative term, and relates to some supposed opposition made to the existence of the thing spoken of, which is overcome, or proves in vain to hinder or alter it. That is necessary, in the original and proper sense of the word, which is, or will be, notwithstanding all supposable opposition. To say that a thing is necessary, is the same thing as to say that it is impossible it should not be: but the word impossible is manifestly a relative term, and has reference to supposed power, exerted to bring a thing to pass, which is insufficient for the effect; as the word unable is relative, and has relation to ability or endeavor, which is insufficient; and as the word irresistible is relative, and has always reference to resistance which is made, or may be made, to some force or power tending to an effect, and is insufficient to withstand the power, or hinder the effect. The common notion of necessity and impossibility implies something that frustrates endeavor or desire.

Here several things are to be noted: —

- 1.** Things are said to be necessary in general, which are or will be, notwithstanding any supposable opposition from us or others, or from whatever quarter. But things are said to be necessary to us which are or will be notwithstanding all opposition supposable in the case from us. The same may be observed of the word impossible, and other such like terms.
- 2.** These terms, necessary, impossible, irresistible, etc. do especially belong to controversy about liberty and moral agency, as used in the latter of the two senses now mentioned; viz. as necessary or impossible to us, and with relation to any supposable opposition or endeavor of ours.
- 3.** As the word necessity, in its vulgar and common use, is relative, and has always reference to some supposable insufficient opposition; so, when we speak of any thing as necessary to us, it is with relation to some supposable opposition of our wills, or some voluntary exertion or effort of ours to the contrary. For we do not properly make opposition to an event, any otherwise than as we voluntarily oppose it. Things are said to be what must be, or necessarily are, as to us, when they are, or will be, though we desire or endeavor the contrary, or try to prevent or remove their existence; but such opposition of ours always either consists in, or implies, opposition of our wills.

It is manifest, that all such like words and phrases, as vulgarly used, are used and accepted in this manner. A thing is said to be necessary, when we cannot help it, let us do what we will. So any thing is said to be impossible to us, when we would do it, or would have it brought to pass, and endeavor it; or at least may be supposed to desire and seek it, but all our desires and endeavors etc, or would be, vain. And that is said to be irresistible, which overcomes all our opposition, resistance, and endeavor to the contrary. And we are said to be unable to do a thing, when our supposable desires and endeavors to do it are insufficient.

We are accustomed, in the common use of language, to apply and understand these phrases in this sense: we grow up with such a habit, which by the daily use of these terms, in such a sense, from our childhood, becomes fixed and settled; so that the idea of a relation to a supposed will, desire, and endeavor of ours, is strongly connected with these terms, and

naturally excited in our minds, whenever we hear the words used. Such ideas, and these words are so united associated that they unavoidably go together — one suggests the other, and carries the other with it, and never can be separated as long as we live. And if we use the words as terms of art, in another sense, yet unless we are exceeding, circumspect and wary, we shall insensibly slide into the vulgar use of them, and so apply the words in a very inconsistent manner. This habitual connection of ideas will deceive and confound us in our reasonings and discourses, wherein we pretend to use these terms in that manner, as terms of art.

**4.** It follows from what has been observed, that when these terms, necessary, impossible, irresistible, unable, etc. are used in cases wherein no opposition, or insufficient will, or endeavor, is supposed, or can be supposed, but the very nature of the supposed case itself excludes and denies any such opposition, will, or endeavor, these terms are then not used in their proper signification, but quite beside their use in common speech. The reason is manifest; namely, that in such cases we cannot use the words with reference to a supposable opposition, will, or endeavor. And therefore, if any man uses these terms in such cases, he either uses them nonsensically, or in some new sense diverse from their original and proper meaning. As, for instance, if a man should affirm after this manner — That it is necessary for a man, and what must be, that a man should choose virtue rather than vice, during, the time that he prefers virtue to vice; and that it is a thing impossible and irresistible, that it should be otherwise than that he should have this choice, so long as this choice continues, — such a man would use the terms, must, irresistible, etc. with perfect insignificance and nonsense, or in some new sense, diverse from their common use; which is with reference, as has been observed, to supposable opposition, unwillingness, and resistance; whereas, here, the very supposition excludes and denies any such things: for the case supposed is that of being willing, and choosing.

**5.** It appears from what has been said, that these terms, necessary, impossible, etc., are often used by philosophers and metaphysicians in a sense quite diverse from their common use and original signification: for they apply them to many cases in which no opposition is supposed or supposable. Thus, they use them with respect to God's existence before the creation of the world, when there was no other being but He: so with

regard to many of the dispositions and acts of the Divine Being, such as his loving himself, his loving righteousness, hating sin, etc. So they apply these terms to many cases of the inclinations and actions of created intelligent beings, angels, and men; wherein all opposition of the will is shut out and denied, in the very supposition of the case.

Metaphysical or philosophical necessity is nothing different from their certainty. I speak not now of the certainty of knowledge, but the certainty that is in things themselves, which is the foundation of the certainty of the knowledge of them; or that wherein lies the ground of the infallibility of the proposition which affirms them.

What is sometimes given as the definition of philosophical necessity — namely, that by which a thing cannot but be, or, whereby it cannot be otherwise, fails of being a proper explanation of it, on two accounts; first, the words can or cannot, need explanation as much as the word necessity; and the former may as well be explained by the latter, as the latter by the former. Thus, if any one asked us what we mean, when we say, a thing cannot but be, we might explain ourselves by saying, we mean, It must necessarily be so; as well as explain necessity, by saying, It is that by which a thing cannot but be. And secondly, this definition is liable to the aforementioned great inconvenience: the words cannot or unable, are properly relative, and have relation to power exerted, in order to the thing spoken of; to which, as I have now observed, the word necessity, as used by philosophers, has no reference.

Philosophical necessity is really nothing else than the full and fixed connection between the things signified by the subject and predicate of a proposition, which affirms something to be true. When there is such a connection, then the thing affirmed in the proposition is necessary, in a philosophical sense, whether any opposition or contrary effort be supposed, or supposable in the case, or no. When the subject and predicate of the proposition, which affirms the existence of any thing, either substance, quality, act, or circumstance, have a full and certain connection, then the existence or being, of that thing is said to be necessary, in a metaphysical sense. And in this sense I use the word necessity in the following discourse, when I endeavor to prove that necessity is not inconsistent with liberty, The subject and predicate of a

proposition which affirms existence of something, may have a full, fixed, and certain connection several ways.

**1.** They may have a full and perfect connection in and of themselves, because it may imply a contradiction or gross absurdity to suppose them not connected. Thus, many things are necessary in their own nature. So, the external existence of being, generally considered, is necessary in itself; because it would be, in itself, the greatest absurdity to deny the existence of being in general, or to say there was absolute and universal nothing; and is as it were, the sum of all contradictions, as might be shown, if this were a proper place for it. So, God's infinity and other attributes are necessary. So, it is necessary, in its own nature, that two and two should be four; and it is necessary that all right lines, drawn from the center of a circle to the circumference, should be equal. It is necessary, fit, and suitable, that men should do to others as they would that they should do to them. So, innumerable metaphysical and mathematical truths are necessary in themselves; the subject and predicate of the proposition which affirms them are perfectly connected of themselves.

**2.** The connection of the subject and predicate of a proposition which affirms the existence of something, may be fixed and made certain; because the existence of that thing is already come to pass, and either now is or has been, and so has, as it were, made sure of existence. And therefore the proposition which affirms present and past existence of it, may by this means be made certain, and necessarily and unalterably true; the past event has fixed and decided the matter, as to its existence, and has made it impossible but that existence should be truly predicated of it. Thus, the existence of whatever is already come to pass, is now become necessary; it is become impossible it should be otherwise than true, that such a thing has been.

**3.** The subject and predicate of a proposition which affirms something to be, may have a real and certain connection consequentially; and so the existence of the thing may be consequentially necessary, as it may be surely and firmly connected with something else that is necessary in one of the former respects; as it is either fully and thoroughly connected with that which is absolutely necessary in its own nature, or with something which has already received and made sure of existence. This necessity lies



in, or may be explained by, the connection of two or more propositions one with another. Things which are perfectly connected with other things that are necessary, are necessary themselves, by a necessity of consequence.

And here it may be observed, that all things which are future, or which will hereafter begin to be, which can be said to be necessary, are necessary only in this last way: their existence is not necessary in itself; for if so, they always would have existed. Nor is their existence become necessary by beings made sure, by being already come to pass. Therefore, the only way that any thing that is to come to pass hereafter, is or can be necessary, is by a connection with something that is necessary in its own nature, or something that already is, or has been; so that the one being supposed, the other certainly follows. And this, also, is the only way that all things past, excepting those which were from eternity, could be necessary before they came to pass, or could come to pass necessarily; and therefore the only way in which any effect or event, or any thing whatsoever that ever has had or will leave a beginning, has come into being necessarily, or will hereafter necessarily exist. And therefore this is the necessity which especially belongs to controversies about the acts of the will.

It may be of some use in these controversies, further to observe, concerning metaphysical necessity, that (agreeable to the distinction before observed of necessity, as vulgarly understood) things that exist may be said to be necessary, either with a general or particular necessity. The existence of a thing may be said to be necessary with a general necessity, when, all things whatsoever being considered, there is a foundation for certainty of their existence; or when, in the most general and universal view of things, the subject and predicate of the proposition, which affirms its existence, would appear with an infallible connection.

An event, or the existence of a thing, may be said to be necessary with a particular necessity, or with regard to a particular person, thing, or time, when nothing that can be taken into consideration in or about that person, thing, or time, alters the case at all, as to the certainty of that event, or the existence of that thing; or can be of any account at all, in determining the infallibility of the connection of the subject and predicate in the proposition which affirms the existence of the thing; so that it is all one, as

to that person or thing, at least, at that time, as if the existence were necessary with a necessity that is most universal and absolute. Thus, there are many things that happen to particular persons, which they have no hand in, and in the existence of which no will of theirs has any concern, at least at that time; which, whether they are necessary or not, with regard to things in general, yet are necessary to then, and with regard to any volition of theirs at that time, as they prevent all acts of the will about the affair. I shall have occasion to apply this observation to particular instances in the following discourse. Whether the same things that are necessary with a particular necessity, be not also necessary with a general necessity, may be a matter of future consideration. Let that be as it will, it alters not the case, as to the use of this distinction of the kinds of necessity.

These things may be sufficient for the explaining of the terms necessary and necessity, as terms of art, and as often used by metaphysicians and controversial writers in divinity, in a sense diverse from and more extensive than their original meaning in common language, which was before explained.

What has been said to show the meaning of the terms necessary and necessity, may be sufficient for the explaining of the opposite terms impossible and impossibility; for there is no difference, but only the latter are negative, and the former positive. Impossibility is the same as negative necessity, or a necessity that a thing should not be; and it is used as a term of art, in a like diversity from the original and vulgar meaning with necessity.

The same may be observed concerning the words unable and inability. It has been observed, that these terms, in their original and common use, have relation to will and endeavor, as supposable in the case, and as insufficient for the bringing to pass the thing willed and endeavored; but as these terms are often used by philosophers and divines, especially writers on controversies about free-will, they are used in a quite different and far more extensive sense, and are applied to many cases wherein no will or endeavor for the bringing of the thing to pass is or can be supposed, but is actually denied and excluded in the nature of the case.

As the words, necessary, impossible, unable, etc., are used by polemic writers in a sense diverse from their common signification, the like has

happened to the term contingent. Any thing is said to be contingent, or to come to pass by chance or accident, in the original meaning of such words, when its connection with its causes or antecedents, according to the established course of things, is not discerned; and so is what we have no means of the foresight of. And especially is any thing said to be contingent or accidental with regard to us, when any thing comes to pass that we are concerned in, as occasions or subjects, without our foreknowledge, and beside our design and scope.

But the word contingent is abundantly used in a very different sense; not for that whose connection with the series of things we cannot discern, so as to foresee the event, but for something which has absolutely no previous ground or reason, with which its existence has any fixed and certain connection.

## SECTION 4

### **OF THE DISTINCTION OF NATURAL AND MORAL NECESSITY, AND INABILITY.**

THAT necessity which has been explained, consisting in an infallible connection of the things signified by the subject and predicate of a proposition, as intelligent beings are the subjects of it, is distinguished into moral and natural necessity.

I shall not now stand to inquire whether this distinction be a proper and perfect distinction; but shall only explain how these two sorts of necessity are understood, as the terms are sometimes used, and as they are used in the following discourse.

The phrase moral necessity is used variously; sometimes it is used for a necessity of moral obligation. So, we say a man is under necessity, when he is under bonds of duty and conscience, which he cannot be discharged from. So, the word necessity is often used for great obligation in point of interest. Sometimes, by moral necessity is meant that apparent connection of things which is the ground of moral evidence; and so is distinguished from absolute necessity, or that sure connection of things that is a foundation for infallible certainty. In this sense, moral necessity signifies

much the same as that high degree of probability which is ordinarily sufficient to satisfy, and be relied upon by mankind, in their conduct and behavior in the world, as they would consult their own safety and interest, and treat others properly as members of society. And sometimes by moral necessity is meant that necessity of connection and consequence which arises from such moral causes, as the strength of inclination, or motives, and the connection which there is in many cases between these, and such certain volition's and actions. And it is in this sense that I use the phrase moral necessity in the following discourse.

By natural necessity, as applied to men, I mean such necessity as men are under through the force of natural causes; as distinguished from what are called moral causes, such as habits and dispositions of the heart, and moral motives and inducements. Thus, men placed in certain circumstances are the subjects of particular sensations by necessity; they feel pain when their bodies are wounded; they see the objects presented before them in a clear light when their eyes are opened: so, they assent to the truth of certain propositions as soon as the terms are understood; as that two and two make four, that black is not white, that two parallel lines can never cross one another; so, by a natural necessity, men's bodies move downwards when there is nothing to support them.

But here several things may be noted concerning these two kinds of necessity.

**1.** Moral necessity maybe as absolute as natural necessity: that is, the effect may be as perfectly connected with its moral cause as a natural necessary effect is with its natural cause. Whether the will in every case is necessarily determined by the strongest motive, or whether the will ever makes any resistance to such a motive, or can ever oppose the strongest present inclination, or not; if that matter should be controverted, yet I suppose none will deny, but that, in some cases, a previous bias and inclination, or the motive presented, may be so powerful, that the act of the will may be certainly and indissolubly connected therewith. When motives or previous bias are very strong, all will allow that there is some difficulty in going against them. And if they were yet stronger, the difficulty would be still greater. And therefore, if more were still added to their strength, to a certain degree, it would make the difficulty so great,

that it would be wholly impossible to surmount it; for this plain reason, because whatever power men may be supposed to have to surmount difficulties, yet that power is not infinite; and so goes not beyond certain limits. If a man can surmount ten degrees of difficulty of this kind with twenty degrees of strength, because the degrees of strength are beyond the degrees of difficulty; yet, if the difficulty be increased to thirty, or a hundred, or a thousand degrees, and his strength not also increased, his strength will be wholly insufficient to surmount the difficulty. As, therefore, it must be allowed, that there may be such a thing as a sure and perfect connection between moral causes and effects; so this only is what I call by the name of moral necessity.

2. When I use this distinction of moral and natural necessity, I would not be understood to suppose, that if any thing comes to pass by the former kind of necessity, the nature of things is not concerned in it, as well as in the latter. I do not mean to determine, that when a moral habit or motive is so strong, that the act of the will infallibly follows, this is not owing to the nature of things. But these are the names that these two kinds of necessity have usually been called by; and they must be distinguished by some names or other; for there is a distinction or difference between them, that is very important in its consequences, which difference does not be so much in the nature of the connection as in the two terms connected. The cause with which the effect is connected is of a particular kind; viz. that which is of a moral nature; either some previous habitual disposition, or some motive exhibited to the understanding. And the effect is also of a particular kind; being likewise of a moral nature, consisting in some inclination or volition of the soul or voluntary action.

I suppose, that necessity which is called natural, in distinction from moral necessity, is so called, because mere nature, as the word is vulgarly used, is concerned, without any thing of choice. The word nature is often used in opposition to choice; not because nature has indeed never any hand in our choice; but this probably comes to pass by means that we first get our notion of nature from that discernible and obvious course of events, which we observe in many things that our choice has no concern in; and especially in the material world, which, in very many parts of it, we easily perceive to be in a settled course; the stated order and manner of succession being very apparent. But where we do not readily discern the

rule and connection, (though there be a connection, according to an established law, truly taking place,) we signify the manner of event by some other name. Even in many things which are seen in the material and inanimate world, which do not discernibly and obviously come to pass according to any settled course, men do not call the manner of the event by the name of nature, but by such names as accident, chance, contingent, etc. So, men make a distinction between nature and choice, as though they were completely and universally distinct. Whereas, I suppose none will deny but that choice, in many cases, arises from nature, as truly as other events. But the dependence and connection between acts of volition or choice, and their causes, according to established laws, is not so sensible and obvious. And we observe, that choice is as it were a new principle of motion and action, different from that established law and order of things which is most obvious, that is seen especially in corporeal and sensible things; and also the choice often interposes, interrupts, and alters the chain of events in these external objects, and causes them to proceed otherwise than they would do, if let alone, and left to go on according to the laws of motion among themselves. Hence, it is spoken of as if it were a principle of motion entirely distinct from nature, and properly set in opposition to it; — names being commonly given to things, according to what is most obvious, and is suggested by what appears to the senses without reflection and research.

**3.** It must be observed, that in what has been explained, as signified by the name of moral necessity, the word necessity is not used according to the original design and meaning of the word: for, as was observed before, such terms — necessary, impossible, irresistible, etc. in common speech, and their most proper sense, are always relative; having reference to some supposable voluntary opposition or endeavor that is insufficient. But no such opposition, or contrary will and endeavor, is supposable in the case of moral necessity; which is a certainty of the inclination and will itself, which does not admit of the supposition of a will to oppose and resist it. For it is absurd to suppose the same individual will to oppose itself in its present act, or the present choice to be opposite to and resisting present choice; as absurd as it is to talk of two contrary motions in the same moving body at the same time. And therefore the very case supposed

never admits of any trial, whether an opposing, or resisting will can overcome this necessity.

What has been said of natural and moral necessity, may serve to explain what is intended by natural and moral inability. We are said to be naturally unable to do a thing, when we cannot do it if we will, because what is most commonly called nature does not allow of it, or because of some impeding defect or obstacle that is extrinsic to the will; either in the faculty of understanding, constitution of body, or external objects. Moral inability consists not in any of these things; but either in the want of inclination, or the strength of a contrary inclination, or the want of sufficient motives in view to induce and excite the act of the will, or the strength of apparent motives to the contrary. Or both these may be resolved into one; and it may be said in one word, that moral inability consists in the opposition or want of inclination. For when a Person is unable to will or choose such a thing, through a defect of motives, or prevalence of contrary motives, it is the same thing as his being unable, through the want of an inclination, or the prevalence of a contrary inclination, in such circumstances, and under the influence of such views.

To give some instances of this moral inability. — A woman of great honor and chastity may have a moral inability to prostitute herself to her slave. A child of great love and duty to his parents may be unable to be willing to kill his father. A very lascivious man, in case of certain opportunities and temptations, and in the absence of such and such restraints, may be unable to forbear gratifying his lust. A drunkard, under such and such circumstances, may be unable to forbear taking of strong drink. A very malicious man may be unable to exert benevolent acts to an enemy, or to desire his prosperity: yea, some may be so under the power of a vile disposition, that they may be unable to love those who are most worthy of their esteem and affection.

A strong habit of virtue, and great degree of holiness, may cause a moral inability to love wickedness in general, — may render a man unable to take complacency in wicked persons or things, or to choose a wicked life, and prefer it to a virtuous life. And, on the other hand, a great degree of habitual wickedness may lay a man under an inability to love and choose

holiness, and render him utterly unable to love any infinitely holy Being, or to choose and cleave to him as his chief good.

Here it may be of use to observe this distinction of moral inability, viz. of that which is general and habitual, and that which is particular and occasional. By a general and habitual moral inability, I mean an inability in the heart to all exercises or acts of will of that nature or kind, through a fixed and habitual inclination, or an habitual and stated defect, or want of a certain kind of inclination. Thus, a very ill-natured man may be unable to exert such acts of benevolence, as another, who is full of good nature, commonly exerts; and a man, whose heart is habitually void of gratitude, may be unable to exert such and such grateful acts, through that stated defect of a grateful inclination. By particular and occasional moral inability, I mean an inability of the will or heart to a particular act, through the strength or defect of present motives, or of inducements presented to the view of the understanding on this occasion. If it be so, that the will is always determined by the strongest motive, then it must always have an inability, in this latter sense, to act otherwise than it does; it not bring, possible, in any case, that the will should at present go against the motive which has now, all things considered, the greatest strength and advantage to excite and induce it. The former of these livings of moral inability, consisting in that which is stated, habitual, and general, is most commonly called by the name of inability; because the word inability, in its most proper and original signification, has respect to some stated defect. And this especially obtains the name of inability also upon another account. I before observed, that the word inability, in its original most common use, is a relative term, and has respect to will and endeavor, as supposable in the case, and as insufficient to bring to pass the thing desired and endeavored. Now, there may be more of an appearance and shadow of this, with respect to the acts which arise from a fixed and strong habit, than others that arise only from transient occasions and causes. Indeed, will and endeavor against, or diverse from, present acts of the will, are in no case supposable, whether those acts be occasional or habitual, for that would be to suppose the will at present to be otherwise than at present it is. But yet there may be will and endeavor against future acts of the will, or volition's that are likely to take place, as viewed at a distance. It is no contradiction to suppose that the acts of the will at one time may be



against the acts of the will at another time; and there may be desires and endeavors to prevent or excite future acts of the will; but such desires and endeavors are, in many cases, rendered insufficient and vain, through fixedness of habit: when the occasion returns, the strength of habit overcomes and baffles all such opposition. In this respect, a man may be in miserable slavery and bondage to a strong habit. But it may be comparatively easy to make an alteration with respect to such future acts, as are only occasional and transient; because the occasion or transient cause, if foreseen, may often easily be prevented or avoided. On this account, the moral inability that attends fixed habits, especially obtains the name of inability. And then, as the will may remotely and indirectly resist itself and do it in vain, in the case of strong habits, so reason may resist present acts of the will, and its resistance be insufficient; and this is more commonly the case also when the acts arise from strong habit.

But it must be observed, concerning moral inability, in each kind of it, that the word inability is used in a sense very diverse from its original import. The word signifies only a natural inability, in the proper use of it; and is applied to such cases only wherein a present will or inclination to the thing, with respect to which a person is said to be unable, is supposable. It cannot be truly said, according to the ordinary use of language, that a malicious man, let him be ever so malicious, cannot hold his hand from striking, or that he is not able to show his neighbor kindness; or that a drunkard, let his appetite be ever so strong, cannot keep the cup from his mouth. In the strictest propriety of speech, a man has a thing in his power, if he has it in his choice, or at his election; and a man cannot be truly said to be unable to do a thing when he can do it if he will. It is improperly said, that a person cannot perform those external actions which are dependent on the act of the will, and which would be easily performed if the act of the will were present. And if it be improperly said, that he cannot perform those external voluntary actions which depend on the will, it is in some respect more improperly said, that he is unable to exert the acts of the will themselves; because it is more evidently false, with respect to these, that he cannot if he will: for to say so, is a downright contradiction; it is to say, he cannot will, if he does will; and in this case not only is it true that it is easy for a man to do the thing if he will, but the very willing is the doing; when once he has willed, the thing is

performed, and nothing else remains to be done. Therefore, in these things to ascribe a non-performance to the want of power or ability, is not just; because the thing wanting is not a being able, but a being willing. There are faculties of the mind, and capacity of nature, and every thing else sufficient, but a disposition: nothing is wanting but a will.

## SECTION 5

### CONCERNING THE NOTION OF LIBERTY AND OF MORAL AGENCY.

THE plain and obvious meaning of the words freedom and liberty, in common speech, is power, opportunity, or advantage, that any one has to do as he pleases. Or in other words, his being free from hindrance or impediment in the way of doing, or conducting, in any respect, as he 'wills.' And the contrary to liberty, whatever name we call that by, is a person's being hindered or unable to conduct as he will, or being necessitated to do otherwise.

If this which I have mentioned be the meaning of the word liberty, in the ordinary use of language, as I trust that none that has ever learned to talk, and is unprejudiced, will deny; then it will follow that in propriety of speech, neither liberty, nor its contrary, can properly be ascribed to any being or thing, but that which has such a faculty, power, or property, as is called will. For that which is possessed of no such thing as will, cannot have any power or opportunity of doing according to its will, nor be necessitated to act contrary to its will, nor be restrained from acting agreeably to it. And therefore, to talk of liberty, or the contrary, as belonging, to the very will itself, is not to speak good sense, if we judge of sense and nonsense by the original and proper signification of words. For the will itself is not an agent that has a will; the power of choosing, itself has not a power of choosing. That which has the power of volition or choice, is the man or the soul, and not the power of volition itself. And he that has the liberty of doing according to his will, is the agent or doer who is possessed of the will, and not the will which he is possessed of. We say with propriety, that a bird let loose has power and liberty to fly; but not that the bird's power of flying has a power and liberty of flying. To be

free, is the property of an agent who is possessed of powers and faculties, as much as to be cunning, valiant, bountiful, or zealous. But these qualities are the properties of men or persons, and not the properties of properties.

There are two things that are contrary to this which is called liberty in common speech. One is constraint; the same is otherwise called force, compulsion, and coalition, which is a person's being necessitated to do a thing contrary to his will. The other is restraint; which is his being hindered, and not having power to do according to his will. But that which has no will, cannot be the subject of these things. — I need say the less on this head, Mr. Locke having set the same thing forth with so great clearness in his "Essay on the Human Understanding."

But one thing more I would observe concerning what is vulgarly called liberty namely, that power and opportunity for one to do and conduct as he will, or according to his choice, is all that is meant by it; without taking into the meaning of the word, any thing of the cause or original of that choice, or at all considering how the person came to have such a volition, whether it was caused by some external motive or internal habitual bias; whether it was determined by some internal antecedent volition, or whether it happened without a cause; whether it was necessarily connected with something foregoing, or not connected. Let the person come by his volition or choice how he will, yet, if he is able, and there is nothing, in the way to hinder his pursuing and executing, his will, the man is fully and perfectly free, according to the primary and common notion of freedom.

What has been said may be sufficient to show what is meant by liberty, according to the common notions of mankind, and in the usual and primary acceptation of the word: but the word, as used by Arminians, Pelagians, and others, who oppose the Calvinists, has an entirely different signification. These several things belong to their notion of liberty. That it consists in self-determining power in the will, or a certain sovereignty the will has over itself, and its own acts, whereby it determines its own volition's; so as not to be dependent in its determinations on any cause without itself, nor determined by any thing prior to its own acts. 2. Indifference belongs to liberty, in their notion of it, or that the mind, previous to the act of volition, be in equilibria. 3. Contingence is another

thing that belongs and is essential to it; not in the common acceptation of the word, as that has been already explained, but as opposed to all necessity, or any fixed and certain connection with some previous ground or reason of its existence. They suppose the essence of liberty so much to consist in these things, that unless the will of man be free in this sense, he has no real freedom, how much soever he may be at liberty to act according to his will.

A moral agent is a being that is capable of those actions that have a moral quality, and which can properly be denominated good or evil in a moral sense, virtuous or vicious, commendable or faulty. To moral agency belongs a moral faculty, or sense of moral good and evil, or of such a thing as desert or worthiness, of praise or blame, reward or punishment; and a capacity which an agent has of being influenced in his actions by moral inducements or motives, exhibited to the view of understanding and reason, to engage to a conduct agreeable to the moral faculty.

The sun is very excellent and beneficial in its action and influence on the earth, in warming it, and causing it to bring forth its fruits; but it is not a moral agent; its action, though good, is not virtuous or meritorious. Fire that breaks out in a city, and consumes great part of it, is very mischievous in its operation, but is not a moral agent: what it does is not faulty or sinful, or deserving of any punishment. The brute creatures are not moral agents: the actions of some of them are very profitable and pleasant; others are very hurtful: yet, seeing they have no moral faculty or sense of desert, and do not act from choice guided by understanding, or with a capacity of reasoning and reflecting, but only from instinct, and are not capable of being influenced by moral inducements, their actions are not properly sinful or virtuous; nor are they properly the subjects of any such moral treatment for what they do, as moral agents are for their faults or good deeds.

Here it may be noted, that there is a circumstantial difference between the moral agency of a ruler and a subject. I call it circumstantial, because it lies only in the difference of moral inducements they are capable of being influenced by, arising from the difference of circumstances. A ruler acting in that capacity only, is not capable of being influenced by a moral law, and its sanctions of threatenings and promises, rewards and punishments,

as the subject is; though both may be influenced by a knowledge of moral good and evil. And therefore the moral agency of the Supreme Being, who acts only in the capacity of a ruler towards his creatures, and never as a subject, differs in that respect from the moral agency of created intelligent beings. God's actions, and particularly those which he exerts as a moral governor, have moral qualifications, are morally good in the highest degree. They are most perfectly holy and righteous; and we must conceive of him as influenced in the highest degree by that which, above all others, is properly a moral inducement; viz. the moral good which he sees in such and such things: and therefore he is, in the most proper sense, a moral agent, the source of all moral ability and agency, the fountain and rule of all virtue and moral good; though, by reason of his being supreme over all, it is not possible he should be under the influence of law or command, promises or threatenings, rewards or punishments, counsels or warnings. The essential qualities of a moral agent are in God in the greatest possible perfection; such as understanding, to perceive the difference between moral good and evil; a capacity of discerning that moral worthiness and demerit by which some things are praiseworthy, others deserving of blame and punishment; and also a capacity of choice, and choice guided by understanding, and a power of acting according to his choice or pleasure, and being capable of doing those things which are in the highest sense praiseworthy. And herein does very much consist that image of God wherein he made man (which we read of, ~~Gen~~ Genesis 1:26, 27, and chapter ~~Gen~~ 9:6), by which God distinguished man from the beasts, viz. in those faculties and principles of nature whereby he is capable of moral agency. Herein very much consists the natural image of God; as his spiritual and moral image, wherein man was made at first, consisted in that moral excellency that he was endowed with.

## PART 2

*Wherein it is Considered, Whether There is or Can be Any Such Sort of Freedom of Will as That Wherein Arminians Place the Essence of the Liberty of all Moral Agents; and Whether Any Such Thing Ever Was or Can be Conceived of.*

### SECTION 1

#### **SHOWING THE MANIFEST INCONSISTANCE OF THE ARMINIAN NOTION OF LIBERTY OF WILL CONSISTING IN THE WILL'S SELF-DETERMINING POWER.**

HAVING taken notice of those things which may be necessary to be observed concerning the meaning of the principal terms and phrases made use of in controversies concerning human liberty, and particularly observed what liberty is according to the common language and general apprehension of mankind, and what it is as understood and maintained by Arminians; I proceed to consider the Arminian notion of the freedom of the will, and the supposed necessity of it in order to moral agency, or in order to any one's being capable of virtue or vice, and properly the subject of command or counsel, praise or blame, promises or threatenings, rewards or punishments; or whether that which has been described as the thing meant by liberty in common speech be not sufficient, and the only liberty which makes, or can make, any one a moral agent; and so properly the subject of these things. In this Part I shall consider whether any such thing be possible or conceivable, as that freedom of will which Arminians insist on; and shall inquire whether any such sort of liberty be necessary to moral agency, etc. in the next part.

And first of all I shall consider the notion of a self-determining power in the will, wherein, according to the Arminians, does most essentially consist the will's freedom; and shall particularly inquire whether it be not plainly absurd, and a manifest inconsistency, to suppose that the will itself determines all the free acts of the will.

Here I shall not insist on the great impropriety of such phrases, and ways of speaking, as the will's determining itself; because actions are to be ascribed to agents, and not properly to the powers of agents; which improper way of speaking leads to many mistakes, and much confusion, as Mr. Locke observes. But I shall suppose that the Arminians, when they speak of the will's determining itself, do by the Will mean the soul willing. I shall take it for granted, that when they speak of the will, as the determiner, they mean the soul in the exercise of a power of willing, or acting voluntarily. I shall suppose this to be their meaning, because nothing else can be meant, without the grossest and plainest absurdity. In all cases when we speak of the powers or principles of acting, as doing such things, we mean that the agents which have these powers of acting do them in the exercise of those powers. So, when we say, valour fights courageously, we mean that the man who is under the influence of valour fights courageously. When we say, love seeks the object loved, we mean the person loving seeks that object. When we say, the understanding discerns, we mean the soul in the exercise of that faculty. So, when it is said, the will decides or determines, the meaning must be, that the person in the exercise of a power of willing and choosing, or the soul acting voluntarily, determines.

Therefore, if the will determines all its own free acts, the soul determines all the free acts of the will, in the exercise of a power of willing and choosing; or, which is the same thing, it determines them of choice; it determines its own acts by choosing its own acts. If the will determines the will, then choice orders and determines the choice; and acts of choice are subject to the decision, and follow the conduct, of other acts of choice. And therefore, if the will determines all its own free acts, then every free act of choice is determined by a preceding act of choice, choosing that act. And if that preceding act of the will or choice be also a free act, then, by these principles, in this act too, the will is self-determined; that is, this, in like manner, is an act that the soul voluntarily chooses; or, which is the same thing, it is an act determined still by a preceding act of the will choosing that. And the like may again be observed of the last-mentioned act, which brings us directly to a contradiction; for it supposes an act of the will preceding the first act in the whole train, directing and determining the rest; or a free act of the will, before the first free act of the will. Or else

we must come at last to an act of the will, determining the consequent acts, wherein the will is not self-determined, and so is not a free act, in this notion of freedom; but if the first act in the train, determining and fixing the rest, be not free, none of them all can be free; as is manifest at first view, but shall be demonstrated presently.

If the will, which we find governs the members of the body, and determines and commands their motions and actions, does also govern itself, and determine its own notions and actions, it doubtless determines them the same way, even by antecedent volition's. The will determines which way the hands and feet shall move, by an act of volition or choice; and there is no other way of the will's determining, directing, or commanding any thing at all. Whatsoever the will commands, it commands by an act of the will. And if it has itself under its command, and determines itself in its own actions, it doubtless does it the same way that it determines other things which are under its command; so that if the freedom of the will consists in this, that it has itself and its own actions under its command and direction, and its own volition's are determined by itself, it will follow, that every free volition arises from another antecedent volition, directing and commanding that; and if that directing volition be also free, in that also the will is determined; that is to say, that directing volition is determined by another going before that, and so on, till we come to the first volition in the whole series: and if that first volition be free, and the will self-determined in it, then that is determined by another volition preceding that, which is a contradiction; because, by the supposition, it can have none before it to direct or determine it, being the first in the train. But if that first volition is not determined by any preceding act of the will, then that act is not determined by the will, and so is not free in the Arminian notion of freedom, which consists in the will's self-determination. And if that first act of the will, which determines and fixes the subsequent acts, be not free, none of the following acts, which are determined by it, can be free. If we suppose there are five acts in the train, the fifth and last determined by the fourth, and the fourth by the third, the third by the second, and the second by the first; if the first is not determined by the will, and so not free, then none of them are truly determined by the will: that is, that each of them are as they are, and not otherwise, is not first owing to the will, but to the determination of the



first in the series, which is not dependent on the will, and is that which the will has no hand in the determination of. And this being that which decides what the rest shall be, and determines their existence, therefore the first determination of their existence is not from the will. The case is just the same, it; instead of a chain of five acts of the will, we should suppose a succession of ten, or a hundred, or ten thousand. If the first act be not free, being determined by something out of the will, and this determines the next to be agreeable to itself, and that the next, and so on; they are none of them free, but all originally depend on, and are determined by, some cause out of the will: and so all freedom in the case is excluded, and no act of the will can be free, according to this notion of freedom. I! we should suppose a long chain of ten thousand links, so connected that if the first link moves it will move the next, and that the next; and so the whole chain must be determined to motion, and in the direction of its motion, by the motion of the first link; and that is moved by something else: in this case, though all the links but one are moved by other parts of the same chain, yet it appears that the motion of no one, nor the direction of its motion, is from any self-moving or self-determining power in the chain, any more than if every link were immediately moved by something that did not belong to the chain. If the will be not free in the first act, which causes the next, then neither is it free in the next, which is caused by that first act: for though, indeed, the will caused it, yet it did not cause it freely; because the preceding act, by which it was caused, was not free. And again, if the will be not free in the second act, so neither can it be in the third, which is caused by that; because, in like manner, that third was determined by an act of the will that was not free. And so we may go on to the next act, and from that to the next; and how long soever the succession of acts is, it is all one; if the first on which the whole chain depends, and which determines all the rest, be not a free act, the will is not free in causing or determining any one of those acts; because the act by which it determines them all is not a free act, and therefore the will is no more free in determining them than if it did not cause them at all. Thus, this Arminian notion of liberty of the will, consisting in the will's self-determination, is repugnant to itself, and shuts itself wholly out of the world.

## SECTION 2

### SEVERAL SUPPOSED WAYS OF EVADING THE FOREGOING REASONING, CONSIDERED.

IF, to evade the force of what has been observed, it should; be said, that when the Arminians speak of the will's determining its own acts, they do not mean that the will determines its acts by any preceding act, or that one act of the will determines another; but only that the faculty or power of will, or the soul in the use of that power, determines its own volition's; and that it does it without any act going before the act determined: such an evasion would be full of the most gross absurdity. I confess it is an evasion of my own inventing'; and I do not know but I should wrong the Arminians in supposing that any of them would make use of it. But it being as good a one as I can invent, I would observe upon it a few things.

First, If the faculty or power of the will determines an act of volition, or the soul in the use or exercise of that power determines it, that is the same thing as for the soul to determine volition by an act of will. For an exercise of the power of will, and an act of that power, are the same thing. Therefore, to say that the power of will, or the soul in the use or exercise of that power, determines volition, without an act of will preceding the volition determined, is a contradiction.

Secondly, If a power of will determines the act of the will, then a power of choosing determines it. For, as was before observed, in every act of will, there is choice; and a power of willing is a power of choosing. But if a power of choosing determines the act of volition, it determines it by choosing it. For it is most absurd to say that a power of choosing determines one thing rather than another, without choosing any thing. But if a power of choosing determines volition by choosing it, then here is an act of volition determined by an antecedent choice, choosing that volition.

Thirdly, to say, the faculty, or the soul, determines its own volition, but not by any act, is a contradiction. Because for the soul to direct, decide, or determine any thing, is to act; and this is supposed; for the soul is here spoken of as being a cause in this affair, bringing something to pass, or doing something; or, which is the same thing, exerting itself in order to an

effect, which effect is the determination of volition, or the particular kind and manner of an act of will. But certainly, this exertion or action is not the same with the effect, in order to the production of which it is exerted; but must be something prior to it.

Again, The advocates for this notion of the freedom of the will speak of a certain sovereignty in the will, whereby it has power to determine its own volition's. And therefore the determination of volition must itself be an act of the will; for, otherwise, it can be no exercise of that supposed power and sovereignty.

Again, If the will determines itself, then either the will is active in determining its volition's, or it is not. If it be active in it, then the determination is an act of the will; and so there is one act of the will determining another. But if the will is not active in the determination, then how does it exercise any liberty in it? These gentlemen suppose, that the thing wherein the will exercises liberty, is in its determining its own acts. But how can this be, if it be not active in determining? Certainly the will, or the soul, cannot exercise any liberty in that wherein it doth not act, or wherein it doth not exercise itself. So that if either part of this dilemma be taken, this scheme of liberty, consisting in self-determining power, is overthrown. If there be an act of the will in determining all its own free acts, then one free act of the will is determined by another; and so we have the absurdity of every free act, even the very first, determined by a foregoing free act. But if there be no act or exercise of the will in determining its own acts, then no liberty is exercised in determining them. From whence it follows, that no liberty consists in the will's power to determine its own acts; or, which is the same thing, that there is no such thing as liberty consisting in a self-determining power of the will.

If it should be said, that although it be true, if the soul determines its own volition's, it must be active in so doing, and the determination itself must be an act; yet there is no need of supposing this act to be prior to the volition determined: but the will or soul determines the act of the will in willing; it determines its own volition, in the very act of volition; it directs and limits the act of the will, causing it to be so and not otherwise, in exerting the act, without any preceding act to exert that. If any should say after this manner, they must mean one of these three things: either

(1) that the determining act, though it be before the act determined in the order of nature, yet is not before it in order of time. Or,

(2) that the determining act is not before the act determined, either in the order of time or nature, nor is truly distinct from it; but that the soul's determining the act of volition is the same thing with its exerting the act of volition: the mind's exerting such a particular act, is its causing and determining the act. Or,

(3) that volition has no cause, and is no effect; but comes into existence, with such a particular determination, without any ground or reason of its existence and determination. — I shall consider these distinctly.

1. If all that is meant be, that the determining act is not before the act determined in order of time, it will not help the case at all, though it should be allowed. If it be before the determined act in the order of nature, being the cause or ground of its existence, this as much proves it to be distinct from it and independent on it, as if it were before in the order of time. As the cause of the particular motion of a natural body, in a certain direction, may have no distance as to time, yet cannot be the same with the motion effected by it, but must be as distinct from it as any other cause that is before its effect in the order of time: as the architect is distinct from the house which he builds, or the father distinct from the son which he begets; — and if the act of the will determining be distinct from the act determined, and before it in the order of nature, then we can go back from one to another, until we come to the first in the series, which has no act of the will before it in the order of nature, determining it; and consequently is an act not determined by the will, and so not a free act, in this notion of freedom. And this being the act which determines all the rest, none of them are free acts. As, when there is a chain of many links, the first of which only is taken hold of and drawn by hand; all the rest may follow and be moved at the same instant, without any distance of time; but yet the motion of one link is before that of another in the order of nature; the last is moved by the next, and that by the next, and so till we come to the first; which not being moved by any other, but by something distinct from the whole chain, this as much proves that no part is moved by any self

moving power in the chain, as if the motion of one link followed that of another in the order of time.

**2.** If any should say, that the determining act is not before the determined act, either in the order of time or of nature, nor is distinct from it; but that the exertion of the act is the determination of the act; that for the soul to exert a particular volition, is for it to cause and determine that act of volition: I would on this observe, that the thing in question seems to be forgotten, or kept out of sight, in a darkness and unintelligibleness of speech; unless such an objector would contradict himself. The very act of volition itself is doubtless a determination of mind; i.e. it is the mind's drawing up a conclusion, or coming to a choice between two things, or more proposed to it. But determining among external objects of choice is not the same with determining the act of choice itself, among various possible acts of choice. The question is, What influences, directs, or determines the mind or will to come to such a conclusion or choice as it does? Or what is the cause, ground, or reason, why it concludes thus, and not otherwise?

Now it must be answered, according to the Arminian notion of freedom, that the will influences, orders, and determines itself thus to act. And if it does, I say it must be by some antecedent act. To say it is caused, influenced, and determined by something, and yet not determined by any thing antecedent, either in order of time or nature, is a contradiction. For that is what is meant by a thing's being prior in the order of nature, that it is some way the cause or reason of the thing with respect to which it is said to be prior.

If the particular act or exertion of will, which comes into existence, be any thing properly determined at all, then it has some cause of its existing, and of its existing in such a particular determinate manner, and not another; some cause whose influence decides the matter: which cause is distinct from the effect, and prior to it. But to say, that the will or mind orders, influences, and determines itself to exert such an act as it does, by the very exertion itself, is to make the exertion both cause and effect; or the exerting such an act, to be a cause of the exertion of such an act. For the question is, What is the cause and reason of the soul's exerting such an act? To which the answer is: The soul exerts such an act; and that is the cause of it.

And so, by this, the exertion must be prior in the order of nature to itself, and distinct from itself.

**3.** If the meaning be, that the soul's exertion of such a particular act of will is a thing that comes to pass of itself without any cause; and that there is absolutely no ground or reason of the soul's being determined to exert such a volition, and make such a choice, rather than another; I say, if this be the meaning of Arminians, when they contend so earnestly for the will's determining its own acts, and for liberty of will consisting in self-determining power; they do nothing but confound themselves and others with words without a meaning. In the question, What determines the will? and in their answer, that the will determines itself, and in all the dispute about it, it seems to be taken for granted, that something determines the will; and the controversy on this head is not, whether any thing at all determines it, or whether its determination has any cause or foundation at all; but where the foundation of it is, whether in the will itself, or somewhere else. But if the thing intended be what is above mentioned, then all comes to this, that nothing at all determines the will; volition having, absolutely no cause or foundation of its existence, either within or without. There is a great noise made about self-determining power, as the source of all free acts of the will: but when the matter comes to be explained, the meaning is, that no power at all is the source of these acts, neither self-determining power, nor any other, but they arise from nothing; no cause, no power, no influence, being at all concerned in the matter.

However, this very thing, even that the free acts of the will are events which come to pass without a cause, is certainly implied in the Arminian notion of liberty of will; though it be very inconsistent with many other things in their scheme, and repugnant to some things implied in their notion of liberty. Their opinion implies, that the particular determination of volition is without any cause; because they hold the free acts of the will to be contingent events; and contingency is essential to freedom, in their notion of it. But certainly, those things which have a prior ground and reason of their particular existence, a cause which antecedently determines them to be, and determines them to be just as they are, do not happen contingently. If something foregoing, by a casual influence and connection, determines and fixes precisely their coming to pass, and the manner of it,

then it does not remain a contingent thing whether they shall come to pass or no.

And because it is a question in many respects very important, in this controversy about the Freedom of will, whether the free acts of the will are events which come to pass without a cause; I shall be particular in examining this point in the two following sections.

## SECTION 3

### **WHETHER ANY EVENT WHATSOEVER, AND VOLITION IN PARTICULAR, CAN COME TO PASS WITHOUT A CAUSE OF ITS EXISTENCE.**

BEFORE I enter on any argument on this subject, I would explain how I would be understood, when I use the word cause in this discourse; since, for want of a better word, I shall have occasion to use it in a sense which is more extensive than that in which it is sometimes used. The word is often used in so restrained a sense as to signify only that which has a positive efficiency or influence to produce a thing, or bring it to pass. But there are many things which have no such positive productive influence, which yet are causes in that respect, that they have truly the nature of a ground or reason why some things are, rather than others; or why they are as they are, rather than otherwise. Thus, the absence of the sun in the night is not the cause of the falling of the dew at that time, in the same manner as its beams are the cause of the ascending of the vapours in the day-time; and its withdrawment in the winter is not in the same manner the cause of the freezing of the waters, as its approach in the spring is the cause of their thawing. But yet the withdrawment or absence of the sun is an antecedent, with which these effects in the night and winter are connected, and on which they depend; and is one thing that belongs to the ground and reason why they come to pass at that time rather than at other times; though the absence of the sun is nothing positive, nor has any positive influence. It may be further observed, that when I speak of connection of causes and effects, I have respect to moral causes, as well as those that are called natural in distinction from them. Moral causes may be causes in as proper

a sense as any causes whatsoever; may have as real an influence, and may as truly be the ground and reason of an event's coming to pass.

Therefore I sometimes use the word cause, in this inquiry, to signify any antecedent, either natural or moral, positive or negative, on which an event, either a thing, or the manner and circumstance of a thing, so depends, that it is the ground and reason, either in whole or in part, why it is, rather than not; or why it is as it is, rather than otherwise; or, in other words, any antecedent with which a consequent event is so connected, that it truly belongs to the reason why the proposition which affirms that event is true, whether it has any positive influence or not. And in an agreeableness to this I sometimes use the word effect for the consequence of another thing, which is, perhaps, rather an occasion than a cause, most properly speaking.

I am the more careful thus to explain my meaning, that I may cut off occasion from any that might seek occasion to cavil and object against some things which I may say concerning the dependence of all things which come to pass on some cause, and their connection with their cause.

Having thus explained what I mean by cause, I assert, that nothing ever comes to pass without a cause. What is self-existent, must be from eternity, and must be unchangeable; but as to all things that begin to be, they are not self-existent, and therefore must have some foundation of their existence without themselves. — That whatsoever begins to be, which before was not, must have a cause why it then begins to exist, seems to be the first dictate of the common and natural sense which God hath implanted in the minds of all mankind, and the main foundation of all our reasonings about the existence of things past, present, or to come.

And this dictate of common sense equally respects substances and modes, or things and the manner and circumstances of things. Thus, if we see a body which has hitherto been at rest, start out of a state of rest, and begin to move, we do as naturally and necessarily suppose there is some cause or reason of this new mode of existence, as of the existence of a body itself which had hitherto not existed. And so, if a body which had hitherto moved in a certain direction, should suddenly change the direction of its motion; or if it should put off its old figure, and take a new one; or change



its color the beginning of these new modes is a new event, and the mind of mankind necessarily supposes that there is some cause or reason of them.

If this grand principle of common sense be taken away, all arguing, from effects to causes ceaseth, and so all knowledge of any existence, besides what we have by the most direct and immediate intuition. Particularly all our proof of the being of God ceases; one argue his being from, our own being, and his being of other things, which ye are sensible once were not, but have begun to be; and from the Being of the world, with all its constituent parts, and the manner of their existence; all which we see plainly are not necessary in their own nature, and so not self-existent, and therefore must have a cause. But if things, not in themselves necessary, may be; in to be without a cause, all this arguing is vain.

Indeed, I will not affirm, that there is in the nature of things no foundation for the knowledge of the being of God, without any evidence of it from his works. I do suppose there is a great absurdity, in the nature of things simply considered, in supposing, that there should be no God, or in denying being in general, and supposing, an eternal, absolute, universal nothing: and therefore that here could be foundation of intuitive evidence that it cannot be, and that eternal, infinite, most perfect Being must be; if we had strength and comprehension of mind sufficient to leave a clear idea of general and universal being, or, which is the same thing, of the infinite, eternal, most perfect Divine nature and essence. But then we should not properly come to the knowledge of the being, of God by arguing; but our evidence would be intuitive: we should see it, as we see other things that are necessary in themselves, the contraries of which are in their own nature absurd and contradictory; as we see that twice two is four; and as ye see that a circle has no angles. If we had as clear an idea of universal, infinite entity, as we have of these three things, I suppose we should most intuitively see the absurdity of supposing such being not to be; should immediately see there is no room for the question, whether it is possible that being, in the most general abstracted notion of it, should not be. But we have not that strength and extent of mind, to know this certainly in this intuitive independent manner: but the way that mankind come to the knowledge of the being of God, is that which the apostle speaks of,

“The invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are

clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; even his eternal power and Godhead.” (Romans 1:20)

We first ascend, and prove a posterior, or from effects, that there must be an eternal cause; and then, secondly, prove by argumentation, not intuition, that this being must be necessarily existent; and then, thirdly, from the proved necessity of his existence, we may descend, and prove many of his perfection's a priori.

But if once this grand principle of common sense be given up, that what is not necessary in itself, must have a cause; and we begin to maintain, that things may come into existence and begin to be, which heretofore have not been, of themselves, without any cause; all our means of ascending in our arguing from the creature to the Creator, and all our evidence of the being of God, is cut off one blow. In this case, we cannot prove that there is a God, either from the being of the world and the creatures in it, or from the manner of their being, their order, beauty, and use. For if things may come into existence without any cause at all, then they doubtless may without any cause answerable to the effect. Our minds do alike naturally suppose and determine both these things; namely, that what begins to be has a cause, and also that it has a cause proportionable and agreeable to the effect. The same principle which leads us to determine, that there cannot be anything coming to pass without a cause, leads us to determine that there cannot be more in the effect than in the cause. Yea, if once it should be allowed, that things may come to pass without a cause, we should not only have no proof of the being of God, but we should be without evidence of the existence of any thing whatsoever, but our own immediately present ideas and consciousness. For we have no way to prove any thing else, but by arguing from effects to causes: from the ideas now immediately in view, we argue other things not immediately in view: from sensations now excited in us, we infer the existence of things without us, as the causes of these sensations: and from the existence of these things, we argue other things, which they depend on, as effects on causes. We infer the past existence of ourselves, or any thing else, by memory; only as we argue, that the ideas which are now in our minds, are the consequences of past ideas and sensations. We immediately perceive nothing else but the ideas which are at this moment extant in our minds. We perceive or know other things only by means of these, as necessarily

connected with others, and dependent on them. But if things may be without causes, all this necessary connection and dependence is dissolved, and so all means of our knowledge is gone. If there be no absurdity or difficulty in supposing one thing to start out of non-existence into being of itself without a cause, then there is no absurdity or difficulty in supposing the same of millions of millions. For nothing, or no difficulty multiplied, still is nothing, or no difficulty: nothing multiplied by nothing, does not increase the sum.

And indeed, according to the hypothesis I am opposing, of the acts of the will coining to pass without a cause, it is the case in fact, that millions of millions of events are continually coming into existence contingently, without any cause or reason why they do so, all over the world, every day and hour, through all ages. So it is, in a constant succession, in every moral agent. This contingency, this efficient nothing, this effectual no-cause, is always ready at hand to produce this sort of effects, as long as the agent exists, and as often as he has occasion.

If it were so, that things only of one kind, viz. acts of the will, seemed to come to pass of themselves, but those of this sort in general came into being thus; and it were an event that was continual, and that happened in a course, wherever were capable subjects of such events; this very thing would demonstrate that there was some cause of them, which made such a difference between this event and others, and that they did not really happen contingently. For continuance is blind, and does not pick and choose for a particular sort of events. Nothing has no choice. This no-cause, which causes no existence, cannot cause the existence which comes to pass, to be of one particular sort only, distinguished from all others. Thus, that only one sort of matter drops out of the heavens, even water, and that this comes so often, so constantly and plentifully, all over the world, in all ages, shews that there is some cause or reason of the falling of water out of the heavens; and that something besides mere contingency has a hand in the matter.

If we should suppose nonentity to be about to bring forth; and things were coming into existence without any cause or antecedent, on which the existence, or kind or manner of existence, depends; or which could at all determine whether the things should be stones, or stars, or beasts, or

angels, or human bodies, or souls, or only some new notion or figure in natural bodies, or some new sensations in animals, or new ideas in the human understanding, or new volition's in the evils; or any thing else of all the infinite number of possibilities; then certainly it would not be expected, all many millions of millions of things are coloring into existence in this manner, all over the face of the earth, that they should all be only of one particular kind, and that it would be thus in all ages, and that this sort of existence; should never fail to come to pass where there is room for then, or a subject capable to of them, and that constantly, whenever there is occasion for them.

If any should imagine, there is something in the sort of event that renders it possible for it to come into existence without a cause, and should say, that the free acts of the will are existence's of an exceeding different nature from other things; by reason of which they may come into existence without any previous ground or reason of it, though other things cannot: if they make this objection in good earnest, it would be an evidence of their strangely forgetting themselves; for they would be giving, an account of some ground of the existence of a thing, when at the same time they would maintain there is no ground of its existence. Therefore I would observe, that the particular nature of existence, be it never so diverse from others, can by no foundation for that thing's coming into existence without a cause; because to suppose this, would be to suppose the particular nature of existence to be a thing prior to the existence; and so a thing which makes way for existence, with such a circumstance, namely, without a cause or reason of existence. But that which in any respect makes way for a thing's coming into being, or for any manner or circumstance of its first existence, must be prior to the existence. The distinguished nature of the effect, which is something belonging to the effect, cannot have influence backward, to act before it is. The peculiar nature of that thing called volition, can do nothing, can have no influence, while it is not. And afterwards it is too late for its influence; for then the thing has made sure of existence already, without its help.

So that it is indeed as repugnant to reason to suppose that an act of the will should come into existence without a cause, as to suppose the human soul, or an angel, or the globe of the earth, or the whole universe, should come into existence without a cause. And if once we allow that such a sort

of effect as a volition may come to pass without a cause, how do we know but that many other sorts of effects may do so too? It is not the particular kind of effect that makes the absurdity of supposing it has being without a cause, but something which is common to all things that ever begin to be, viz. that they are not self-existent, or necessary in the nature of things.

## SECTION 4

### **WHETHER VOLITION CAN ARISE WITHOUT A CAUSE, THROUGH THE ACTIVITY OF THE NATURE OF THE SOUL.**

THE author of the “Essay on the Freedom of the Will in God and the creatures,” in answer to that objection against his doctrine of a self-determining power in the will, (p. 68, 69,) That nothing is, or comes to pass, without a sufficient reason why it is, and why it is in this manner rather than another, allows that it is thus in corporeal things, which are, properly and philosophically speaking, passive being; but denies that it is thus in spirits, which are beings of an active nature, who have the spring of action within themselves, and can determine themselves. By which it is plainly supposed, that such an event as an act of the will may come to pass in a spirit, without a sufficient reason why it comes to pass, or why it is after this manner rather than another, by reason of the activity of the nature of a spirit. But certainly this author, in this matter, must be very unwary and inadvertent. For,

**1.** The objection or difficulty proposed by this author, seems to be forgotten in his answer or solution. The very difficulty, as he himself proposes it, is this: how an event can come to pass without a sufficient reason why it is, or why it is in this manner rather than another? Instead of solving, this difficulty, or answering this question with regard to volition, as he proposes, he forgets himself; and answers another question quite diverse, and wholly inconsistent with this, viz. What is a sufficient reason why it is, and why it is in this manner rather than another And he assigns the active being’s own determination as the cause, and a cause sufficient for the effect; and leaves all the difficulty unresolved, and the question unanswered, which yet returns, even, How the soul’s own determination, which he speaks of, came to exist, and to be what it was,

without a cause a The activity of the soul may enable it to be the cause of effects; but it does not at all enable or help it to be the subject of effects which have no cause, which is the thing this author supposes concerning acts of the will. Activity of nature will no more enable a being to produce effects, and determine the manner of their existence, within itself, without a cause, than out of itself, in some other being But if an active being should, through its activity, produce and determine an effect in some external object, how absurd would it be to say that the effect was produced without a cause!

**2.** The question is not so much, How a spirit endowed with activity comes to act, as, Why it exerts such an act and not another; or why it acts with such a particular determination. If activity of nature be the cause why a spirit (the soul of man, for instance,) acts, and does not lie still, yet that alone is not the cause why its action is thus and thus limited, directed, and determined. Active nature is a general thing; it is an ability or tendency of nature to action, generally taken, which may be a cause wily the soul acts as occasion or reason is given; but this alone cannot be a sufficient cause why the soul exerts such a particular act, at such a time, rather than others. In order to this, there must be something besides a general tendency to action; there must also be a particular tendency to that individual action. If it should be asked, why the soul of man uses its activity in such a manner as it does; and it should be answered, that the soul uses its activity thus rather than otherwise, because it has activity, would such an answer satisfy a rational man? Would it not rather be looked upon as a very impertinent one?

**3.** An active being can bring no effects to pass by his activity but what are consequent upon his acting; he produces nothing by his activity, any other way than by the exercise of his activity, and so nothing but the fruits of its exercise; he brings nothing to pass by a dormant activity. But the exercise of his activity is action; and so his action, or exercise of his activity, must be prior to the effects of his activity. If an active being produces an effect in another being, about which his activity is conversant, the effect being the fruit of his activity, his activity must be first exercised or exerted, and the effect of it must follow. So it must be, with equal reason, if the active being is his own object, and his activity is conversant about himself, to produce and determine some effect in himself; still the exercise of his

activity must go before the effect, which he brings to pass and determines by it. And therefore his activity cannot be the cause of the determination of the first action, or exercise of activity itself, whence the effects of activity arise; for that would imply a contradiction; it would be to say, the first exercise of activity is before the first exercise of activity, and is the cause of it.

**4.** That the soul, though an active substance, cannot diversify its own acts, but by first acting; or be a determining cause of different acts, or any different effects, sometimes of one kind and sometimes of another, any other way than in consequence of its own diverse acts, is manifest by this: that if so, then the same cause, the same causal power, force, or influence, without variation in any respect, would produce different effects at different times. For the same substance of the soul before it acts, and the same active nature of the soul before it is exerted, (i. e. before in the order of nature) would be the cause of different effects, viz. different volition's at different times. But the substance of the soul before it acts, and its active nature before it is exerted, are the same without variation. For it is some act that makes the first variation in the cause, as to any causal exertion, force, or influence. But if it be so, that the soul has no different causality, or diverse causal force or influence in producing these diverse effects; then it is evident that the soul has no influence, no hand in the diversity of the effect, and that the difference of the effect cannot be owing to any thing in the soul; or, which is the same thing, the soul does not determine the diversity of the effect; which is contrary to the supposition. It is true the substance of the soul, before it acts, and before there is any difference in that respect, may be in a different state and circumstances: but those whom I oppose will not allow the different circumstances of the soul to be the determining causes of the acts of the will, as being contrary to their notion of self-determination and self-motion.

**5.** Let us suppose, as these divines do, that there are no acts of the soul, strictly speaking, but free volition's; then it will follow, that the soul is an active being in nothing further than it is a voluntary or elective being; and whenever it produces effects actively, it produces effects voluntarily and electively. But to produce effects thus is the same thing as to produce effects in consequence of; and according to, its own choice. And if so, then

surely the soul does not by its activity produce all its own acts of will or choice themselves; for this, by the supposition, is to produce all its free acts of choice voluntarily and electively, or in consequence of its own free acts of choice, which brings the matter directly to the aforementioned contradiction, of a free act of choice before the first free act of choice. According to these gentlemen's own notion of action, if there arises in the mind a volition, without a free act of the will or choice to determine and produce it, the mind is not the active voluntary cause of that volition; because it does not arise from, nor is regulated by, choice or design. And therefore it cannot be, that the mind should be the active, voluntary, determining cause of the first and leading volition that relates to the affair. The mind's being a designing cause, only enables it to produce effects in consequence of its design; it will not enable it to be the designing cause of all its own designs. The mind's being, an elective cause will only enable it to produce effects in consequence of its elections, and according to them; but cannot enable it to be the elective cause of all its own elections; because that supposes an election before the first election. So the mind's being an active cause enables it to produce effects in consequence of its own acts, but cannot enable it to be the determining cause of all its own acts; for that is still in the same manner a contradiction, as it supposes a determining act conversant about the first act, and prior to it, having a causal influence on its existence and manner of existence.

I can conceive of nothing else that can be meant by the soul's having power to cause and determine its own volition's, as a being to whom God has given a power of action, but this: that God has given power to the soul sometimes, at least, to excite volition's at its pleasure, or according as it chooses. And this certainly supposes, in all such cases, a choice preceding all volition's which are thus caused, even the first of them; which runs into the fore-mentioned great absurdity.

Therefore the activity of the nature of the soul affords no relief from the difficulties which the notion of a self-determining power in the will is attended with; nor will it help, in the least, its absurdities and inconsistencies.



## SECTION 5

**SHOWING, THAT IF THE THINGS ASSERTED IN THESE  
EVASIONS SHOULD BE SUPPOSED TO BE TRUE, THEY ARE  
ALTOGETHER IMPERTINENT, AND CANNOT HELP THE CAUSE  
OF ARMINIAN LIBERTY; AND HOW (THIS BEING THE STATE  
OF THE CASE) ARMINIAN WRITERS ARE OBLIGED TO TALK  
INCONSISTENTLY.**

WHAT was last observed in the preceding section, may show, not only that the active nature of the soul cannot be a reason why an act of the will is, or why it is in this manner rather than another; but also that if it could be so, and it could be proved that volition's are contingent events, in that sense, that their being and manner of being is not fixed or determined by any cause, or any thing antecedent; it would not at all serve the purpose of Arminians to establish the freedom of the will, according to their notion of its freedom, as consisting in the will's determination of itself; which supposes every free act of the will to be determined by some act of the will going before to determine it; inasmuch as for the will to determine a thing, is the same as for the soul to determine a thing by willing; and there is no other way that the will can determine an act of the will, than by willing that act of the will, or, which is the same thing, choosing it. So that here must be two acts of the will in the case, one going before another, one conversant about the other, and the latter the object of the former, and chosen by the former. If the will does not cause and determine the act by choice, it does not cause or determine it at all; for that which is not determined by choice is not determined voluntarily or willingly; — and to say that the will determines something which the soul does not determine willingly, is as much as to say that something is done by the will which the soul doth not with its will.

So that if Arminian liberty of will, consisting in the will's determining its own acts, be maintained, the old absurdity and contradiction must be maintained, that every free act of the will is caused and determined by a foregoing free act of will; which doth not consist with the free acts arising, without any cause, and being so contingent as not to be fixed by any thing foregoing. So that this evasion must be given up, as not at all relieving, and

as that which, instead of supporting this sort of liberty, directly destroys it.

And if it should be supposed that the soul determines its own acts of will some other way than by a foregoing act of will, still it will not help the cause of their liberty of will. If it determines them by an act of the understanding, or some other power, then the will does not determine itself; and so the self-determining power of the will is given up. And what liberty is there exercised, according to their own opinion of liberty, by the soul's being determined by something besides its own choice? The acts of the will, it is true, may be directed and effectually determined and fixed; but it is not done by the soul's own will and pleasure: there is no exercise at all of choice or will in producing the effect; and if will and choice are not exercised in it, how is the liberty of the will exercised in it?

So that let Arminians turn which way they please with their notion of liberty consisting in the will's determining its own acts, their notion destroys itself. If they hold every free act of will to be determined by the soul's own free choice, or foregoing free act of will, foregoing either in the order of time or nature, it implies that gross contradiction that the first free act belonging to the affair is determined by a free act which is before it; or if they say that the free acts of the will are determined by some other act of the soul, and not an act of will or choice, this also destroys their notion of liberty, consisting, in the acts of the will being determined by the will itself; or if they hold that the acts of the will are determined by nothing at all that is prior to them, but that they are contingent, in that sense, that they are determined and fixed by no cause at all, this also destroys their notion of liberty consisting in the will's determining its own acts.

This being the true state of the Arminian notion of liberty, it hence comes to pass that the writers that defend it are forced into gross inconsistencies in what they say upon this subject. To instance in Dr. Whitby: he, in his discourse on the freedom of free will, opposes the opinion of the Calvinists, who place man's liberty only in a power of doing what he will, as that wherein they plainly agree with Mr. Hobbes. And yet he himself mentions the very same notion of liberty as the dictate of the sense and common reason of mankind, and a rule laid down by the light of nature; viz. that liberty is a power of acting from ourselves, or DOING WHAT WE

WILL. This is indeed, as he says, a thing agreeable to the sense and common reason of mankind; and therefore it is not so much to be wondered at, that he unawares acknowledges it against himself: for if liberty does not consist in this, what else can be devised that it should consist in? If it be said, as Dr. Whitby elsewhere insists, that it does not only consist in liberty of doing what we will, but also a liberty of willing without necessity, still the question returns, what does the liberty of willing, without necessity consist in, but in a power of willing as we please, without being impeded by a contrary necessity; or, in other words, a liberty for the soul in its willing to act according to its own choice? Yea, this very thing the same author seems to allow, and suppose again and again, in the use he makes of sayings of the fathers, whom he quotes as his vouchers. Thus he cites the words of Origen, which he produces as a testimony on his side:

The soul acts by HER OWN CHOICE, and it is free for her to incline to whatever part SHE WILL. And those words of Justin Martyr: The doctrine of the Christians is this, that nothing is done or suffered according to fate, but that every man doth; good or evil ACCORDING TO HIS OWN FREECHOICE. And from Eusebius these words: If fate be established, philosophy and piety are overthrown; all these things depending upon the necessity introduced by the stars, and not upon mediation and exercise PROCEEDING FROM OUR OWN FREE CHOICE. And again, the words of Maccarius: God, to preserve the liberty of man's will, suffered their bodies to die, that it might be IN THEIR CHOICE to turn to good or evil. They who are acted by the Holy Spirit are not held under any necessity, but have liberty to turn themselves, and DO WHAT THEY WILL, in this life.

Thus, the Doctor, in effect, comes into that very notion of liberty which the Calvinists have; which he at the same time condemns, as agreeing with the opinion of Mr. Hobbes, namely, the soul's acting by its own choice, men's doing good or evil according to their own free choice, there being in that exercise which proceeds from their only free choice, having it in their choice to turn to good or evil, and doing what they will. So that if men exercise this liberty in the acts of free will themselves, it must be in exerting, acts of will as they will, or according to their own free choice or exerting acts of will that proceed from their choice. And if it be so, then let every one judge, whether this does not suppose a free choice going before

the free act of will, or whether an act of choice does not go before that act of the will which proceeds from it. And if it be thus with all free acts of the will, then let every one judge, whether it will not follow, that there is a free choice or will going before the first free act of the will exerted in the case. And then let every one judge, whether this be not a contradiction. And finally, let every one judge, whether, in the scheme of these writers, there be any possibility of avoiding these absurdities.

If liberty consists, as Dr. Whitby himself says, in a man's doing what he will; and a man exercises this liberty, not only in external actions, but in the acts of the will themselves; then, so far as liberty is exercised in the latter, it consists in willing what he wills: and if any say so, one of these two things must be meant; either, 1. That a man has power to will, as he does will; because what he wills, he wills; and therefore has power to will what he has power to will. If this be their meaning, then all this mighty controversy about freedom of the will and self-determining power, comes wholly to nothing; all that is contended for being no more than this, that the mind of man does what it does, and is the subject of what it is the subject of, or that what is, is; wherein none has any controversy with them. Or, 2. The meaning must be, that a man has power to will as he pleases or chooses to will: that is, he has power by one act of choice, to choose another; by an antecedent act of will, to choose a consequent act; and therein to execute his own choice. And if this be their meaning, it is nothing but reason. For still the question returns, Wherein lies man's liberty in that antecedent act of will which chose the consequent act? The answer, according to the same principles, must be, that his liberty in this also lies in his willing as he would, or as he chose, or agreeable to another act of choice preceding that. And so the question returns in infinitum, and the like answer must be made in infinitum: in order to support their opinion, there must be no beginning, but free acts of will must have been chosen by foregoing free acts of will in the soul of every man, without beginning; and so before he had a being, from all eternity.

## SECTION 6

### CONCERNING THE WILL'S DETERMINING IN THINGS WHICH ARE PERFECTLY INDIFFERENT IN THE VIEW OF THE MIND.

A GREAT argument for self-determining power is the supposed experience we universally have of an ability to determine our wills, in cases wherein no prevailing motive is presented: the will (as is supposed) has its choice to make between two or more things, that are perfectly equal in the view of the mind: and the will is apparently altogether indifferent; and yet we find no difficulty in coming, to a choice; the will can instantly determine itself to one, by a sovereign power which it has over itself, without being mover by any preponderating inducement.

Thus the fore-mentioned author of an "Essay on the Freedom of the Will," etc. pp. 25, 26, 27, supposes, "That there are many instances wherein the will is determined neither by present uneasiness nor by the greatest apparent good, nor by the last dictate of the understanding, nor by any thing, else, but merely by itself, as a sovereign self-determining power of the soul; and that the soul does not will this or that action, in some cases, by any other influence but because it will. Thus (says he) I can turn my face to the south, or to the north; I can point with my finger upward or downward. — And thus, in some cases, the will determines itself in a very sovereign manner, because it will, without a reason borrowed from the understanding; and hereby it discovers its own perfect power of choice, rising from within itself, and free from all influence or restraint of any kind." And in pages 66, 70, and 73, 74, this author very expressly supposes the will in many cases to be determined by no motive at all, and acts altogether without motive or ground of preference. — Here I would observe,

**1.** The very supposition which is here made, directly contradicts and overthrows itself. For the thing supposed, wherein this grand argument consists, is, that among: several things the will actually chooses one before an other, at the same time that it is perfectly indifferent; which is the very same thing as to say the mind has a preference, at the same time that it has

no preference. What is meant cannot be, that the mind is indifferent before it comes to have a choice, or until it has a preference; or, which is the same thing, that the mind is indifferent until it comes to be not indifferent. For certainly this author did not suppose he had a controversy with any person in supposing this. And then it is nothing, to his purpose, that the mind which chooses was indifferent once; unless it chooses, remaining indifferent; for otherwise, it does not choose at all in that case of indifference, concerning which is all the question. Besides, it appears in fact, that the thing which this author supposes, is not that the will chooses one thing before another, concerning which it is indifferent before it chooses, but also is indifferent where it chooses, and that its being otherwise than indifferent is not until after wards, in consequence of its choice; that the chosen thing's appearing preferable and more agreeable than another, arises from its choice already made. His words are, (p. 30), "Where the objects which are proposed appear equally fit or good, the will is left without a guide or director; and therefore must take its own choice by its own determination; it being properly a self-determining power. And in such cases the will does as it were make a good to itself by its own choice, i. e. creates its own pleasure or delight in this self-chosen good. Even as a man, by seizing upon a spot of unoccupied land in an uninhabited country, makes it his own possession and property, and as such rejoices in it. Where things were indifferent before, the will finds nothing to make them more agreeable, considered merely in themselves; but the pleasure it feels ARISING FROM ITS OWN CHOICE, and its perseverance therein. We love many things which we have chosen, AND PURELY BECAUSE WE CHOSE THEM."

This is as much as to say, that we first begin to prefer many things, now ceasing any longer to be indifferent with respect to them, purely because we have preferred and chosen them before. — These things must needs be spoken inconsiderately by this author. Choice or preference cannot be before itself in the same instance, either in the order of time or nature. It cannot be the foundation of itself, or the fruit or consequence of itself. The very act of choosing one thing rather than another, is preferring that thing, and that is setting a higher value on that thing. But that the mind sets a higher value on one thing than another, is not, in the first. place, the fruit of its setting a higher value on that thing.

This author says, p. 36, “The will may be perfectly indifferent, and yet the will may determine itself to choose one or the other.” And again, in the same page, “I am entirely indifferent to either; and yet my will may determine itself to choose.” And again, “Which I shall choose must be determined by the mere act of my will.” If the choice is determined by a mere act of will, then the choice is determined by a mere act of choice. And concerning this matter, viz. That the act of the will itself is determined by an act of choice, this writer is express, in p. 72. Speaking of the case where there is no superior fitness in objects presented, he has these words: “There it must act by its own CHOICE, and determine itself as it PLEASES;” — where it is supposed that the very determination, which is the ground and spring of the will’s act, is an act of choice and pleasure, wherein one act is more agreeable, and the mind better pleased in it, than another; and this preference and superior pleasedness, is the ground of all it does in the case. And if so, the mind is not indifferent when it determines itself, but had rather do one thing than another, had rather determine itself one way than another. And therefore the will does not act at all in indifference, not so much as in the first step it takes, or the first rise and beginning of its acting. If it be possible for the understanding to act in indifference, yet to be sure the and never does; because the will’s beginning to act is the very same thing as its beginning to choose or prefer.

And if in the very first act of the will, the mind prefers something, then the idea of that thing preferred does at that time preponderate, or prevail in the mind; or, which is the same thing, the idea of it has a prevailing influence on the will. So that this wholly destroys the thing supposed, viz. That the mind can by a sovereign power choose one of two or more things, which in the view of the mind are, in every respect, perfectly equal, one of which does not at all preponderate, nor has any prevailing influence on the mind above another.

So that this author, in his grand argument for the ability of the will to choose one of two or more things, concerning which it is perfectly indifferent, does at the same time, in effect, deny the thing he supposes, and allows and asserts the point he endeavors to overthrow; even that the will, in choosing, is subject to no prevailing influence of the idea, or view of the thing chosen. And indeed it is impossible to offer this argument without overthrowing it; the thing supposed in it being inconsistent with

itself, and that which denies itself. To suppose the will to act at all in a state of perfect indifference, either to determine itself, or to do any thing else, is to assert that the mind chooses without choosing. To say that when it is indifferent, it can do as it pleases, is to say that it can follow its pleasure, when it has no pleasure to follow. And therefore, if there be any difficulty in the instances of two cakes, or two eggs, etc. which are exactly alike, one as good as another; concerning which this author supposes the mind in fact has a choice, and so in effect supposes that it has a preference, it as much concerned himself to solve the difficulty, as it does those whom he opposes. For if these instances prove any thing to his purpose, they prove that a man chooses without choice. And yet this is not to his purpose; because if this is what he asserts, his own words are as much against him, and do as much contradict him, as the words of those he disputes against can do.

**2.** There is no great difficulty in showing, in such instances as are alleged, not only that it must needs be so, that the mind must be influenced in its choice by something that has a preponderating influence upon it, but also how it is so. A little attention to our own experience, and a distinct consideration of the acts of our own minds, in such cases, will be sufficient to clear up the matter.

Thus, supposing I have a chess-board before me; and because I am required by a superior, or desired by a friend, or to make some experiment concerning my own ability and liberty, or on some other consideration, I am determined to touch some one of the spots or squares on the board with my finger; not being limited or directed in the first proposal, or my own first purpose, which is general, to any one in particular; and there being nothing in the squares, in themselves considered, that recommends any one of all the sixty-four, more than another; in this case my mind determines to give itself up to what is vulgarly called accident, by determining, to touch that square which happens to be most in views which my eye is especially upon at that moment, or which happens to be most in my mind, or which I shall be directed to by some other such like accident. Here are several steps of the mind's proceeding, (though all may be done as it were in a moment) the first step is its general determination that it will touch one of the squares. The next step is another general determination to give itself up to accident, in some certain way; as to



touch that which shall be most in the eye or mind at that time, or to some other such like accident. The third and last step is a particular determination to touch a certain individual spot, even that square which, by that sort of accident the mind has pitched upon, has actually offered itself beyond others. Now it is apparent, that in none of these several steps does the mind proceed in absolute indifference, but in each of them is influenced by a preponderating inducement. So it is in the first step; the mind's general determination to touch one of the sixty-four spots: the mind is not absolutely indifferent whether it does so or no; it is included to it, for the sake of making some experiment, or by the desire of a friend, or some other motive that prevails. So it is in the second step; the mind's determining to give itself up to accident, by touching, that which shall be most in the eye, or the idea of which shall be most prevalent in the mind, etc. The mind is not absolutely indifferent whether it proceeds by this rule or no; but chooses it because it appears at that time a convenient and requisite expedient in order to fulfill the general purpose aforesaid. And so it is in the third and last step; it is determining to touch that individual spot which actually does prevail in the mind's view. The mind is not indifferent concerning this; but is influenced by a prevailing inducement and reason; which is, that this is a prosecution of the preceding determination, which appeared requisite, and was fixed before in the second step.

Accident will ever serve a man, without hindering him a moment in such a case. It will always be so among a number of objects in view; one will prevail in the eye, or in idea, beyond others. When we have our eyes open in the clear sunshine, many objects strike the eye at once, and innumerable images may be at once painted in it by the rays of light; but the attention of the mind is not equal to several of them at once; or if it be, it does not continue so for any time. And so it is with respect to the ideas of the mind in general; several ideas are not in equal strength in the mind's view and notice at once; or at least, do not remain so for any sensible continuance. There is nothing in the world more constantly varying, than the ideas of the mind: they do not remain precisely in the same state for the least perceivable space of time; as is evident by this: That all perceivable time is judged and perceived by the mind only by the succession or the successive changes of its own ideas. Therefore, while the views or perceptions of the

mind remain precisely in the same state, there is no perceivable space or length of time, because no sensible succession at all.

As the acts of the will, in each step of the fore-mentioned procedure, do not come to pass without a particular cause, every act is owing to a prevailing inducement: so the accident, as I have called it, or that which happens in the unsearchable course of things, to which the mind yields itself, and by which it is guided, is not any thing that comes to pass without a cause; and the mind, in determining to be guided by it, is not determined by something that has no cause, any more than if it determined to be guided by a lot, or the casting of a die. For though the die's falling in such a manner be accidental to him that casts it, yet none will suppose that there is no cause why it falls as it does. The involuntary changes in the succession of our ideas, though the cause may not be observed, have as much a cause, as the changeable motions of the motes that float in the air, or the continual, infinitely various, successive changes of the unevennesses on the surface of the water.

There are two things especially, which are probably the occasions of confusion in the minds of them who insist upon it, that the will acts in a proper indifference, and without being moved by any inducement, in its determinations in such cases as have been mentioned.

**1.** They seem to mistake the point in question, or at least not to keep it distinctly in view. The question they dispute about, is, Whether the mind be indifferent about the objects presented, one of which is to be taken, touched, pointed to, etc., as two eggs, two cakes, which appear equally good. Whereas the question to be considered is, Whether the person be indifferent with respect to his own actions; whether he does not, on some consideration or other, prefer one act with respect to these objects before another. The mind in its determination and choice, in these cases, is not most immediately and directly conversant about the objects presented; but the acts to be done concerning these objects. The objects may appear equal, and the mind may never properly make any choice between them: but the next act of the will being about the external actions to be performed, taking, touching, etc., these may not appear equal, and one action may properly be chosen before another. In each step of the mind's progress, the determination is not about the objects, unless indirectly and

improperly, but about the actions, which it chooses for other reasons than any preference of the objects, and for reasons not taken at all from the object.

There is no necessity of supposing that the mind does ever at all properly choose one of the objects before another; either before it has taken, or afterwards. Indeed, the man chooses to take or touch one rather than another; but not because it chooses the thing taken, or touched, but from foreign considerations. The case may be so, that of two things offered, a man may, for certain reasons, choose and prefer the taking of that which he undervalues, and choose to neglect to take that which his mind prefers. In such a case, choosing the thing taken, and choosing to take, are diverse; and that they are in a case where the things presented are equal in the mind's esteem, and neither of them preferred. All that fact and experience make evident is, that the mind chooses one action rather than another; and therefore the arguments which they bring, in order to be to their purpose, ought to be to prove that the mind chooses the action in perfect indifference with respect to that action; and not to prove that the mind chooses the action in perfect indifference with respect to the object; which is very possible, and yet the will not act at all without prevalent inducement, and proper pre-ponderation.

**2.** Another reason of confusion and difficulty in this matter seems to be, not distinguishing between a general indifference, or an indifference with respect to what is to be done in a more distant and general view of it, and a particular indifference, or an indifference with respect to the next immediate act, viewed with its particular and present circumstances. A man may be perfectly indifferent with respect to his own actions, in the former respect, and yet not in the latter. Thus, in the foregoing instance of touching one of the squares of a chess board; when it is first proposed that I should touch one of them, I may be perfectly indifferent which I touch, because as yet I view the matter remotely and generally, being but in the first step of the mind's progress in the affair. But yet, when I am actually come to the last step, and the very next thing to be determined is which is to be touched, having already determined that will touch that which happens to be most in my eye or mind, and my mind being now fixed on a particular one, the act of touching that, considered thus immediately, and

in these particular present circumstances, is not what my mind is absolutely indifferent about.

## SECTION 7

### CONCERNING THE NOTION OF LIBERTY OF WILL, CONSISTING IN INDIFFERENCE.

WHAT has been said in the foregoing section has a tendency, in some measure, to evince the absurdity of the opinion of such as place liberty in indifference, or in that equilibrium whereby the will is without all antecedent determination, or bias, and left hitherto free from any prepossessing inclination to one side or the other; that the determination of the will to either side may be entirely from itself, and that it may be owing only to its own power, and that sovereignty which it has over itself, that it goes this way rather than that.

But inasmuch as this has been of such long standing, and has been so generally received, and so much insisted on by Pelagians, Jesuits, Socinians, Arminians, and others, it may deserve a more full consideration. And therefore I shall now proceed to a more particular and thorough inquiry into this notion.

Now, lest some should suppose that I do not understand those that place liberty in indifference, or should charge me with misrepresenting their opinion, I would signify, that I am sensible there are some, who, when they talk of the liberty of the will as consisting in indifference, express themselves as though they would not be understood of the indifference of the inclination or tendency of the will, but of, I know not what, indifference of the soul's power of willing; or that the will, with respect to its power or ability to choose, is indifferent, can go either way indifferently, either to the right hand or left, either act or forbear to act, one as well as the other. Though this seems to be a refining only of some particular writers, and newly invented, and which will by no means consist with the manner of expression used by the defenders of liberty of indifference in general. And I wish such refiners would thoroughly consider whether they distinctly know their own meaning, when they

make a distinction between indifference of the soul as to its power or ability of willing or choosing, and the soul's indifference as to the preference or choice itself: and whether they do not deceive themselves in imagining that they have any distinct meaning at all. The indifference of the soul as to its ability or power to will, must be the same thing as the indifference of the state of the power or faculty of the will, or the indifference of the state which the soul itself; which has that power or faculty, hitherto remains in, as to the exercise of that power, in the choice it shall by and by make.

But not to insist any longer on the abstruseness and inexplicableness of this distinction, let what will be supposed concerning the meaning of them that make use of it, thus much must at least be intended by Arminians when they talk of indifference as essential to liberty of will, if they intend any thing in any respect to their purpose; viz. that it is such an indifference as leaves the will not determined already; but free from actual possession, and vacant of predetermination, so far, that there may be room for the exercise of the self-determining power of the will; and that the will's freedom consists in, or depends upon, this vacancy and opportunity that is left for the will itself to be the determiner of the act that is to be the free act.

And here I would observe in the first place, that to make out this scheme of liberty, the indifference must be perfect and absolute; there must be a perfect freedom from all antecedent pre-ponderation, or inclination. Because, if the will be already inclined, before it exerts its own sovereign power on itself, then its inclination is not wholly owing to itself: if when two opposites are proposed to the soul for its choice, the proposal does not find the soul wholly in a state of indifference, then it is not found in a state of liberty for mere self-determination. The least degree of an antecedent bias must be inconsistent with their notion of liberty. For so long as prior inclination possesses the will, and is not removed, it binds the will, so that it is utterly impossible that the will should act otherwise than agreeably to it. Surely the will cannot act or choose contrary to a remaining prevailing inclination of the will. To suppose otherwise would be the same thing as to suppose that the will is inclined contrary to its present prevailing inclination, or contrary to what it is inclined to. That which the will chooses and prefers, that, all things considered, it

preponderates and inclines to. It is equally impossible for the will to choose contrary to its own remaining and present preponderating inclination, as it is to prefer contrary to its own present preference or choose contrary to its own present choice. The will, therefore, so long as it is under the influence of an old preponderating inclination, is not at liberty for a new free act, or any act that shall now be an act of self-determination. The act which is a self-determined free act, must be an act which the will determines in the possession and use of such a liberty as consists in a freedom from every tiling, which, if it were there, would make it impossible that the will at that time, should be otherwise than that way to which it tends.

If any one should say there is no need that the indifference should be perfect, but although a former inclination and preference still remains, yet, if it be not very strong and violent, possibly the strength of the will may oppose and overcome it: this is grossly absurd; for the strength of the will, let it be never so great, does not at all enable it to act one way, and the contrary way, both at the same time. It gives it no such sovereignty and command, as to cause itself to prefer and not to prefer at the same time, or to choose contrary to its own present choice.

Therefore, if there be the least degree of antecedent pre-ponderation of the will, it must be perfectly abolished before the will can be at liberty to determine itself the contrary way. And if the will determines itself the same way, it was not a free determination, because the will is not wholly at liberty in so doing, its determination is not altogether from itself, but it was partly determined before, in its prior inclination; and all the freedom the will exercises in the case is in an increase of inclination, which it gives itself, over and above what it had by foregoing bias; so much is from itself, and so much is from perfect indifference. For though the will had a previous tendency that way, yet as to that additional degree of inclination, it had no tendency; therefore the previous tendency is of no consideration, with respect to the act wherein the will is free. So that it comes to the same thing which was said at first, that as to the act of the will, wherein the will is free, there must be perfect indifference or equilibrium.

To illustrate this: if we should suppose a sovereign self-moving power in a natural body, but that the body is in motion already, by an antecedent

bias; for instance, gravitation towards the center of the earth; and has one degree of motion already, by virtue of that previous tendency; but by its self-moving power it adds one degree more to its motion, and moves so much more swiftly towards the center of the earth than it would do by its gravity only: it is evident, that all that is owing to a self-moving power in this case, is the additional degree of motion; and that the other degree of motion which it had from gravity, is of no consideration in the case, does not help the effect of the free self-moving power in the least; the effect is just the same as if the body had received from itself one degree of motion from a state of perfect rest. So, if we should suppose a self-moving power given to the scale of a balance, which has a weight of one degree beyond the opposite scale; and we ascribe to it an ability to add to itself another degree of force the same way, by its self-moving power; this is just the same thing as to ascribe to it a power to give itself one degree of preponderation from a perfect equilibrium; and so much power as the scale has to give itself an overbalance from a perfect equipoise, so much self-moving, self-preponderating power it has, and no more. So that its free power this way is always to be measured from perfect equilibrium.

I need say no more to prove, that if indifference be essential to liberty, it must be perfect indifference; and that so far as the will is destitute of this, so far it is destitute of that freedom by which it is its own master, and in a capacity of being its own determiner, without being at all passive, or subject to the power and sway of something else, in its motions and determinations.

Having observed these things, let us now try whether this notion of the liberty of the will consisting in indifference and equilibrium, and the will's self-determination in such a state, be not absurd and inconsistent.

And here I would lay down this as an axiom of undoubted truth, — that every free act is done in a state of freedom, and not only after such a state. If an act of the will be an act wherein the soul is free, it must be exerted in a state of freedom, and in the time of freedom. It will not suffice, that the act immediately follows a state of liberty; but liberty must yet continue, and coexist with the act; the soul remaining in possession of liberty. Because that is the notion of a free act of the soul, even an act wherein the

soul uses or exercises liberty. But if the soul is not, in the very time of the act, in the possession of liberty, it cannot at that time be in the use of it.

Now, the question is, whether ever the soul of man puts forth an act of will, while it yet remains in a state of liberty, in that notion of a state of liberty, viz. as implying a state of indifference; or whether the soul ever exerts an act of choice or preference, while at that very time the will is in a perfect equilibrium, not inclining one way more than another. The very putting, of the question is sufficient to show the absurdity of the affirmative answer; for how ridiculous would it be for any body to insist, that the soul chooses one thing before another, when at the very same instant it is perfectly indifferent with respect to each! This is the same thing as to say, the soul prefers one thing to another, at the very same time that it has no preference. Choice and preference can no more be in a state of indifference, than motion can be in a state of rest, or than the preponderation of the scale of a balance can be in a state of equilibrium. Motion may be the next moment after rest; but cannot coexist with it in any, even the least part of it. So, choice may be immediately after a state of indifference, but has no co-existence with it: even the very beginning of it is not in a state of indifference. And therefore, if this be liberty, no act of the will, in any degree, is ever performed in a state of liberty, or in the time of liberty. Volition and liberty are so far from agreeing and being essential one to another, that they are contrary one to another, and one excludes and destroys the other, as much as motion and rest, light and darkness, or life and death. So that the will acts not at all, does not so much as begin to act, in the time of such liberty: freedom is perfectly at an end, and has ceased to be, at the first moment of action; and therefore liberty cannot reach the action, to affect or qualify it, or give it a denomination, or any part of it, any more than if it had ceased to be, twenty years before the action began. The moment that liberty ceases to be, it ceases to be a qualification of any thing. If light and darkness succeed one another instantaneously, light qualifies nothing after it is gone out, to make any thing light some or bright, any more at the first moment of perfect darkness, than months or years after it. Life denominates nothing, vital at the first moment of perfect death. So freedom, if it consists in, or implies indifference, can denominate nothing free, at the first moment of preference or preponderation. Therefore it is manifest, that no liberty which the soul is



possessed of, of ever uses, in any of its acts of volition, consists in indifference; and that the opinion of such as suppose that indifference belongs to the very essence of liberty, is to the highest degree absurd and contradictory.

If any one should imagine that this manner of arguing, is nothing but a trick and delusion; and, to evade the reasoning, should say, that the thing wherein the will exercises its liberty, is not in the act of choice or pre-ponderation itself, but in determining itself to a certain choice or preference; that the act of the will wherein it is free, and uses its own sovereignty, consists in its causing or determining the change or transition from a state of indifference to a certain preference, or determining, to give a certain turn to the balance, which has hitherto been even; and that this act the will exerts in a state of liberty, or while the will yet remains in equilibrium, and perfect master of itself: — I say, if any one chooses to express his notion of liberty after this, or some such manner, let us see if he can make out his matters any better than before.

What is asserted is, that the will, while it yet remains in perfect equilibrium, without preference, determines to change itself from that state, and excite in itself a certain choice or preference. Now, let us see whether this does not come to the same absurdity we had before. If it be so, that the will, while it yet remains perfectly indifferent, determines to put itself out of that state, and give itself a certain pre-ponderation; then I would inquire, whether the soul does not determine this of choice; or whether the will's coming to a determination to do so, be not the same thing as the soul's coming to a choice to do so. If the soul does not determine this of choice, or in the exercise of choice, then it does not determine it voluntarily; and if the soul does not determine it voluntarily, or of its own will, then in what sense does its will determine it? And if the will does not determine it, then how is the liberty of the will exercised in the determination? What sort of liberty is exercised by the soul in those determinations, wherein there is no exercise of choice, which are not voluntary, and wherein the will is not concerned? But if it be allowed that this determination is an act of choice, and it be insisted on, that the soul, while it yet remains in a state of perfect indifference, chooses to put itself out of that state, and to turn itself one way; then the soul is already come to a choice, and chooses that way. And so we have the very same

absurdity which we had before. Here is the soul in a state of choice, and in a state of equilibrium, both at the same time: the soul already choosing one way, while it remains in a state of perfect indifference and has no choice of one way more shall the other. And indeed this manner of talking, though it may a little hide the absurdity in the obscurity of expression, is more nonsensical, and increases the inconsistency. To say, the free act of the will, or the act which the will exerts in a state of freedom and indifference, does not imply preference in it, but is what the will does in order to causing or producing a preference, is as much as to say, the soul chooses (for to will and to choose are the same thing) without choice, and prefers without preference, in order to cause or produce the beginning of a preference, or the first choice. And that is, that the first choice is exerted without choice, in order to produce itself.

If any, to evade these things, should own, that a state of liberty and a state of indifference are not the same, and that the former may be without the latter; but should say, that indifference is still essential to the freedom of an act of will, in some sort, namely, as it is necessary to go immediately before it; it being essential to the freedom of an act of will that it should directly and immediately arise out of a state of indifference: still this will not help the cause of Arminian liberty, or make it consistent with itself. For if the act springs immediately out of a state of indifference, then it does not arise from antecedent choice or preference. But if the act arises directly out of a state of indifference, without any intervening choice to choose and determine it, then the act not being determined by choice, is not determined by the will; the mind exercises no free choice in the affair, and free choice and free will have no hand in the determination of the act, — which is entirely inconsistent with their notion of the freedom of volition.

If any should suppose that these difficulties and absurdities may be avoided by saying, that the liberty of the mind consists in a power to suspend the act of the will and so to keep it in a state of indifference until there has been opportunity for consideration; and so shall say, that however indifference is not essential to liberty in such a manner that the mind must make its choice in a state of indifference, which is an inconsistency, or that the act of will must spring immediately out of indifference, yet indifference may be essential to the liberty of acts of the

will in this respect, viz. That liberty consists in a power of the mind to forbear or suspend the act of volition, and keep the mind in a state of indifference for the present, until there has been opportunity for proper deliberation: I say, if any one imagines that this helps the matter, it is a great mistake; it reconciles no inconsistency, and relieves no difficulty, which the affair is attended with. For here the following things must be observed:

- 1.** That this suspending of volition, if there be properly any such thing, is itself an act of volition. If the mind determines to suspend its act, it determines it voluntarily; it chooses, on some consideration, to suspend it. And this choice or determination is an act of the will: and indeed it is supposed to be so in the very hypothesis; for it is supposed that the liberty of the will consists in its power to do this, and that its doing it is the very thing wherein the will exercises its liberty. But how can the will exercise liberty in it, if it be not an act of the wills The liberty of the will is not exercised in any thing but what the will does.
- 2.** This determining to suspend acting is not only an act of the will, but it is supposed to be the only free act of the will; because it is said, that this is the thing wherein the liberty of the will consists. Now, if this be so, then this is all the act of will that we have to consider in this controversy, about the liberty of will, and in our inquiries, wherein the liberty of man consists. And now the fore-mentioned difficulties remain: the former question returns upon us, viz. Wherein consists the freedom of the will in those acts wherein it is free? And if this act of determining a suspension be the only act in which the will is free, then wherein consists the will's freedom with respect to this act of suspension? And how is indifference essential to this act? The answer must be, according to what is supposed in the evasion under consideration, That the liberty of the will, in this act of suspension, consists in a power to suspend even this act, until there has been opportunity for thorough deliberation But this will be to plunge directly into the grossest nonsense: for it is the act of suspension itself that we are speaking of; and there is no room for a space of deliberation and suspension in order to determine whether we will suspend or no. For that supposes that even suspension itself may be deferred; which is absurd: for the very deferring the determination of suspension, to consider whether we will suspend or no, will be actually suspending. For during the

space of suspension, to consider whether to suspend, the act is ipso facto suspended. There is no medium between suspending to act, and immediately acting; and therefore no possibility of avoiding either the one or the other one moment.

And besides, this is attended with ridiculous absurdity another way: for now it is come to that, that liberty consists wholly in the mind's having power to suspend its determination whether to suspend or no; that there may be time for consideration, whether it be best to suspend. And if liberty consists in this only, then this is the liberty under consideration; we have to inquire now, how liberty with respect to this act of suspending a determination of suspension, consists in indifference, or how indifference is essential to it. The answer, according to the hypothesis we are upon, must be, that it consists in a power of suspending even this last-mentioned act, to have time to consider whether to suspend that. And then the same difficulties and inquiries return over again with respect to that; and so on for ever, which, if it would show any thing, would show only that there is no such thing as a free act. It drives the exercise of freedom back in infinitum; and that is to drive it out of the world.

And besides all this, there is a delusion, and a latent gross contradiction, in the affair another way; inasmuch as, in explaining how, or in what respect, the will is free with regard to a particular act of volition, it is said, that its liberty consists in a power to determine to suspend that act, which places liberty not in that act of volition which the inquiry is about, but altogether in another antecedent act, — which contradicts the thing supposed in both the question and answer. The question is, wherein consists the mind's liberty in any particular act of volition? And the answer, in pretending to show wherein lies the mind's liberty in that act, in effect says, it does not lie in that act at all, but in another, viz. a volition to suspend that act. And therefore the answer is both contradictory, and altogether impertinent and beside the purpose. For it does not show wherein the liberty of the will consists in the act in question; instead of that, it supposes it does not consist in that act at all, but in another distinct from it, even a volition to suspend that act, and take time to consider of it. And no account is pretended to be given wherein the mind is free with respect to that act, wherein this answer supposes the liberty of the mind indeed consists, viz. the act of suspension, or of determining the suspension.

On the whole, it is exceeding manifest, that the liberty of the mind does not consist in indifference, and that indifference is not essential or necessary to it, or at all belonging to it, as the Arminians suppose; that opinion being full of nothing but absurdity and self-contradiction.

## SECTION 8

### CONCERNING THE SUPPOSED LIBERTY OF THE WILL, AS OPPOSITE TO ALL NECESSITY.

It is a thing chiefly insisted on by Arminians, in this controversy, as a thing most important and essential in human liberty, that volition's, or the acts of the will, are contingent events; understanding contingency as opposite, not only to constraint, but to all necessity. Therefore I would particularly consider this matter. And,

1. I would inquire, whether there is, or can be, any such thing as a volition which is contingent in such a sense, as not only to come to pass without any necessity of constraint or co-action, but also without a necessity of consequence, or an infallible connection with anything foregoing.
2. Whether, if it were so, this would at all help the cause of liberty.

I would consider whether volition is a thing that ever does, or can, come to pass, in this manner, contingently.

And here it must be remembered, that it has been already shown, that nothing can ever come to pass without a cause, or reason why it exists in this manner rather than another; and the evidence of this has been particularly applied to the acts of the will. Now, if this be so, it will demonstrably follow, that the acts of the will are never contingent, or without necessity, in the sense spoken of; inasmuch as those things which have a cause or reason of their existence, must be connected with their cause. This appears by the following considerations: —

1. For an event to have a cause and ground of its existence, and yet not to be connected with its cause, is an inconsistency. For if the event be not connected with the cause, it is not dependent on the cause; its existence is, as it were, loose from its influence, and may attend it, or may not; it being

a mere contingency, whether it follows or attends the influence of the cause or not: and that is the same thing as not to be dependent on it. And to say the event is not dependent on its cause, is absurd: it is the same thing as to say, it is not its cause, nor the event the effect of it; for dependence on the influence of a cause is the very notion of an effect. If there be no such relation between one thing and another, consisting in the connection and dependence of one thing on the influence of another, then it is certain there is no such relation between them as is signified by the terms cause and effect. So far as an event is dependent on a cause, and connected with it, so much causality is there in the case, and no more. The cause does, or brings to pass, no more in any event, than is dependent on it. If we say, the connection and dependence is not total, but partial, and that the effect, though it has some connection and dependence, yet is not entirely dependent on it; that is the same thing as to say, that not all that is in the event is an effect of that cause, but that only part of it arises from thence, and part some other way.

**2.** If there are some events which are not necessarily connected with causes, then it will follow, that there are some things which come to pass without any cause, contrary to the supposition. For if there be any event which was not necessarily connected with the influence of the cause under such circumstances, then it was contingent whether it would attend or follow the influence of the cause, or no, it might have followed and it might not, when the cause was the same, its influence the same, and under the same circumstances. And if so, why did it follow, rather than not follow? There is no cause or reason of this. Therefore, here is something without any cause or reason why it is, viz. the following of the effect on the influence of the cause, with which it was not necessarily connected. If there be a necessary connection of the effect on any thing antecedent, then we may suppose that sometimes the event will follow the cause, and sometimes not, when the cause is the same, and in every respect in the same state and circumstances. And what can be the cause and reason of this strange phenomenon, even this diversity, that in one instance the effect should follow, in another not? It is evident by the supposition, that this is wholly without any cause or ground. Here is something in the present manner of the existence of things, and state of the world, that is

absolutely without a cause, — which is contrary to the supposition, and contrary to what has been before demonstrated.

**3.** To suppose there are some events which have a cause and ground of their existence, that yet are not necessarily connected with their cause, is to suppose that they have a cause which is not their cause. Thus, if the effect be not necessarily connected with the cause, with its influence, and influential circumstances; then, as I observed before, it is a thing possible and supposable, that the cause may sometimes exert the same influence, under the same circumstances, and yet the effect not follow. And if this actually happens in any instance, this; instance is a proof, in fact, that the influence of the cause is not sufficient to produce the effect. For if it had been sufficient, it would have done it. And yet, by the supposition, in another instance, the same cause, with perfectly the same influence, and when all circumstances which have any influence are the same, it was, followed with the effect, — by which it is manifest, that the effect in this last instance was not owing to the influence of the cause, but must come to pass some other way. For it was proved before, that the influence of the cause was not sufficient to produce the effect. And if it was not sufficient to produce it, then the production of it could not be owing to that influence, but must be owing to something else, or owing to nothing. And if the effect be not owing to the influence of the cause, then it is not the cause, — which brings us to the contradiction of a cause, and no cause; that which is the ground and reason of the existence of a thing, and at the same time is not the ground and reason of its existence, nor is sufficient to be so.

If the matter be not already so plain as to render any further reasoning upon it impertinent, I would say, that that which seems to be the cause in the supposed case, can be no cause; its power and influence having, on a full trial, proved insufficient to produce such an effect. and if it be not sufficient to produce it, then it does not produce it. To say otherwise, is to say, there is power to do that which there is not power to do. If there be in a cause sufficient power exerted, and in circumstances sufficient to produce an effect, and so the effect be actually produced at one time; these things all concurring, will produce the effect at all times. And so we may turn it the other way; that which proves not sufficient at one time, cannot be sufficient at another, with precisely the same influential circumstances.

And therefore if the effect follows, it is not owing to that cause: unless the different time be a circumstance which has influence; but that is contrary to the supposition; for it is supposed that all circumstances that have influence are the same. And besides, this would be to suppose the time to be the cause; which is contrary to the supposition of other things being the cause. But if merely diversity of time has no influence, then it is evident that it is as much of an absurdity to say, the cause was sufficient to produce the effect at one time, and not at another; as to say, that it is sufficient to produce the effect at a certain time, and yet not sufficient to produce the same effect at the same time.

On the whole, it is clearly manifest, that every effect has a necessary connection with its cause, or with that which is the true ground and reason of its existence. And therefore, if there be no event without a cause, as was proved before, then no event whatsoever is contingent in the manner that Arminians suppose the free acts of the will to be contingent.

## SECTION 9

### OF THE CONNEXION ON THE ACTS OF THE WILL WITH THE DICTATES OF THE UNDERSTANDING.

It is manifest, that the acts of the will are none of them contingent in such a sense as to be without all necessity, or so as not to be necessary with a necessity of consequence and connection; because every act of the will is some way connected with the understanding, and is as the greatest apparent good is, in the manner which has already been explained; namely, that the soul always wills or chooses that which, in the present view of the mind, considered in the whole of that view, and all that belongs to it, appears most agreeable. Because, as was observed before, nothing is more evident shall that, when men act voluntarily, and do what they please, then they do what appears most agreeable to them; and to say otherwise, would be as much as to affirm, that men do not choose what appears to suit them best, or what seems most pleasing to them: or that they do not choose what they prefer, — which brings the matter to a contradiction.



And it is evident in itself, that the acts of the will have some connection with the dictates or views of the understanding; so this is allowed by some of the chief of the Arminian writers, particularly by Dr. Whitby and Dr. Samuel Clarke. Dr. Turnbull, though a great enemy to the doctrine of necessity, allows the same thing. In his “Christian Philosophy,” (p 196) he with much approbation cites another philosopher, as of the same mind, in these words: “No man (says an excellent philosopher) sets himself about anything but upon some view or other, which serves him for a reason for what he does: and whatsoever faculties he employs, the understanding, with such light as it has, well or ill formed, constantly leads; and by that light, true or false, all her operative powers are directed. The will itself, how absolute and incontrollable soever it may be thought, never fails in its obedience to the dictates of the understanding. Temples have their sacred images; and we see what influence they have always had over a great part of mankind; but in truth the ideas and images in men’s minds are the invisible powers that constantly govern them; and to these they all pay universally a ready submission.

But whether this be in a just consistence with themselves, and their own notions of liberty, I desire may now be impartially considered. Dr. Whitby plainly supposes, that the acts and determinations of the will always follow the understanding’s apprehension or view of the greatest good to be obtained, or evil to be avoided; or, in other words, that the determinations of the will constantly and infallibly follow these two things in the understanding:

1. The degree of good to be obtained and evil to be avoided, proposed to the understanding, and apprehended, viewed, and taken notice of by it.
2. The degree of the understanding’s view, notice, or apprehension of that good or evil; which is increased by attention and consideration.

That this is an opinion he is exceeding peremptory in, (as he is in every opinion which he maintains in his controversy with the Calvinists) with disdain of the contrary opinion, as absurd and self-contradictory, will appear by the following words of his, in his discourse on the Five Points.

“Now it is certain, that what naturally makes the understanding to perceive, is evidence proposed and apprehended, considered or adverted to: for nothing else can be requisite to make us come to the knowledge of the truth. Again, what makes the will choose, is something approved by the understanding; and consequently appearing to the soul as good. And whatsoever it refuseth, is something represented by the understanding, and so appearing to the will as evil. Whence all that God requires of us is and can be only this — to refuse the evil, and choose the good Wherefore, to say that evidence proposed, apprehended, and considered, is not sufficient to make the understanding approve; or that the greatest good proposed, the greatest evil threatened, when equally believed and reflected on, is not sufficient to engage the will to choose the good and refuse the evil is in effect to say, that which alone doth move the will to choose or to refuse, is not sufficient to engage us so to do, — which being contradictory to itself, must of necessity be false. Be it then so, that we naturally have an aversion to the truths proposed to us in the Gospel; that only can make us indisposed to attend to them, but cannot hinder our conviction, when we do apprehend them, and attend to them. Be it, that there is in us also a renitency to the good we are to choose; that only can indispose us to believe it is, and to approve it as our chiefest good. Be it, that we are prone to the evil that we should decline; that only can render it the more difficult for us to believe it is the worst of evils. But yet, what we do really believe to be our chiefest good, will still be chosen; and what we apprehend to be the worst of evils, will, whilst we do continue under that conviction, be refused by us. It therefore can be only requisite, in order to these ends, that the good Spirit should so illuminate our understandings, that we, attending to, and considering what lies before us, should apprehend, and be convinced of our duty; and that the blessings of the Gospel should be so propounded to us, as that we may discern them to be our chiefest good; and the miseries it threateneth, so as we may be convinced that they are the worst of evils; that we may choose the one, and refuse the other.”

Here let it be observed, how plainly and peremptorily it is asserted, that the greatest good proposed, and the greatest evil threatened, when equally believed and reflected on, is sufficient to engage the will to choose the good, and refuse the evil, and is that alone which doth move the will to choose or to refuse; and that it is contradictory to itself, to suppose otherwise; and, therefore, must of necessity be false; and then what we do really believe to be our chiefest good will still be chosen; and what we apprehend to be the worst of evils, will, whilst we continue under that conviction, be refused by us. Nothing could have been said more to the purpose, fully to signify and declare, that the determinations of the will must evermore follow the illumination, conviction, and notice of the understanding, with regard to the greatest good and evil proposed, reckoning both the degree of good and evil understood, and the degree of understanding, notice, and conviction, of that proposed good and evil; and that it is thus necessarily, and can be otherwise in no instance; because it is asserted, that it implies a contradiction, to suppose it ever to be otherwise.

I am sensible the Doctor's aim in these assertions is against the Calvinists; to show, in opposition to them, that there is no need of any physical operation of the Spirit of God on the will, to change and determine that to a good choice, but that God's operation and assistance is only moral, suggesting ideas to the understanding; which he supposes to be enough, if those ideas are attended to, infallibly to obtain the end. But whatever his design was, nothing can more directly and fully prove that every determination of the will in choosing and refusing, is necessary, directly contrary to his own notion of the liberty of the will. For if the determination of the will evermore in this manner follows the light, conviction, and view of the understanding, concerning the greatest good and evil, and this be that alone which moves the will, and it be a contradiction to suppose otherwise; then it is necessarily so, — the will necessarily follows this light or view of the understanding not only in some of its acts, but in every act of choosing and refusing. So that the will does not determine itself in any one of its own acts; but all its acts, every act of choice and refusal, depends on, and is necessarily connected with some antecedent cause, which cause is not the will itself, nor any act of its own, nor any thing pertaining to that faculty, but something belonging to

another faculty, whose acts go before the will, in all its acts, and govern and determine them every one.

Here, if it should be replied, that although it be true, that, according to the Doctor, the final determination of the will always depends upon, and is infallibly connected with, the understanding's conviction and notice of the greatest good; yet the acts of the will are not necessary, because that conviction and notice of the understanding is first dependent on a preceding act of the will, in determining to attend to, and take notice of the evidence exhibited; by which means the mind obtains that degree of conviction, which is sufficient and effectual to determine the consequent and ultimate choice of the will; and that the will with regard to that preceding act, whereby it determines whether to attend or no, is not necessary; and that in this the liberty of the will consists, that when God holds forth sufficient objective light, the will is at liberty whether to command the attention of the mind to it.

Nothing can be more weak and inconsiderate than such a reply as this. For that preceding act of the will, in determining to attend and consider, still is an act of the will, {it is so to be sure, if the liberty of the will consists in it, as is supposed,) and if it be an act of the will, it is an act of choice or refusal. And therefore, if what the Doctor asserts be true, it is determined by some antecedent light in the understanding, concerning the greatest apparent good or evil. For he asserts, it is that light which alone doth move the will to choose or refuse. And therefore the will must be moved by that in choosing to attend to the objective light offered, in order to another consequent act of choice: so that this act is no less necessary than the other. And if we suppose another act of the will, still preceding both these mentioned, to determine both, still that also must be an act of the will, and an act of choice; and so must, by the same principles, be infallibly determined by some certain degree of light in the understanding concerning the greatest good. And let us suppose as many acts of the will, one preceding another, as we please, yet they are every one of them necessarily determined by a certain degree of light in the understanding, concerning the greatest and most eligible good in that case; and so, not one of them free, according to Dr. Whitby's notion of freedom. And if it be said, the reason, why men do not attend to light held forth, is because of ill habits contracted by evil acts committed before, whereby their minds are

indisposed to attend to, and consider of the truth held forth to them by God; the difficulty is not at all avoided: still the question returns, What determined the will in those preceding evil acts? It must, by Dr. Whitby's principles, still be the view of the understanding concerning the greatest good and evil. If this view of the understanding be that alone which doth move the will to choose or refuse, as the Doctor asserts, then every act of choice or refusal, from a man's first existence, is moved and determined by this view, and this view of the understanding exciting and governing the act, must be before the act: and therefore the will is necessarily determined in every one of its acts, from a man's first existence, by a cause beside the will, and a cause that does not proceed from, or depend on, any act of the will at all, — which at once utterly abolishes the Doctor's whole scheme of liberty of will; and he, at one stroke, has cut the sinews of all his arguments from the goodness, righteousness, faithfulness, and sincerity of God, in his commands, promises, threatenings, calls, invitations, expostulations; which he makes use of, under the heads of reprobation, election, universal redemption, sufficient and effectual grace, and the freedom of the will of man; and has enervated and made vain all those exclamations against the doctrine of the Calvinists, as charging God with manifest unrighteousness, unfaithfulness, hypocrisy, fallaciousness, and cruelty; which he has over, and over, and over again, numberless times in his book.

Dr. Samuel Clarke, in his "Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God," to evade the argument to prove the necessity of volition, from its necessary connection with the last dictate of the understanding, supposes the latter not to be diverse from the act of the will itself. But if it be so, it will not alter the case as to the evidence of the necessity of the act of the will. If the dictate of the understanding be the very same with the determination of the will or choice, as Dr. Clarke supposes, then this determination is no fruit or effect of choice: and if so, no liberty of choice has any hand in it: as to volition or choice, it is necessary, that is, choice cannot prevent it. If the last dictate of the understanding be the same with the determination of volition itself, then the existence of that determination must be necessary as to volition; inasmuch as volition can have no opportunity to determine whether it shall exist or no, it having existence already before volition has opportunity to determine any thing. It is itself

the very rise and existence of volition. But a thing, after it exists, has no opportunity to determine as to its own existence, it is too late for that.

If liberty consists in that which Arminians suppose, viz. in the will's determining its own acts, having free opportunity, and being without all necessity; this is the same as to say, that liberty consists in the soul's having power and opportunity to have what determinations of the will it pleases or chooses. And if the determinations of the will, and the last dictates of the understanding, be the same thing, then liberty consists in the mind's having power to have what dictates of the understanding it pleases, having opportunity to choose its own dictates of understanding. But this is absurd: for it is to make the determination of choice prior to the dictate of the understanding, and the ground of it, which cannot consist with the dictate of understanding's being the determination of choice itself.

Here is no way to do in this case, but only to recur to the old absurdity of one determination before another, and the cause of it; and another before that, determining that; and so on in infinitum. If the last dictate of the understanding be the determination of the will itself, and the soul be free with regard to that dictate, in the Arminian notion of freedom; then the soul, before that dictate of its understanding exists, voluntarily and according, to its own choice determines, in every case, that that dictate of the understanding shall be; otherwise, that dictate, as to the will, is necessary, and the acts determined by it must also be necessary. So that here is a determination of the mind prior to that dictate of the understanding; an act of choice going before it, choosing, and determining what that dictate of the understanding, shall be: and this preceding act of choice, being a free act of will, must also be the same with another last dictate of the understanding: and if the mind also be free in that dictate of understanding, that must be determined still by another; and so on for ever.

Besides, if the dictate of the understanding, and determination of the will, be the same, this confounds the understanding and will, and makes them the same. Whether they be the same or no, I will not now dispute; but only would observe, that if it be so, and the Arminian notion of liberty consists in a self-determining power in the understanding, free of all necessity; being independent, undetermined by any thing prior to its own acts and determinations; and the more the understanding is thus independent, and

sovereign over its own determinations, the more free. By this therefore the freedom of the soul, as a moral agent, must consist in the independence of the understanding on any evidence or appearance of things, or any thing whatsoever, that stands forth to the view of the mind, prior to the understanding's determination. And what a sort of liberty is this! consisting in an ability, freedom, and easiness of judging, either according to evidence, or against it; having a sovereign command over itself at all times, to judge, either agreeably or disagreeably to what is plainly exhibited to its own view. Certainly, it is no liberty that renders persons the proper subjects of persuasive reasoning, arguments, expostulations, and such like moral means and inducements, — the use of which with mankind is a main argument of the Arminians, to defend their notion of liberty without all necessity; for according to this, the more free men are, the less they are under the government of such means, less subject to the power of evidence and reason, and more independent on their influence in their determinations.

And whether the understanding and will are the same or no, as Dr. Clarke seems to suppose, yet, in order to maintain the Arminian notion of liberty without necessity, the free will is not determined by the understanding, nor necessarily connected with the understanding; and the further from such connection, the greater the freedom. And when the liberty is full and complete, the determinations of the will have no connection at all with the dictates of the understanding. And if so, in vain are all the applications to the understanding, in order to induce to any free virtuous act; and so in vain are all instructions, counsels, invitations, expostulations, and all arguments and persuasives whatsoever; for these are but applications to the understanding, and a clear and lively exhibition of the objects of choice to the mind's view. But if, after all, the will must be self-determined, and independent on the understanding, to what purpose are things thus represented to the understanding, in order to determine the choice.

## SECTION 10

### **VOLITION NECESSARILY CONNECTED WITH THE INFLUENCE OF MOTIVES: WITH PARTICULAR OBSERVATIONS ON THE GREAT INCONSISTENCE OF MR. CHUBB'S ASSERTIONS AND REASONINGS ABOUT THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL.**

THAT every act of the will has some cause, and consequently (by what has been already proved) has a necessary connection with its cause, and so is necessary by a necessity of connection and consequence, is evident by this, that every act of the will whatsoever is excited by some motive: which is manifest, because, if the will or mind, in willing and choosing after the manner that it does, is excited so to do by no motive or inducement, then it has no end which it proposes to itself, or pursues in so doing; it aims at nothing, and seeks nothing. And if it seeks nothing, then it does not go after any thing, or exert any inclination or preference towards any thing, — which brings the matter to a contradiction; because, for the mind to will something, and for it to go after something by an act of preference and inclination, are the same thing.

But if every act of the will is excited by a motive, then that motive is the cause of the act of the will. If the acts of the will are excited by motives, then motives are the causes of their being excited; or, which is the same thing, the cause of their being put forth into act and existence. And if so, the existence of the acts of the will is properly the effect of their motives. Motives do nothing as motives or inducements, but by their influence; and so much as is done by their influence is the effect of then,. For that is the notion of an effect, something that is brought to pass by the influence of another thing.

And if volition's are properly the effects of their motives, then they are necessarily connected with their motives; every effort and event being, as was proved before, necessarily connected with that which is the proper ground and reason of its existence. Thus it is manifest that volition is necessary, and is not from any self-determining power in the will; the volition, which is caused by previous motive and inducement, is not caused by the will exercising a sovereign power over itself, to determine,



cause, and excite volition's in itself. This is not consistent with the will's acting in a state of indifference and equilibrium to determine itself to a preference; for the way in which motives operate, is by biasing the will, and giving, it a certain inclination or preponderation one way.

Here it may be proper to observe, that Mr. Chubb, in his Collection of Tracts on various subjects, has advanced a scheme of liberty which is greatly divided against itself, and thoroughly subversive of itself; and that many ways.

**I.** He is abundant in asserting, that the will, in all its acts, is influenced by motive and excitement; and that this is the previous ground and reason of all its acts, and that it is never otherwise in any instance He says, p. 262: "No action can take place without some motive to excite it." And in p. 263: "Volition cannot take place without some previous reason or motive to induce it." And in p. 310: "Action would not take place without some reason or motive to induce it; it being absurd to suppose, that the active faculty would be exerted without some previous reason to dispose the mind to action." So also p. 257. And he speaks of these things, as what we may be absolutely certain of, and which are the foundation, the only foundation we have, of a certainty of the moral perfection's of God. Pages 252-255, 261-264.

And yet, at the same time, by his scheme the influence of motives upon us, to excite to action, and to be actually a ground of volition, is consequent on the volition or choice of the mind. For he very greatly insists upon it that in all free actions, before the mind is the subject of those volition's which motives excite, it chooses to be so. It chooses, whether it will comply with the motive which presents itself in view, or not; and when various motives are presented, it chooses which it will yield to, and which it will reject. So p. 266: "Every man has power to act, or to refrain from acting, agreeably with, or contrary to, any motive that presents." P 257: "Every man is at liberty to act, or refrain from acting, agreeably with, or contrary to, v hat each of these motives, considered singly, would excite him to. — Man has power, and is as much at liberty, to reject the motive that does prevail, as he has power, and is at liberty, to reject those motives that do not." And so pp. 310, 311: "In order to constitute a moral agent, it is necessary that he should have power to act,

or to refrain from acting, upon such moral motives as he pleases.” And to the like purpose in many other places. According to these things, the will acts first, and chooses or refuses to comply with the motive that is presented, before it falls under its prevailing influence: and it is first determined by the mind’s pleasure or choice, what motives it will be induced by, before it is induced by them.

Now, how can these things hang together? How can the mind first act, and by its act of volition and choice determine what motives shall be the ground and reason of its volition and choice? For this supposes the choice is already made before the motive has its effect; and that the volition is already exerted before the motive prevails, so as actually to be the ground of the volition; and makes the prevailing of the motive the consequence of the volition, which yet it is the ground of. If the mind has already chosen to comply with a motive, and to yield to its excitement, it does not need to yield to it after this: for the thing is effected already that the motive would excite to, and the will is beforehand with the excitement; and the excitement comes in too late, and is needless and in vain afterwards. If the mind has already chosen to yield to a motive which invites to a thing, that implies, and in fact is, a choosing the thing invited to; and the very act of choice is before the influence of the motive which induces, and is the ground of the choice: the son is beforehand with the father that begets him; the choice is supposed to be the ground of that influence of the motive, which very influence is supposed to be the ground of the choice. And so, vice versa, the choice is supposed to be the consequence of the influence of the motive, which influence of the motive is the consequence of that very choice.

And besides, if the will acts first towards the motive before it falls under its influence, and the prevailing of the motive upon it to induce it to act and choose, be the fruit and consequence of its act and choice, then how is the motive “a previous ground and reason of the act and choice, “so that,” in the nature of the things, volition cannot take place without some previous reason and motive to induce it;” and that this act is consequent upon, and follows the motive? — which things Mr. Chubb, often asserts, as of certain and undoubted truth. So that the very same motive is both previous and consequent both before and after, both the ground and fruit of the very same thing!

**II.** Agreeable to the aforementioned inconsistent notion of the will's first acting towards the motive, choosing whether it will comply with it, in order to its becoming a ground of the will's acting, before any act of volition can take place, Mr. Chubb frequently calls motives and excitements to the action of the will, "the passive ground or reason of that action," — which is a remarkable phrase, than which I presume there is none more unintelligible, and void of distinct and consistent meaning, in all the writings of Duns Scotus or Thomas Aquinas. When he represents the motive to action or volition as passive, he must mean passive in that affair, or passive with respect to that action, which he speaks of; otherwise it is nothing to his purpose, or relating to the design of his argument: he must mean, (if that be called a meaning,) that the motive to volition is first acted upon or towards by the volition choosing to yield to it, making it a ground of action, or determining to fetch its influence from thence; and so to make it a previous ground of its own excitation and existence, — which is the same absurdity, as if one should say, that the soul of man, or any other thing, should, previous to its existing, choose what cause it would come into existence by, and should act upon its cause to influence from thence to bring it into being; and so its cause should be a passive ground of its existence!

Mr. Chubb does very plainly suppose motive or excitement to be the ground of the being of volition.' He speaks of it as the ground or reason of the EXERTION of an act of the will, pp. 391, 392, and expressly says, that volition cannot take place without some previous ground or motive to induce it, p. 313. And he speaks of the act as "from the motive," and "from the influence of the motive," p. 352; and from the influence that the motive has on the man for the production of an action, p. 317. Certainly there is no need of multiplying words about this; it is easily judged, whether motive can be the ground of volition's being exerted and taking place, so that the very production of it is from the influence of the motive, and yet the motive, before it becomes the ground of the volition, is passive, or acted upon by the volition. But this I will say, that a man who insists so much on clearness of meaning in others, and is so much in blaming their confusion and inconsistency, ought, if he was able, to have explained his meaning in this phrase of passive ground of action, so as to show it not to be confused and inconsistent.

If any should suppose that Mr. Chubb, when he speaks of motive as a passive ground of action, does not mean passive with regard to that volition which it is the ground of, but some other antecedent volition, (though his purpose, and argument, and whole discourse, will by no means allow of such a supposition,) yet it would not help the matter in the least. For,

(1.) If we suppose there be an act of volition or choice, by which the soul chooses to yield to the invitation of a motive to another volition, by which the soul chooses something else; both these supposed volition's are in effect the very same. A volition, or choosing to yield to the force of a motive inviting to choose some thing, comes to just the same thing as choosing the thing which the motive invites to, as I observed before. So that here can be no room to help the matter, by a distinction of two volition's.

(2.) the motive lie passive with respect, not to the same volition that the motive excites to, but one truly distinct and prior; yet, by Mr. Chubb, that prior volition cannot take place, without a motive or excitement, as a previous ground of its existence.

For he insists, that it is absurd to suppose any volition should take place without some previous motive to induce it. So that at last it comes to just the same absurdity; for if every volition must have a previous motive, then the very first in the whole series must be excited by a previous motive; and yet the motive to that first volition is passive; but cannot be passive with regard to another antecedent volition, because, by the supposition, it is the very first: therefore, if it be passive with respect to any volition, it must be so with regard to that very volition that it is the ground of, and that is excited by it.

**III.** Though Mr. Chubb asserts, as above, that every volition was some motive, and that in the nature of the thing, no volition can take place without some motive to induce it; yet he asserts, that volition does not always follow the strongest motive; or, in other words, is not governed by any superior strength of the motive that is follower, beyond motives to the contrary, previous to the volition itself. His own words, p. 258, are as follow: "Though with regard to physical causes, that which is strongest always prevails, yet it is otherwise with regard to moral causes. Of these,

sometimes the stronger, sometimes the weaker, prevails. And the ground of this difference is evident, namely, that what we call moral causes, strictly speaking, are no causes at all, but barely passive reasons of, or excitements to, the action, or to the refraining, from acting: which excitements we have power, or are at liberty, to comply with or reject, as I have showed above.” And so, throughout the paragraph, he, in a variety of phrases, insists, that the will is not always determined by the strongest motive, unless by strongest we preposterously mean actually prevailing in the event; which is not in the motive, but in the will; but that the will is not always determined by the motive, which is strongest, by any strength previous to the volition itself. And he elsewhere does abundantly assert, that the will is determined by no superior strength or advantage that motives have from any constitution or state of things, or any circumstances whatsoever, previous to the actual determination of the will. And indeed his whole discourse on human liberty implies it, his whole scheme is founded upon it.

But these things cannot stand together. — There is such a thing as a diversity of strength in motives to choice, previous to the choice itself. Mr. Chubb himself purposes, that they do previously invite, induce, excite, and dispose the mind to action. This implies that they have something in themselves that is inviting, some tendency to induce and dispose to volition, previous to volition itself. And if they have in themselves this nature and tendency, doubtless they have in it certain limited degrees, which are capable of diversity; and some have it in greater degrees, others in less; and they that have most of this tendency, considered with all their nature and circumstances, previous to volition, they are the strongest motives; and those that have least are the weakest motives.

Now, if volition sometimes does not follow the motive which is strongest, or has most previous tendency or advantage, all things considered, to induce or excite it, but follows the weakest, or that which, as it stands previously in the mind’s view, has least tendency to induce it; herein the will apparently acts wholly without motive, without any previous reason to dispose the mind to it, contrary to what the same author supposes. The act, wherein the will must proceed without a previous motive to induce it, is the act of preferring the weakest motive. For how absurd is it to say, the

mind sees previous reason in the motive to prefer that motive before the other; and at the same time to suppose, that there is nothing, in the motive, in its nature, state, or any circumstance of it whatsoever, as it stands in the previous view of the mind, that gives it any preference; but, on the contrary, the other motive that stands in competition with it, in all these respects, has most belonging to it that is inviting and moving, and has most of a tendency to choice and preference! This is certainly as much as to say, there is previous ground and reason in the motive for the act of preference, and yet no previous reason for it. By the supposition, as to all that is in the two rival motives, which tends to preference, previous to the act of preference, it is not in that which is preferred, but wholly in the other: because appearing superior strength, and all appearing preferableness, is in that; and yet Mr. Chubb supposes, that the act of preference is from previous ground and reason in the motive which is preferred. But are these things consistent? Can there be previous ground in a thing for an event that takes place, and yet no previous tendency in it to that event? If one thing follows another, without any previous tendency to its following, then I should think it very plain that it follows it without any manner of previous reason why it should follow.

Yea, in this case, Mr. Chubb supposes that the event follows an antecedent or a previous thing, as the ground of its existence, not only that has no tendency to it, but a contrary tendency. The event is, the preference which the mind gives to that motive which is weaker, as it stands in the previous view of the mind; the immediate antecedent is, the view the mind has of the two rival motives conjunctly; in which previous view of the mind, all the preferableness, or previous tendency to preference, is supposed to be on the other side, or in the contrary motive; and all the unworthiness of preference, and so previous tendency to comparative neglect, rejection, or undervaluing, is on that side which is preferred: and yet in this view of the mind is supposed to be the previous ground or reason of this act of preference, exciting it and disposing the mind to it, — which I leave the reader to judge, whether it be absurd or not. If it be not, then it is not absurd to say, that the previous tendency of an antecedent to a consequent, is a ground and reason why that consequent does not follow; and the want of a previous tendency to an event, yea, a

tendency to the contrary, is the true ground and reason why that event does follow.

An act of choice or preference is a comparative act, wherein the mind acts with reference to two or more things that are compared, and stand in competition in the mind's view. If the mind, in this comparative act, prefers that which appears inferior in the comparison, then the mind herein acts absolutely without motive, or inducement, or any temptation whatsoever. Then, if a hungry man has the offer of two sorts of food, both which he finds an appetite to, but has a stronger appetite to one than the other, and there be no circumstances or excitements whatsoever in the case to induce him to take either the one or the other, but merely his appetite; if in the choice he makes between them, he chooses that which he has least appetite to, and refuses that to which he has the strongest appetite, this is a choice made absolutely without previous motive, excitement, reason, or temptation, as much as if he were perfectly without all appetite to either: because his volition in this case is a comparative act, attending, and following a comparative view of the food which he chooses, viewing it as related to, and compared with, the other sort of food, in which view his preference has absolutely no previous ground, yea, is against all previous ground and motive. And if there be any principle in man, from whence an act of choice may arise after this manner, from the same principle volition may arise wholly without motive on either side. If the mind in its volition can go beyond motive, then it can go without motive; for when it is beyond the motive, it is out of the reach of the motive, out of the limits of its influence, and so without motive. If volition goes beyond the strength and tendency of motive, and especially if it goes against its tendency, this demonstrates the independence of volition or motive. And if so, no reason can be given for what Mr. Chubb so often asserts, even that "in the nature of things volition cannot take place without a motive to induce it."

If the Most High should endow a balance with agency or activity of nature, in such a manner, that when unequal weights are put into the scales, its agency could enable it to cause that scale to descend which has the least weight, and so to raise the greater weight; this would clearly demonstrate, that the motion of the balance does not depend on weights in the scales, at least as much as if the balance should move itself, when there is no weight in either scale. And the activity of the balance, which is

sufficient to move itself against the greater weight, must certainly be more than sufficient to move it when there is no weight at all.

Mr. Chubb supposes, that the will cannot stir at all without some motive, and also supposes, that if there be a motive to one thing, and none to the contrary, volition will infallibly follow that motive. This is virtually to suppose an entire dependence of the will on motives: if it were not wholly dependent on them, it could surely help itself a little without them, or help itself a little against a motive, without help from the strength and weight of a contrary motive. And yet his supposing, that the will, when it has before it various opposite motives, can use them as it pleases, and choose its own influence from them, and neglect the strongest, and follow the weakest, supposes it to be wholly independent on motives.

It further appears, on Mr. Chubb's supposition, that volition must be without any previous ground in any motive, thus: if it be as he supposes, that the will is not determined by any previous superior strength of the motive, but determines and chooses its own motive, then, when the rival motives are exactly equal in strength and tendency to induce in all respects, it may follow either; and may in such a case sometimes follow one, sometimes the other. And if so, this diversity which appears between the acts of the will, is plainly without previous ground in either of the motives; for all that is previously in the motives, is supposed precisely and perfectly the same, without any diversity whatsoever. Now, perfect identity, as to all that is previous in the antecedent, cannot be the ground and reason of diversity in the consequent. Perfect identity in the ground cannot be a reason why it is not followed with the same consequence. And therefore the source of this diversity of consequence must be sought for elsewhere.

And lastly, it may be observed, that however Mr. Chubb does much insist that no volition can take place without some motive to induce it, which previously disposes the mind to it; yet, as he also insists that the mind, without reference to any superior strength of motives, picks and chooses for its motive to follow; he himself herein plainly supposes, that with regard to the mind's preference of one motive before another; it is not the motive that disposes the will, but the will disposes itself to follow the motive.



**IV.** Mr. Chubb supposes necessity to be utterly inconsistent with agency; and that to suppose a being to be an agent in that which is necessary, is a plain contradiction. At p. 311, and throughout his discourses on the subject of liberty, he supposes, that necessity cannot consist with agency, or freedom, and that to suppose otherwise, is to make liberty and necessity, action, and passion, the same thing. And so he seems to suppose, that there is no action, strictly speaking, but volition; and that as to the effects of volition in body or mind, in themselves considered, being necessary, they are said to be free, only as they are the effects of an act that is not necessary.

And yet, according to him, volition itself is the effect of volition; yea, every act of free volition: and therefore every act of free volition must, by what has now been observed from him, be necessary. That every act of free volition is itself the effect of volition, is abundantly supposed by him. In p. 341, he says, "If a man is such a creature as I have proved him to be, that is, if he has in him a power or liberty of doing either good or evil, and either of these is the subject of his own free choice so that he might, if he had pleased, have chosen and done the contrary." Here he supposes, all that is good or evil in man is the effect of his choice; and so that his good or evil choice itself is the effect of his pleasure or choice, in these words, he might, "if he had pleased, have chosen the contrary." So in p. 356, "Though it be highly reasonable, that a man should always choose the greater good, — yet he may, if he please, choose otherwise," — which is the same thing as if he had said, he may, if he chooses, choose otherwise. And then he goes on, — "that is, he may, if he pleases, choose what is good for himself," etc. And again, in the same page, "The will is not confined by the understanding to any particular sort of good, whether greater or less; but is at liberty to choose what kind of good it pleases." If there be any meaning in the last words, the meaning must be this, that the will is at liberty to choose what kind of good it chooses to choose; supposing the act of choice itself determined by an antecedent choice. The liberty Mr. Chubb speaks of, is not only a man's having power to move his body agreeably to an antecedent act of choice, but to use or exert the faculties of his soul. Thus, in p. 379, speaking of the faculties of his mind, he says, "Man has poorer, and is at liberty, to neglect these faculties, to use them aright, or to abuse them, as he pleases. And that he supposes an

act of choice, or exercise of pleasure, properly distinction, and antecedent to, those acts thus chosen, directing, commanding, and producing the chosen acts, and even the acts of choice themselves, is very plain in p. 283. "He can command his actions, and herein consists his liberty; he can give or deny himself that pleasure, as he pleases." And p. 377. "If the actions of men are not the produce of a free choice, or election, but spring from a necessity of nature, — he cannot in reason be the object of reward or punishment on their account. Whereas, if action in man, whether good or evil, is the produce of will or free choice, so that a man, in either case, had it in his power, and was at liberty, to have chosen the contrary; he is the proper object of reward or punishment, according as he chooses to behave himself." Here, in these last words, he speaks of liberty of choosing, according as he chooses. So that the behavior which he speaks of, as subject to his choice, is his choosing itself, as well as his external conduct consequent upon it. And therefore it is evident, he means not only external actions, but the acts of choice themselves, when he speaks of all free actions as the produce of free choice. And this is abundantly evident in what he says in pp. 372, 373.

Now these things imply a twofold great absurdity and inconsistency.

- 1.** To suppose, as Mr. Chubb plainly does, that every free act of choice is commanded by, and is the produce of; free choice, is to suppose the first free act of choice belonging to the case, yea, the first free act of choice that ever man exerted, to be the produce of an antecedent act of choice. But I hope I need not labor at all to convince my readers, that it is an absurdity to say, the very first act is the produce of another act that went before it.
- 2.** If it were both possible and real, as Mr. Chubb insists, that every free act of choice were the produce or the effect of a free act of choice; yet even then, according to his principles, no one act of choice would be free, but every one necessary; because, every act of choice being the effect of a foregoing act, every act would be necessarily connected with that foregoing cause. For Mr. Chubb himself says, p. 389, "When the self-moving power is exerted, it becomes the necessary cause of its effects." — So that his notion of a free act, that is rewardable or punishable, is a heap of contradictions. It is a free act, and yet, by his own notion of freedom, is necessary; and therefore by him it is a contradiction to suppose it to be

free. According to him, every free act is the produce of a free act; so that there must be an infinite number of free acts in succession, without any beginning in an agent that has a beginning. And therefore here is an infinite number of free acts, every one of them free; and yet not any one of them free, but every act in the whole infinite chain a necessary effect. All the acts are rewardable or punishable, and yet the agent cannot, in reason, be the object of reward or punishment on account of any one of these actions. He is active in them all, and passive in none; yet active in none, but passive in all, etc.

**V.** Mr. Chubb does most strenuously deny that motives are causes of the acts of the will; or that the moving principle in man is moved, or caused to be exerted, by motives. His words, pp. 280, 388, are, “If the moving principle in man is moved, or caused to be exerted, by something external to man, which all motives are, then it would not be a self-moving principle, seeing it would be moved by a principle external to itself. And to say, that a self-moving principle is moved, or caused to be exerted, by a cause external to itself, is absurd and a contradiction,” etc. — And in the next page it is particularly and largely insisted, that motives are causes in no case, that they are merely passive in the production of action, and have no causality in the production of it no causality to be the cause of the exertion of the will.

Now I desire it may be considered, how this can possibly consist with what he says in other places. Let it be noted here,

**1.** Mr. Chubb abundantly speaks of motives as excitements of the acts of the will; and says, that motives do excite volition, and induce it, and that they are necessary to this end; that in the reason and nature of things, volition cannot take place without motives to excite it. But now, if motives excite the will, they move it; and yet he says, it is absurd to say the will is moved by motives. And again, (if language is of any significancy at all,) if motives excite volition, then they are the cause of its being excited; and to cause volition to be excited, is to cause it to be put forth or exerted. Yea, Mr. Chubb says himself, p. 817, motive is necessary to the exertion of the active faculty. To excite, is positively to do something; and certainly that which does something, is the cause of the thing done by it. To create, is to cause to be created; to make, is to cause to be made: to kill,

is to cause to be killed; to quicken, is to cause to be quickened; and to excite is to cause to be excited. To excite, is to be a cause, in the most proper sense; not merely a negative occasion, but a ground of existence by positive influence. The notion of exciting, is exerting influence to cause the effect to arise or come forth into existence.

**2.** Mr. Chubb himself, p. 317, speaks of motives as the ground and reason of action by influence, and by prevailing influence. Now, what can be meant by a cause, but something that is the ground and reason of a thing by its influence, an influence that is prevalent, and so effectual?

**3.** This author not only speaks of motives as the ground and reason of action, by prevailing influence; but expressly of their influence as prevailing for the production of an action, in the same page (317) which makes the inconsistency still more palpable and notorious. The production of an effect is certainly the causing of an effect; and productive influence is causal influence, if any thing is; and that which has this influence prevalently, so as thereby to become the ground of another thing, is a cause of that thing, if there be any such thing as a cause. This influence Mr. Chubb says motives have to produce an action; and yet he says it is absurd and a contradiction to say they are causes.

**4.** In the same page, he once and again speaks of motives as disposing the agent to action, by their influence. His words are these: "As motive, which takes place in the understanding, and is the product of intelligence, is necessary to action, that is, to the exertion of the active faculty, because that faculty would not be exerted without some previous reason to dispose the mind to action; so from hence it plainly appears, that when a man is said to be disposed to one action rather than another, this properly signifies the prevailing influence that one motive has upon a man for the production of an action, or for the being at rest, before all other motives for the production of the contrary. For as motive is the ground and reason of any action, so the motive that prevails, disposes the agent to the performance of that action.

Now, if motives dispose the mind to action, then they cause the mind to be disposed; and to cause the mind to be disposed, is to cause it to be willing; and to cause it to be willing, is to cause it to will; and that is the same thing as to be the cause of an act of the will And yet this same Mr.

Chubb holds it to be absurd to suppose motive to be a cause of the act of the will.

And if we compare these things together, we have here again a whole heap of inconsistencies. Motives are the previous ground and reason of the acts of the will; yea, the necessary ground and reason of their exertion, without which they will not be exerted, and cannot, in the nature of things, take place; and they do excite these acts of the will, and do this by a prevailing influence; yea, an influence which prevails for the production of the act of the will, and for the disposing, of the mind to it; and yet it is absurd to suppose motive to be a cause of an act of the will, or that a principle of will is moved or caused to be exerted by it, or that it has any causality in the production of it, or any causality to be the cause of the exertion of the will and due consideration of these things which Mr. Chubb has advanced, the strange inconsistencies which the notion of liberty, consisting in the will's power of self-determination void of all necessity, united with that dictate of common sense, that there can be no volition without a motive, drove him into, may be sufficient to convince us, that it is utterly impossible ever to malice that notion of liberty consistent with the influence of motives in volition. And as it is in a manner self-evident, that there can be no act of will, choice, or preference of the mind, without some motive or inducement, something in the mind's view, which it aims at, seeks, inclines to, and goes after; so it is most manifest, there is no such liberty in the universe as Arminians insist on; nor any such thing possible or conceivable.

## SECTION 11

### **THE EVIDENCE OF GOD'S CERTAIN FOREKNOWLEDGE OF THE VOLITIONS OF MORAL AGENTS.**

THAT the acts of the wills of moral agents are not contingent events, III that sense as to be without all necessity, appears by God's certain foreknowledge of such events.

In handling this argument, I would, in the first place, prove that God has a certain foreknowledge of the voluntary acts of moral agents; and, secondly,

show the consequence, or how it follows from hence, that the volition's of moral agents are not contingent, so as to be without necessity of connection and consequence.

First, I and to prove, that God has an absolute and certain foreknowledge of the free actions of moral agents.

One would think it should be wholly needless to enter on such an argument with any that profess themselves Christians: but so it is; God's certain foreknowledge of the free acts of moral agents, is denied by some that pretend to believe the Scriptures to be the word of God; and especially of late. I therefore shall consider the evidence of such a prescience in the Most High, as fully as the designed limits of this essay will admit of; supposing, myself herein to have to do with such as own the truth of the Bible.

**Arg. I.** My first argument shall be taken from God's prediction of such events. Here I would, in the first place, lay down these two things as axioms.

**1.** If God does not foreknow, he cannot foretell such events; that is, he cannot peremptorily and certainly foretell them. If God has no more than an uncertain guess concerning events of this kind, then he can declare no more than an uncertain guess. Positively to foretell, is to profess to foreknow, or declare positive foreknowledge.

**2.** If God does not certainly foreknow the future volition's of moral agents, then neither can he certainly foreknow those events which are consequent and dependent on these volition's. The existence of the one depending on the existence of the other, the knowledge of the existence of the one depends on the knowledge of the existence of the other; and the one cannot be more certain than the other.

Therefore, how many, how, great, and how extensive soever the consequences of the volition's of moral agents may be; though they should extend to an alteration of the state of things through the universe, and should lie continued in a series of successive events to all eternity, and should, in the progress of things, branch forth into an infinite number of series, each of them going on in an endless line or chain of events; God must be as ignorant of all these consequences, as he is of the volition

whence they first take their rise: all these events, and the whole state of things depending, on them, how important, extensive, and vast soever, must be hid from him.

These positions being such as, I suppose, none will deny, I now proceed to observe the following things.

**1.** Men's morel conduct and qualities, their virtues and vices, their wickedness and good practice, things rewardable and punishable, have often been foretold by God. — Pharaoh's moral conduct, in refusing to obey God's command, in letting his people go, was foretold. God says to Moses,

“I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go.”  
(~~Exo~~ Exodus 3:19).

Here God professes not only to guess at, but to know, Pharaoh's future disobedience. In chapter ~~Exo~~ 7:4, God says, “but Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that I may lay mine hand upon Egypt,” etc. And chapter 9:30, Moses says to Pharaoh, “as for thee, and thy servants, I know that ye will not fear the Lord.” See also chapter 11:10. — The moral conduct of Josiah, by name, in his zealously exerting, himself in opposition to idolatry, in particular nets of his, was foretold above three hundred years before he was born, and the prophecy sealed by a miracle, and renewed and confirmed by the words of a second prophet, as what surely would not fail, ~~1 Kings~~ 13:1-6, 32. This prophecy was also in effect a prediction of the moral conduct of the people, in upholding their schismatical and idolatrous worship until that time, and the idolatry of those priests of the high places which it is foretold Josiah should over upon that altar of Bethel, Micaiah foretold the foolish and sinful conduct of Ahab in refusing to hearken to the word of the Lord by him, and choosing rather to hearken to the false prophets, in going to Ramoth-Gilead to his ruin, ~~1 Kings~~ 21:20-22. The moral conduct of Hazael was foretold, in that cruelty he should be guilty of; on which Hazael says, “What! is thy servant a dog that he should do this things?” The prophet specks of the event as what he knew, and not what he conjectured,

“I know the evil thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: thou wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child.”

(<sup><1182></sup>2 Kings 8:12)

The moral conduct of Cyrus is foretold long before he had a being, in his mercy to God's people, and regard to the true God, in turning the captivity of the Jews, and promoting the building of the temple, <sup><2408></sup>Isaiah 44:28, and 55:13. Compare <sup><1822></sup>2 Chronicles 36:22, 23. and <sup><1810></sup>Ezra 1:1-4. How many instances of the moral conduct of the kings of the north and south, particular instances of the wicked behavior of the kings of Syria and Egypt, are foretold in the <sup><2100></sup>11th chapter of Daniel! their corruption, violence, robbery, treachery, and lies. And particularly, how much is foretold of the horrid wickedness of Antiochus Epiphaneus, called there a the person, instead of Epiphaneus, or illustrious! In that chapter, and also in chapter 8 verse 9, 14, 23, to the end, are foretold his flattery, deceit, and lies, his having his heart set to do mischief; and set against the holy covenant, his destroy and treading, under foot the holy people, in a marvelous manner, his having, indignation against the holy covenant, setting his heart against it, and conspiring against it, his polluting the sanctuary of strength, treading it under foot, taking away the daily sacrifice, and placing the abomination that maketh desolate; his great pride, magnifying himself against God, and uttering marvelous blasphemies against him, until God in indignation should destroy him. Withal, the moral conduct of the Jews, on occasion of his persecution, is predicted. It is foretold that "he should corrupt many by flatteries," chapter <sup><2112></sup>11:32-34. But that others should behave with a glorious constancy and fortitude, in opposition to him, verse 32. And that some good men should fall and repent, verse 35. Christ foretold Peter's sin in denying his Lord, with its circumstances, in a peremptory manner. And so that great sin of Judas in betraying his Master, and its dreadful and eternal punishment in hell, was foretold in the like positive manner, <sup><1822></sup>Matthew 26:21-25, and parallel places in the other evangelists.

**2.** Many events have been foretold by God, which are consequent and dependent on the moral conduct of particular persons, and were accomplished either by their virtuous or vicious actions. Thus, the children of Israel's going down into Egypt to dwell there, was foretold to Abraham, <sup><1810></sup>Genesis 15, which was brought about by the wickedness of Joseph's brethren in selling him, and the wickedness of Joseph's mistress, and his own signal virtue in resisting her temptation. The accomplishment of the



thing prefigured in Joseph's dream depended on the same moral conduct. Jotham's parable and prophecy, <sup><0045></sup>Judges 9:15-20, was accomplished by the wicked conduct of Abimelech and the men of Shechem. The prophecies against the house of Eli, <sup><0011></sup>1 Samuel chapter 2 and 3 were accomplished by the wickedness of Doeg the Edomite, in accusing the priests, and the great impiety and extreme cruelty of Saul in destroying the priests at Nob, <sup><0021></sup>1 Samuel 22. Nathan's prophecy against David, <sup><0012></sup>2 Samuel 12:11, 12, was fulfilled by the horrible wickedness of Absalom, in rebelling against his father, seeking his life, and lying with his concubines in the sight of the sun. The prophecy against Solomon, <sup><0011></sup>1 Kings 11:11-13, was fulfilled by Jeroboam's rebellion and usurpation, which are spoken of as his wickedness, <sup><0035></sup>2 Chronicles 13:5, 6, compare verse 18. The prophecy against Jeroboam's family, <sup><0014></sup>1 Kings 14, was fulfilled by the conspiracy, treason, and cruel murders of Baasha, <sup><0057></sup>2 Kings 15:27, etc. The predictions of the prophet Jehu against the house of Baasha, <sup><0016></sup>1 Kings 16, at the beginning, were fulfilled by the treason and parricide of Zimri, <sup><0016></sup>1 Kings 16:9-13, 20.

**3.** How often has God foretold the future moral conduct of nations and people, of numbers, bodies, and successions of men; with God's judicial proceedings, and many other events consequent and dependent on their virtues and vices; which could not be foreknown, if the volition's of men, wherein they acted as moral agents, had not been foreseen? The future cruelty of the Egyptians in oppressing Israel, and God's judging and punishing them for it, was foretold long before it came to pass, <sup><0053></sup>Genesis 15:13, 14. The continuance of the iniquity of the Amorites, and the increase of it until it should be full, and they ripe for destruction, visas foretold above four hundred years beforehand, <sup><0056></sup>Genesis 15:16; <sup><0016></sup>Acts 7:6, 7. The prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem and the land of Judah, were absolute; <sup><0017></sup>2 Kings 20:17-19; chapter <sup><0025></sup>22:15, to the end. It was foretold in Hezekiah's time, and was abundantly insisted on in the book of the prophet Isaiah, who wrote nothing after Hezekiah's days. It was foretold in Josiah's time, in the beginning of a great reformation, <sup><0021></sup>2 Kings 22. And it is manifest by innumerable things in the prediction of the prophets, relating to this event, its time, its circumstances, its continuance and end; the return from the captivity, the restoration of the temple, city, and land, and many circumstances and consequences of that; I say, these

show plainly that the prophecies of this great event were absolute. And yet this event was connected with and dependent on, two things in aren't moral conduct: first, the injurious rapine and violence of the king of Babylon and his people, as the efficient cause; which God often speaks of as what he highly resented, and would severely punish: and, secondly, the final obstinacy of the Jews. That great event is often spoken of as suspended on this, <sup><2401></sup>Jeremiah 4:1, and <sup><2401></sup>5:1; <sup><2401></sup>7:1-7; 7:1-8; <sup><2402></sup>17:24, to the end; <sup><2401></sup>25:1-7; <sup><2401></sup>26:1-8, 13; and <sup><2407></sup>38:17, 18. Therefore, this destruction and captivity could not be foreknown, unless sulk amoral conduct of the Chaldeans and Jews had been foreknown. And then it was foretold, that the people should be finally obstinate, to the destruction and utter desolation of the city and land. <sup><2409></sup>Isaiah 6:9-11; <sup><2415></sup>Jeremiah 1:15, 19; <sup><2402></sup>7:27, 29; <sup><2401></sup>Ezekiel 3:7; and <sup><2413></sup>24:13, 14.

The final obstinacy of those Jews who were left in flee lend of Israel, in their idolatry and rejection of the true God, was foretold by God, and the prediction confirmed until an oath, <sup><2409></sup>Jeremiah 44:26, 27. And God tells the people, <sup><2408></sup>Isaiah 48:3, 4-8, that he had predicted those things which should be consequent on their treachery and obstinacy, because he knew they would be obstinate; and that he had declared these things before and, for their conviction of his being the only true God, etc.

The destruction of Babylon, with many of the circumstances of it, was foretold, as the judgment of God for the exceeding pride and haughtiness of the heads of that monarchy, Nebuchadnezzar, and his successors, and their wickedly destroying other nations, and particularly for their exalting themselves against the true God and his people, before any of these monarchs had a being; Isaiah chapter <sup><2401></sup>13, 14, 47 compare <sup><2401></sup>Habakkuk 2:5, to the end, and Jeremiah chapter 1 and <sup><2401></sup>51. That Babylon's destruction was to be a "recompense, according, to the works of their own hands," appears by <sup><2404></sup>Jeremiah 25:14. The immorality which the people of Babylon, and particularly her princes and great men, were guilty of, that very night that the city was destroyed, their revelling and drunkenness at Belshazzar's idolatrous feast, was foretold, <sup><2408></sup>Jeremiah 11:39, 57.

The return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity is often very particularly foretold, with many circumstances, and the promises of it are very peremptory; <sup><2401></sup>Jeremiah 21:35-40, and <sup><2403></sup>32:13-15, 41-44, and

33:24-26. And the very time of their return was prefixed; Jeremiah 25:11, 12; 29:10, 11; 2 Chronicles 36:21; Ezekiel 4:6, and Daniel 9:2. And yet the prophecies represent their return as consequent on their repentance. And their repentance itself is very expressly and particularly foretold, Jeremiah 29:12, 13, 14; 31:8, 9, 18-31; 33:8; 1, 4, 5; Ezekiel 6:8, 9, 10; 7:16; 14:22, 23; and 20:43, 44.

It was foretold, under the Old Testament, that the Messiah should suffer greatly through the malice and cruelty of men; as is largely and fully set forth, Psalm 22, applied to Christ in the New Testament, Matthew 27:35, 43; Luke 23:34; John 19:24; Hebrews 2:12. And likewise in Psalm 69, which, it is also evident by the New Testament, is spoken of Christ; John 15:25; 7:5, etc.; and 2:17; Romans 15:3; Matthew 26:34, 48; Mark 15:23; John 19:29. The same thing is also foretold, Isaiah 53 and 50:6; and Micah 5:1. This cruelty of men was their sin, and what they acted as moral agents. It was foretold that there should be an union of heathen and Jewish rulers against Christ, Psalm 2:1, 2, compared with Acts 4:25-28. It was foretold that the Jews should generally reject and despise the Messiah, Isaiah 49:5, 6, 7, and 22:1-3; Psalm 22:6, 7, and 69:4, 8, 19, 20. And it was foretold that the body of that nation should be rejected in the Messiah's days from being God's people, for their obstinacy in sin; Isaiah 49:4-7, and 8:14, 15, 16; compared with Romans 10:19. and Isaiah 65 at the beginning, compared with Romans 10:20, 21. It was foretold that Christ should be rejected by the chief priests and rulers among the Jews, Psalm 118:22, compared with Matthew 21:42; Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:4, 7.

Christ himself foretold his being delivered into the hands of the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and his being cruelly treated by them, and condemned to death; and that he by them should be delivered to the Gentiles; and that he should be mocked and scourged and crucified, (Matthew 16:21, and 20:17-19; Luke 9:22; John 8:28;) and that the people should be concerned in and consenting to his death, (Luke 20:13-18,) especially the inhabitants of Jerusalem; Luke 13:33-35. He foretold that the disciples should all be offended because of him that night that he was betrayed, and should forsake him; Matthew 26:31; John 16:32. He foretold that he should be rejected of that generation, even the body of the people, and that they should continue obstinate to their ruin; Matthew

12:45; <sup><123></sup>21:33-42, and 22:1-7; <sup><2316></sup>Luke 13:16, 21, 24; <sup><275></sup>17:25; <sup><2944></sup>19:14, 27, 41-44; <sup><213></sup>20:13-18, and <sup><2334></sup>13:34-39.

As it was foretold in both Old Testament and New, that the Jews should reject the Messiah, so it was foretold that the Gentiles should receive him, and so be admitted to the privileges of God's people, in places too many to be now particularly mentioned. It was foretold in the Old Testament, that the Jews should envy the Gentiles on this account; <sup><522></sup>Deuteronomy 32:21, compared with <sup><506></sup>Romans 10:19. Christ himself often foretold that the Gentiles would embrace the true religion, and become his followers and people; <sup><4080></sup>Matthew 8:10, 11, 12; <sup><244></sup>21:41-43, and 22:8-10; <sup><233></sup>Luke 13:28; <sup><2446></sup>14:16-24, and <sup><2116></sup>20:16; <sup><506></sup>John 10:16. He also foretold the Jews' envy of the Gentiles on this occasion; <sup><410></sup>Matthew 20:12-16; <sup><253></sup>Luke 15:26, to the end. He foretold that they should continue in this opposition and envy, and should manifest it in the cruel persecutions of his followers, to their utter destruction; <sup><123></sup>Matthew 21:33-42; 22:6, and <sup><233></sup>23:34-39; <sup><4149></sup>Luke 11:49-51. The Jews' obstinacy is also foretold, <sup><428></sup>Acts 22:18. Christ often foretold the great persecutions his followers should meet with, both from Jews and Gentiles; <sup><4006></sup>Matthew 10:16-18, 21, 22, 34-36, and <sup><420></sup>24:9; <sup><413></sup>Mark 13:9; <sup><203></sup>Luke 10:3; <sup><2121></sup>12:11, 49-53, and <sup><212></sup>21:12, 16, 17; <sup><553></sup>John 15:18-21, and 16:1-4, 20-22, 23. He foretold the martyrdom of particular persons; <sup><412></sup>Matthew 20:23; <sup><535></sup>John 13:36, and 21:18, 19, 22. He foretold the great success of the gospel in the city of Samaria, as near approaching; which afterwards was fulfilled by the preaching of Philip; <sup><4045></sup>John 4:35-38. He foretold the rising of many deceivers after his departure, <sup><4204></sup>Matthew <sup><5204></sup>24:4, 5, 11, and the apostasy of many of his professed followers, <sup><4241></sup>Matthew 24:10-22.

The persecutions which the apostle Paul was to meet with in the world, were foretold; <sup><4406></sup>Acts 9:16; <sup><4023></sup>20:23, and <sup><4211></sup>21:11. The apostle says to the Christian Ephesians, <sup><4023></sup>Acts 20:29, 30: "I know, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock: also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." The apostle says, he knew this: but he did not know it, if God did not know the future actions of moral agents.

**4.** Unless God foreknows the future acts of moral agents, all the prophecies we have in Scripture concerning the great antichristian

apostasy, the rise, reign, wicked qualities, and deeds of the Man of sin, and his instruments and adherents, the extent and long continuance of his dominion, his influence on the minds of princes and others, to corrupt them, and draw them away to idolatry and other foul vices; his great and cruel persecutions; the behavior of the saints under these great temptations, etc. etc.; I say, unless the volition's of moral agents are foreseen, all these prophecies are uttered without knowing the things foretold.

The predictions relating to this great apostasy are all of a moral nature, relating to men's virtues and vices, and their exercises, fruits, and consequences, and events depending on them; and are very particular; and most of them often repeated, with many precise characteristics, descriptions, and limitations of qualities, conduct, influence, effects, extent, duration, periods, circumstances, final issue, etc., which it would be very long to mention particularly. And to suppose all these are predicted by God without any certain knowledge of the future moral behavior of free agents, would be to the utmost degree absurd.

**5.** Unless God foreknows the future acts of men's wills, and their behavior as moral agents, all those great things which are foretold in both Old Testament and New concerning the erection, establishment, and universal extent of the kingdom of the Messiah, were predicted and promised, while God was in ignorance whether any of these things would come to pass or no, and did but guess at them. For that kingdom is not of this world; it does not consist in things external, but is within men, and consists in the dominion of virtue in their hearts, in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and in these things made manifest in practice, to the praise and glory of God. The Messiah came to save men from their sins, and deliver them from their spiritual enemies, that they might serve him in righteousness and holiness before him; he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. And therefore his success consists in gaining men's hearts to virtue, in their being made God's willing people in the day of his power. His conquest of his enemies consists in his victory over men's corruption and vices. And such success, such victory, and such a reign and dominion, is often expressly foretold: — that his kingdom shall fill the earth; that all people, nations, and languages, should serve and obey

him and so that all nations should go up to the mountain of the house of the Lord, that he might teach them his ways, and that they might walk in his paths; and that all men should be drawn to Christ, and the earth be full of the knowledge of the Lord, (by which, in the style of Scripture, is meant true virtue and religion,) as the waters cover the seas; that God's law should be put into men's inward parts, and written in their hearts; and that God's people should be all righteous, etc. etc.

A very great part of the prophecies of the Old Testament is taken up in such predictions as these. — And here I would observe, that the prophecies of the universal prevalence of the kingdom of the Messiah, and true religion of Jesus Christ, are delivered in the most peremptory manner, and confirmed by the oath of God, <sup>242</sup>Isaiah 14:22, to the end, “Look unto me, and be ye saved, the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. I have SWORN by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear. SURELY, shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men Come,” etc. But here this peremptory declaration, and great oath of the Most High, are delivered with such mighty solemnity to things God did not know, if he did not certainly foresee the volition's of moral agents.

And all the predictions of Christ and his apostles, to the like purpose, must be without knowledge; as those of our Savior comparing the kingdom of God to a grain of mustard-seed, growing, exceeding great, from a small beginning and to leaven, hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened, etc. — And the prophecies in the epistles concerning the restoration of the nation of the Jews to the true church of God, and the bringing in the fullness of the Gentiles; and the prophecies in all the Revelation concerning the glorious change in the moral state of the world of mankind, attending the destruction of antichrist, the kingdoms of the world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and its being granted to the church to be arrayed in that fine linen, white and clean, which is the righteousness of saints, etc.

**Corol. 1.** Hence that great promise and oath of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, so much celebrated in Scripture, both in the Old Testament and New, namely, “That in their seed all the nations and

families of the earth should be blessed,” must be made on uncertainties, if God does not certainly foreknow the volition’s of moral agents. For the fulfillment of this promise consists in that success of Christ in the work of redemption, and that setting up of his spiritual kingdom over the nations of the world, which has been spoken of. Men are blessed in Christ no otherwise than as they are brought to acknowledge him, trust in him, love and serve him, as is represented and predicted in Psalm.

“All kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him.”  
(~~Psalm~~ Psalm 72:11)

With verse 17,

“Men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed.”

This oath to Jacob and Abraham is fulfilled in subduing men’s iniquities; as is implied in that of the prophet Micah, chapter 7:19, 20.

**Corol. 2** Hence also it appears, that first gospel promise that ever was made to mankind, that great prediction of the salvation of the Messiah, and his victory over Satan, made to our first parents, ~~Genesis~~ Genesis 3:15, if there be no certain prescience of the volition’s of moral agents, must have no better foundation than conjecture. For Christ’s victory over Satan consists in men’s being saved from sin, and in the victory of virtue and holiness, over that vice and wickedness, which Satan by his temptation has introduced, and wherein his kingdom consists.

**6.** If it be so, that God has not a prescience of the future actions of moral agents, it will follow, that the prophecies of Scripture in general are without foreknowledge. For Scripture prophecies, almost all of them, if not universally, without any exception, are either predictions of the actings and behaviours of moral agents, or of events depending on them, or some way connected with them; judicial dispensations, judgments on men for their wickedness, or rewards of virtue and righteousness, remarkable manifestations of favor to the righteous, or manifestations of sovereign mercy to sinners, forgiving their iniquities, and magnifying the riches of Divine grace; or dispensations of providence, in some respect or other, relating to the conduct of the subjects of God’s moral government, wisely adapted thereto; either providing for what should be in a future state of things, through the volition’s and voluntary actions of moral agents, or

consequent upon them, and regulated and ordered according to them. So that all events that are foretold, are either moral events, or other events which are connected with, and accommodated to, moral events.

That the predictions of Scripture in general must be without knowledge, if God does not foresee the volition's of men, will further appear, if it be considered, that almost all events belonging to the future state of the world of mankind, the changes and revolutions which come to pass in empires, kingdoms, and nations, and all societies, depend in innumerable ways on the acts of men's wills; yea. on an innumerable multitude of millions of millions of volition's of mankind. Such is the state and course of things in the world of mankind, that one single event, which appears in itself exceeding inconsiderable, may, in the progress and series of things, occasion a succession of the greatest and most important and extensive events; causing the state of mankind to be vastly different from what it would otherwise have been, for all succeeding generations. For instance, the coming into existence of those particular men, who have been the great conquerors of the world, who, under God, have had the main hand in all the consequent state of the world in all after ages; such as Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander, Pompey, Julius Caesar, &c. undoubtedly depended on many millions of acts of the will, which followed and were occasioned one by another, in their parents. And perhaps most of these volition's depended on millions of volition's of hundreds and thousands of others, their contemporaries of the same generation; and snort of these on millions of millions of volition's of others in preceding generations. — As we go back, still the number of volition's, which were some way the occasion of the event, multiply as the branches of a rivet; until they come at last, as it were, to an infinite number. This will not seem strange to any one who well considers the matter; if we recollect what philosophers tell us of the innumerable multitudes of those things which are, as it were, the principia, or stamina vitæ, concerned in generation; the animalcula in semen mascula, and the ova in the womb of the female; the impregnation, or animating of one of these in distinction from all the rest, must depend on things infinitely minute, relating to the time and circumstances of the act of the parents, the state of their bodies, etc. which must depend on innumerable foregoing circumstances and occurrences; which must depend, infinite ways, on foregoing acts of their



wills; which are occasioned by innumerable things that happen in the course of their lives, in which their own, and their neighbours' behavior, must have a hand an infinite number of ways. And as the volition's of others must be so many ways concerned in the conception and birth of such men; so, no less in their preservation, and circumstances of life, their particular determinations and actions, on which the great revolutions they were the occasions of, depended. As, for instance, when the conspirators in Persia against the Magi, were consulting about the succession to the empire, it came into the mind of one of them to propose, that he whose horse neighed first, when they came together the next morning, should be king. Now such a thing's coming, into his mind, might depend on innumerable incidents, wherein the volition's of mankind had been concerned. But, in consequence of this accident, Darius the son of Hystaspes, was king. And if this had not been, probably his successor would not have been the same, and all the circumstances of the Persian empire might have been far otherwise. And then perhaps Alexander might never have conquered that empire. And then probably the circumstances of the world, in all succeeding ages, might have been vastly otherwise. I might further instance in many other occurrences; such as those on which depended Alexander's preservation in the many critical junctures of his life, wherein a small trifle would have turned the scale against him; and the preservation and success of the Roman people in the infancy of their kingdom and commonwealth, and afterwards; which all the succeeding changes in their state, and the mighty revolutions that afterwards came to pass in the habitable world, depended upon. But these hints may be sufficient for every discerning considerate person, to convince him, that the whole state of the world of mankind, in all ages, and the very being of every person who has ever lived in it, in every age, since the times of the ancient prophets, has depended on more volition's, or acts of the wills of men, than there are sands on the sea-shore.

And therefore, unless God does most exactly and perfectly foresee the future acts of men's wills, all the predictions which he ever uttered concerning David, Hezekiah, Josiah, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander; concerning the four monarchies, and the revolutions in them; and concerning all the ways, commotion's, victories, properties, and

calamities, of any of the kingdoms, nations, or communities of the world, have all been without knowledge.

So that, according to this notion of God's not foreseeing, the volition's and free actions of men, God could foresee nothing, appertaining to the state of the world of mankind in future ages; not so much as the being of one person that should live in it; and could foreknow no events, but only such as he would bring to pass himself by the extraordinary interposition of his immediate power; or things which should come to pass in the natural material world, by the laws of motion, and course of nature, wherein that is independent on the actions or works of mankind: that is, as he might, like a very able mathematician and astronomer; with great exactness calculate the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and the greater wheels of the machine of the external creation. And if we closely, consider the matter, there will appear reason to convince us, that he could not, with any absolute certainty, foresee even these. As to the first, namely, things done by the immediate and extraordinary interposition of God's power, these cannot be foreseen, unless it can be foreseen when there shall be occasion for such extraordinary interposition; and that cannot be foreseen, unless the state of the moral world can be foreseen. For whenever God thus interposes, it is with regard to the state of the moral world requiring such divine interposition. Thus, God could not certainly foresee the universal deluge, the calling, of Abraham, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the plagues on Egypt, and Israel's redemption out of it, the expelling the seven nations of Cannan, and the bringing Israel into that land; for these all are represented as connected with things belonging to the state of the moral world. Nor can God foreknow the most proper and convenient time of the day of judgment and general conflagration; for that chiefly depends on the course and state of things in the moral world.

Nor, secondly, can we on this supposition reasonably think, that God can certainly foresee what things shall come to pass in the course of things, in the natural and material world, even those which in an ordinary state of things might be calculated by a good astronomer. For the moral world is the end of the natural world; and the course of things in the former is undoubtedly subordinate to God's designs with respect to the latter. Therefore he has seen cause, from regard to the state of things in the moral world, extraordinarily to interpose, to interrupt and lay an arrest on the

course of things in the natural world; and even in the greater wheels of its motion, even so as to stop the sun in its course. And unless he can foresee the volition's of men, and so know something of the future state of the moral world, he cannot know but that he may still have as great occasion to interpose in this manner, as ever he had: nor can he foresee how, or when, he shall have occasion thus to interpose.

**Corol. 1.** It appears from the things which have been observed, that unless God foresees the volition's of moral agents, that cannot be true which is observed by the apostle James,

“Known unto God are all his works from the beginning, of the world.” (~~41518~~ Acts 15:18)

**Corol. 2.** It appears from what has been observed, that unless God foreknows the volition's of moral agents, all the prophecies of Scripture have no better foundation than mere conjecture; and that, in most instances, a conjecture which must have the utmost uncertainty; depending on an innumerable, and, as it were, infinite multitude of volition's, which are all, even to God, uncertain events: however, these prophecies are delivered as absolute predictions, and very many of them in the most positive manner, with asseverations; and some of them with the most solemn oaths.

**Corol. 3.** It also follows, from what has been observed, that if this notion of God's ignorance of future volition's be true, in vain did Christ say (after uttering many great and important predictions concerning God's moral kingdom, and things depending on men's moral actions,)

(~~4185~~ Matthew 24:35) “Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away.”

**Corol. 4.** From the same notion of God's ignorance, it would follow, that in vain has God himself often spoken of the predictions of his word as evidence of foreknowledge; and so as evidences of that which is his prerogative as God, and his peculiar glory, greatly distinguishing him from all other beings; as in ~~2417~~ Isaiah 12:22-26; ~~2349~~ 43:9, 10; ~~2348~~ 44:8; ~~2353~~ 45:21; ~~2360~~ 46:10; ~~2344~~ 48:14.

**Arg. II.** If God does not foreknow the volition's of moral agents, then he did not foreknow the fall of man, nor of angels, and so could not foreknow the great things which are consequent on these events; such as his sending his Son into the world to die for sinners, and all things pertaining to the great work of redemption;

All the things which were done for four thousand years before Christ came, to prepare the way for it; and the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, of Christ; and the setting him at the head of the universe, as King of heaven and earth, angels and men; and the setting up his church and kingdom in this world, and appointing him the Judge of the world; and all that Satan should do in the world in opposition to the kingdom of Christ; and the great transactions of the day of judgment, that men and devils shall be the subjects of, and angels concerned in; — they are all what God was ignorant of before the fall. And if so, the following Scriptures, and others like them, must be without any meaning, or contrary to truth <sup><001></sup>Ephesians 1:4, “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.” <sup><001></sup>1 Peter 1:20, “Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world.” <sup><001></sup>2 Timothy 1:9, “Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his purpose and Greece, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” So, <sup><001></sup>Ephesians 3:11, (speaking of the wisdom of God in the work of redemption,) “According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus.” <sup><001></sup>Titus 1:2, “In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.” <sup><001></sup>Romans 8:29, “Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate,” etc. <sup><001></sup>1 Peter 1:2, “Elect, according to the foreknow ledge of God the Father.”

If God did not foreknow the fall of man, nor the redemption by Jesus Christ, nor the volition's of man since the fall; then he did not foreknow the saints in any sense; neither as particular persons, nor as societies or nations; either by election, or mere foresight of their virtue or good works; or any foresight of any thing about them relating to their salvation; or any benefit they have by Christ, or any manner of concern of theirs with a Redeemer.

**Arg. III.** On the supposition of God's ignorance of the future volition's of free agents, it will follow, that God must in many cases truly repent what he has done, so as properly to wish he had done otherwise: by reason that the event of things, in those affairs which are most important, viz. the affairs of his moral kingdom, being uncertain and contingent, often happens quite otherwise than he was aware beforehand.

And there would be reason to understand that in the most literal sense in <sup><006></sup>Genesis 6:6, "It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." And that <sup><051></sup>1 Samuel 15:11. contrary to that, <sup><029></sup>Numbers 23:19, "God is not the son of man, that he should repent." And <sup><059></sup>1 Samuel 15:19, 25, "Also the Strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent; for he is not a man, that he should repent." Yea, from this notion it should follow, that God is liable to repent and be grieved at his heart, in a literal sense, continually; and is always exposed to an infinite number of real disappointments in his governing the world, and to manifold, constant, great perplexity and vexation: but this is not very consistent with his title of "God over all, blessed for evermore," which represents him as possessed of perfect, constant, and uninterrupted tranquillity and felicity, as God over the universe, and in his management of the affairs of the world as supreme and universal ruler. See <sup><012></sup>Romans 1:25; <sup><009></sup>9:5; 2 Corinthians 13:31; <sup><065></sup>1 Timothy 6:15.

**Arg. IV.** It will also follow, from this notion, that as God is liable to be continually repenting what he has done, so he must be exposed to be constantly changing his mind and intentions as to his future conduct; altering his measures, relinquishing his old designs, and forming new schemes and projections.

For his purposes, even as to the main parts of his scheme, namely, such as belong to the state of his moral kingdom, must he always liable to be broken, through want of foresight; and he must be continually putting his system to rights, as it gets out of order, through the contingency of the actions of moral agents: he must be a being, who, instead of being absolutely immutable, must necessarily be the subject of infinitely the most numerous acts of repentance and changes of intention, of any being whatsoever; for this plain reason, that his vastly extensive charge

comprehends an infinitely greater number of those things which are to him contingent and uncertain. In such a situation, he must have little else to do but to mend broken titles as well as he can, and be rectifying his disjointed frame, and disordered movements, in the best manner the case will allow. The supreme Lord of all things must needs be under great and miserable disadvantages, in governing the world which he has made, and has the care of, through his being utterly unable to find out things of chief importance which hereafter shall befall his system, which, if he did but know, he might make seasonable provision for. In many cases there may be very great necessity that he should make provision, in the manner of his ordering and disposing things, for some great events which are to happen, of vast and extensive influence, and endless consequence to the universe, which he may see afterwards, when it is too late, and may wish in vain that he had known beforehand, that he might have ordered his affairs accordingly. And it is in the power of man, on these principles, by his devices, purposes, and actions, thus to disappoint God, break his measures, make him continually to change his mind, subject him to vexation, and bring him into confusion.

But how do these things consist with reason, or with the word of God? which represents that all God's works, all that he has ever to do, the whole scheme and series of his operations, are from the beginning, perfectly in his view; and declares that, whatever devices and designs are in the hearts of men, "the counsel of the Lord is that which shall stand, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations," <sup><JER></sup>Proverbs 19:21; <sup><PSA></sup>Psalms 33:10, 11. "And that which the Lord of Hosts hath purposed none shall disannul," <sup><ISA></sup>Isaiah 14:27. And that he can not lie frustrated in one design or thought, <sup><JOB></sup>Job 42:2. And

"that which God doth, it shall be forever, that nothing, can be put to it or talon from it," <sup><ECG></sup>Ecclesiastes 3:14.

The stability and perpetuity of God's counsels are expressly spoken of as connected with the foreknowledge of God,

"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." <sup><ISA></sup>Isaiah 46:10


And how are these things consistent with is hat the Scripture says of God's immutability, which represents him as "without variableness or shadow of turning," and speaks of him most particularly as unchangeable with regard to his purposes, ~~Malachi~~ Malachi 3:6, "I am the Lord; I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob Are not consumed." ~~Exodus~~ Exodus 3:14, "I AM THAT I AM." ~~Job~~ Job 23:13, 14. "He is in one mind; and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doth: for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me."

**Arg. V.** If this notion of God's ignorance of future volition's of moral agents be thoroughly considered in its consequences, it will appear to follow from it, that God, after he had upside world, was liable to be wholly frustrated of his end in the creation of it; and so has been, in like manner, liable to be frustrated of his end in all the great works he hath wrought.

It is manifest, the moral world is the end of the natural: the rest of the creation is but an house which God hath built, with furniture, for moral agents: and the good or bad state of the unmoral world depends on the improvement they make of their natural agency, and so depends on their volition's. And therefore, if these cannot be foreseen by God, because they are contingent, and subject to no kind of necessity, then the affairs of the moral world are liable to go wrong, to any assignable degree; yea, liable to be utterly ruined. As, on this scheme, it may well be supposed to be literally said, Then mankind, by the abuse of their moral a agency, became very corrupt before the flood, "that the Lord repented that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart;" so, Then he made the universe, he did not know but that he might be so disappointed in it, that it might grieve him at his heart that he had made it. It actually proved, that all mankind became sinful, and a very great part of the angels apostatized: and how could God know beforehand that all of then would not? And how could God know but that all mankind, notwithstanding means used to reclaim them, being still left to the freedom of their own will, would continue in their apostasy, and grow worse and worse, as they of the old world before the flood did?

According to the scheme I am endeavoring to confute, neither the fall of men nor angels could be foreseen, and God must be greatly disappointed in

these events, and so the grand scheme and contrivance for our redemption, and destroying the works of the devil, by the Messiah, and all the great things God has done in the prosecution of these denials, must be only the finite of his own disappointment, and contrivances of his to mend and patch up, as well as he could, his system, which originally was all very good, and perfectly beautiful, but was marred, broken, and confounded by the free will of angels and men. And still he must be liable to be totally disappointed a second time. He could not know that he should have his desired success in the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and exaltation of his only-begotten Son, and other great works accomplished to restore the state of things: he could not know, after all, whether there would actually be any tolerable measure of restoration; for this depended on the free will of man. There has been a general great apostasy of almost all the Christian world, to that which was worse than heathenish, which continued for many ages. And how could God, without foreseeing men's volition's, know whether ever Christendom would return from this apostasy? And which way could he tell beforehand how soon it would begin. The apostle says it began to work in his time; and how could it be known how far it would proceed in that age? Yea, how could it be known that the gospel, which was not effectual for the reformation of the Jews, would ever be effectual for the turning of the heathen nations from their heathen apostasy, which they had been confirmed in for so many ages?

It is represented often in Scripture, that God, who made the world for himself, and created it for his pleasure, would infallibly obtain his end in the creation, and in all his works; that as all things are of him, so they would all be to him; and that in the final issue of things, it would appear that he is "the first and the last."  Revelation 21:6, "And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." But these things are not consistent with God's being so liable to be disappointed in all his works, nor indeed with his failing of his end in any thing that he has undertaken or done.



## SECTION 12

### GOD'S CERTAIN FOREKNOWLEDGE OF THE FUTURE VOLITIONS OF MORAL AGENTS, INCONSISTENT WITH SUCH A CONTINGENCE OF THOSE VOLITIONS AS IS WITHOUT ALL NECESSITY.

HAVING proved that God has a certain and infallible prescience of the act of the will of moral agents, I come now, in the second place, to show the consequence; to show how it follows from hence, that these events are necessary, with a necessity of connection or consequence.

The chief Arminian divines, so far as I have had opportunity to observe, deny this consequence; and affirm, that if such foreknowledge be allowed, it is no evidence of any necessity of the event foreknown. Now, I desire that this matter may be particularly and thoroughly inquired into. I cannot but think that, on particular and full consideration, it may be perfectly determined, whether it be indeed so or not.

In order to a proper consideration of this matter, I would observe the following things.

**I.** It is very evident, with regard to a thing whose existence is infallibly and indissolubly connected with something which already has, or has had, existence, the existence of that thing is necessary. Here may be noted:

**1.** I observed before, in explaining the nature of necessity, that in things which are past, their past existence is now necessary: having already made sure of existence, it is too late for any possibility of alteration in that respect: it is now impossible that it should be otherwise than true that that thing has existed.

**2.** If there be any such thing as a divine foreknowledge of the volition's of free agents, that foreknowledge, by the supposition, is a thing which already has, and long ago had, existence; and so, now its existence is necessary; it is now utterly impossible to be otherwise than that this foreknowledge should be, or should have been.

**3.** It is also very manifest, that those things which are indissolubly connected with other things that are necessary, are themselves necessary. As that proposition whose truth is necessarily connected with another proposition, which is necessarily true, is itself necessarily true. To say otherwise, would be a contradiction: it would be in effect to say, that the connection was indissoluble, and yet was not so, but might be broken. If that, whose existence is indissolubly connected with something whose existence is now necessary, is itself not necessary, then it may possibly not exist, notwithstanding that indissoluble connection of its existence. — Whether the absurdity be not glaring, let the reader judge.

**4.** It is no less evident, that if there be a full, certain, and infallible foreknowledge of the future existence of the volition's of moral agents, then there is a certain infallible and indissoluble connection between those events and that foreknowledge; and that therefore, by the preceding observations, those events are necessary events; being infallibly and indissolubly connected with that, whose existence already is, and so is now necessary, and cannot but have been.

To say the foreknowledge is certain and infallible, and yet the connection of the event with that foreknowledge is not indissoluble, but dissoluble and fallible, is very absurd. To affirm it, would be the same thing as to affirm that there is no necessary connection between a proposition's being infallibly known to be true, and its being true indeed. So that it is perfectly demonstrable, that if there be any infallible knowledge of future volition's the event is necessary; or, in other words, that it is impossible but the event should come to pass. For if it be not impossible but that it may be otherwise, then it is not impossible but that the proposition which affirms its future coming to pass, may not now be true. But how absurd is that, on the supposition that there is now an infallible knowledge (i. e. knowledge which it is impossible should fail) that it is true. There is this absurdity in it, that it is not impossible but that there now should be no truth in that proposition which is now infallibly known to be true.

**II.** That no future event can be certainly foreknown, whose existence is contingent, and without all necessity, may be proved thus: it is impossible for a thing to be certainly known to any intellect without evidence. To suppose otherwise, implies a contradiction: because, for a thing to be

certainly known to any understanding, is for it to be evident to that understanding: and for a thing to be evident to any understanding, is the same thing as for that understanding to see evidence of it: but no understanding, created or increased, can see evidence where there is none: for that is the same thing as to see that to be which is not. And therefore, if there be any truth which is absolutely without evidence, that truth is absolutely unknowable, insomuch that it implies a contradiction to suppose that it is known.

But if there be any future event, whose existence is contingent, without all necessity, the future existence of the event is absolutely without evidence. If there be any evidence of it, it must be one of these two sorts, either self-evidence or proof; for there can be no other sort of evidence but one of these two; an evident thing must be either evident in itself, or evident in something else; that is, evident by connection with something else. But a future thing, whose existence is without all necessity, can have neither of these sorts of evidence. It cannot be self-evident; for if it be, it may be now let down, by what is now to be seen in the thing itself; either its present existence, or the necessity of its nature: but both these are contrary to the supposition. It is supposed, both that the thing has no present existence to be seen, and also that it is not of such a nature as to be necessarily existent for the future: so that its future existence is not self-evident. And, secondly, neither is there any proof, or evidence in any thing else, or evidence of connection with something else that is evident; for this is also contrary to the supposition. It is supposed, that there is now nothing existent, with which the future existence of the contingent event is connected. For such a connection destroys its contingency, and supposes necessity. Thus it is demonstrated, that there is in the nature of things absolutely no evidence at all of the future existence of that event, which is contingent, without all necessity (if any such event there be,) neither self-evidence nor proof. And therefore the thing in reality is not evident; and so cannot be seen to be evident, or, which is the same thing, cannot be known.

Let us consider this in an example. Suppose that five thousand seven hundred and sixty years ago there was no other being but the Divine Being; and then this world, or some particular body or spirit, all at once starts out of nothing into being, and takes on itself a particular nature and form; all in

absolute contingency, without any concern of God, or any other cause, in the matter; without any manner of ground or reason of its existence; or any dependence upon, or connection at all with, any thing foregoing: I say, that if this be supposed, there was no evidence of that event beforehand. There was no evidence of it to be seen in the thing itself; for the thing itself as yet was not. And there was no evidence of it to be seen in any thing else; for evidence in something else, is connection with something else: but such connection is contrary to the supposition. There was no evidence before, that this thing would happen; for, by the supposition, there was no reason why it should happen, rather than something else, or rather than nothing. And if so, then all things before were exactly equal and the same, with respect to that and other possible things: there was no pre-ponderation, no superior weight or value, and therefore nothing that could be of any weight or value to determine any understanding. The thing was absolutely without evidence, and absolutely unknowable. An increase of understanding, or of the capacity of discerning, has no tendency, and makes no advance, to a discerning any signs or evidences of it, let it be increased never so much; yea, if it be increased infinitely. The increase of the strength of sight may have a tendency to enable to discern the evidence which is far off, and very much hid, and deeply involved in clouds and darkness; but it has no tendency to enable to discern evidence where there is none. If the sight be infinitely strong, and the capacity of discerning infinitely great, it will enable to see all that there is, and to see it perfectly and with ease: yet it has no tendency at all to enable a being to discern that evidence which is not; but, on the contrary, it has a tendency to enable to discern with great certainty that there is none.

**III.** To suppose the future volition's of moral agents not to be necessary events; or; which is the same thing, events which it is not impossible but that they may not come to pass; and yet to suppose that God certainly foreknows them, and knows all things, is to suppose God's knowledge to be inconsistent with itself. For to say, that God certainly, and without all conjecture, knows that a thing will infallibly be, which at the same time he knows to be so contingent that it may possibly not be, is to suppose his knowledge inconsistent with itself; or that one thing that he knows, is utterly inconsistent with another thing that he knows. It is the same thing as to say, he now knows a proposition to be of certain infallible truth,

which he knows to be of contingent uncertain truth. If a future volition is so without all necessity, that there is nothing hinders but that it may not be, then the proposition which asserts its future existence is so uncertain, that there is nothing hinders but that the truth of it may entirely fail. And if God knows all things, he knows this proposition to be thus uncertain. And that is inconsistent with his knowing that it is infallibly true, and so inconsistent with his infallibly knowing that it is true. If the thing be indeed contingent, God views it so, and judges it to be contingent, if he views things as they are. If the event be not necessary, then it is possible it may never be: and if it be possible it may never be, God knows it may possibly not be true, and that is to know that the truth of it is uncertain; which surely is inconsistent with his knowing it as a certain truth. If volition's are in themselves contingent events, without all necessity, then it is no argument of perfection of knowledge in any being to determine peremptorily that they will be; but, on the contrary, an argument of ignorance and mistake; because it would argue, that he supposes that proposition to be certain, which, in its own nature, and all things considered, is uncertain and contingent. To say, in such a case, that God may have ways of knowing contingent events which we cannot conceive of, is ridiculous; as much so, as to say that God may know contradictions to be true, for aught we know, or that he may know a thing to be certain, and at the same time know it not to be certain, though we cannot conceive how; because he has ways of knowing which we cannot comprehend.

**Corol. 1.** From what has been observed, it is evident that the absolute decrees of God are no more inconsistent with human liberty, on account of any necessity of the event which follows from such decrees, than the absolute foreknowledge of God.

Because the connection between the event and certain foreknowledge, is as infallible and indissoluble as between the event and an absolute decree. That is, it is no more impossible, that the event and decree should not agree together, than that the event and absolute knowledge should disagree. The connection between the event and foreknowledge is absolutely perfect, by the supposition; because it is supposed, that the certainty and infallibility of the knowledge is absolutely perfect. And it being so, the certainty cannot be increased; and therefore the connection between the knowledge and thing known cannot be increased; so that if a decree be

added to the foreknowledge, it does not at all increase the connection, or make it more infallible and indissoluble. If it were not so, the certainty of knowledge might be increased by the addition of a decree; which is contrary to the supposition, which is, that the knowledge is absolutely perfect, or perfect to the highest possible degree.

There is as much of an impossibility but that the things which are infallibly foreknown, should be, or (which is the same thing) as great a necessity of their future existence, as if the event were already written down, and was known and read by all mankind, through all preceding ages, and there was the most indissoluble and perfect connection possible between the writing and the thing written. In such a case, it would be as impossible the event should fail of existence, as if it had existed already; and a decree cannot make an event surer or more necessary than this.

And therefore, if there be any such foreknowledge, as it has been proved there is, then necessity of connection and consequence is not at all inconsistent with any liberty which man or any other creature enjoys. And front hence it may be inferred, that absolute decrees of God, which do not at all increase the necessity, are not at all inconsistent with the liberty which man enjoys, on any such account, as that they make the event decreed necessary, and render it utterly impossible but that it should come to pass. Therefore, if absolute decrees are inconsistent with man's liberty as a moral agent, or his liberty in a state of probation, or any liberty whatsoever that he enjoys, it is not on account of any necessity which absolute decrees infer.

Dr. Whitby supposes there is a great difference between God's foreknowledge, and his decrees, with regard to necessity of future events. In his "Discourse on the Five Points," p. 474, etc., he says, "God's prescience has no influence at all on our actions. — Should God, by immediate revelation, give me the knowledge of the event of any man's state or actions, would my knowledge of them have any influence upon his actions surely none at all — our knowledge doth not affect the things we know, to make them more certain, or more future, than they would be without it Now, foreknowledge in God is knowledge. As therefore knowledge has no influence on things that are, so neither has foreknowledge on things that shall be. And, consequently, the

foreknowledge of any action that would be otherwise free, cannot alter or diminish that freedom. Whereas God's decree of election is powerful and active, and comprehends the preparation and exhibition of such means as shall unfrustrably produce the end. Hence God's prescience renders no actions necessary." And to this purpose, p. 473, he cites Origen, where he says, "God's prescience is not the cause of things future, but their being future is the cause of God's prescience that they will be;" and Le Blanc, where he says, "This is the truest resolution of this difficulty, that prescience is not the cause that things are future; but their being future is the cause they are foreseen." In like manner, Dr. Clarke, in his *Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God*," pp. 95-99. And the author of the "Freedom of Will in God and the Creature," speaking to the like purpose with Dr. Whitby, represents "foreknowledge as having no more influence on things known, to make them necessary, than after-knowledge," or to that purpose.

To all which I would say, that what is said about knowledge, its not having influence on the thing known to make it necessary, is nothing to the purpose, nor does it in the least affect the foregoing reasoning. Whether prescience be the thing that makes the event necessary or no, it alters not the case. Infallible foreknowledge may prove the necessity of the event foreknown, and yet not be the thing which causes the necessity. If the foreknowledge be absolute, this proves the event known to be necessary, or proves that it is impossible but that the event should be, by some means or other, either by a decree, or some other ways, if there be any other way: because, as was said before, it is absurd to say, that a proposition is known to be certainly and infallibly true, which yet may possibly prove not true.

The whole of the seeming force of this evasion lies in this: that, inasmuch as certain foreknowledge does no cause an event to be necessary, as a decree does: therefore it does not prove it to be necessary, as a decree does. But there is no force in this arguing: for it is built wholly on this supposition, that nothing can prove, or be an evidence of a thing's being necessary, but that which has a causal influence to make it so. But this can never be maintained. If certain foreknowledge of the future existing of an event, be not the thing which first makes it impossible that it should fail of existence: yet it may, and certainly does, demonstrate that it is impossible

it should fail of it, however that impossibility comes. If foreknowledge be nothing cause, but the effect, of this impossibility, it may prove that there is such an impossibility, as much as if it were the cause. It is as strong arguing from the effect to the cause, as from the cause to the effect. It is enough that an existence, which is infallibly foreknown, cannot fail whether that impossibility arises from the foreknowledge, or is prior to it. It is as evident, as it is possible any thing should be, that it is impossible a thing which is infallibly let down to be true, should prove not to be true: therefore there is a necessity that it should be otherwise; whether the knowledge be the cause of this necessity, or the necessity the cause of the knowledge.

All certain knowledge, whether it be foreknowledge or after-knowledge, or concomitant knowledge, proves the thing known now to be necessary, by some means or other; or proves that it is impossible it should now be otherwise than true. I freely allow, that foreknowledge does not prove a thing to be necessary, any more than after-knowledge; but then after-knowledge, which is certain and infallible, proves that it is now become impossible but that the proposition known should be true. Certain after-knowledge proves that it is now, in the time of the knowledge, by some means or other, become impossible but that the proposition which predicates past existence on the event, should be true. And so does certain foreknowledge prove, that now, in the time of the knowledge, it is, by some means or other, become impossible but that the proposition which predicates future existence on the event, should be true. The necessity of the truth of the propositions, consisting in the present impossibility of the non-existence of the event affirmed, in both cases is the immediate ground of the certainty of the knowledge; there can be no certainty of knowledge without it.

There must be a certainty in things themselves, before they are certainly known, or (which is the same thing) known to be certain. For certainty of knowledge is nothing else but knowing or discerning the certainty there is in the things themselves, which are known. Therefore there must be a certainty in things to be a ground of certainty of knowledge, and to render things capable of being known to be certain. And this is nothing but the necessity of the truth known, or its being impossible but that it should be true; or, in other words, the firm and infallible connection between the



subject and predicate of the proposition that contains that truth. All certainty of knowledge consists in the view of the firmness of that connection. So God's certain foreknowledge of the future existence of any event, is his view of the firm and indissoluble connection of the subject and predicate of the proposition that affirms its future existence. The subject is that possible event; the predicate is its future existing: but if future existence be firmly and indissolubly connected faith that event, then the future existence of that event is necessary. If God certainly knows the future existence of an event which is wholly contingent, and may possibly never be, then he sees a firm connection between a subject and predicate that are not firmly connected; which is a contradiction.

I allow what Dr. Whitby says to be true, "that mere knowledge does not affect the thing known, to make it more certain or more future." But yet, I say, it supposes and proves the thing to be already both future and certain; i. e. necessarily future. Knowledge of futurity supposes futurity; and a certain knowledge of futurity supposes certain futurity, antecedent to that certain knowledge. But there is no other certain futurity of a thing, antecedent to certainty of knowledge, than a prior impossibility but that the thing should prove true; or (which is the same thing,) the necessity of the event.

I would observe one thing further concerning this matter; it is this: that if it be as those aforementioned writers suppose, that God's foreknowledge is not the cause, but the effect, of the existence of the event foreknown; this is so far from showing that this foreknowledge doth not infer the necessity of the existence of that event, that it rather shows the contrary the more plainly. Because it shows the existence of the event to be so settled and firm, that it is as if it had already been; inasmuch as in effect it actually exists already; its future existence has already had actual influence and efficiency, and has produced an effect, viz. prescience: the effect exists already; and as the effect supposes, the cause is connected with the cause, and depends entirely upon it, therefore it is as if the future event, which is the cause, had existed already. The effect is firm as possible, it having already the possession of existence, and has made sure of it. But the effect cannot be more firm and stable than its cause, ground, and reason. The building cannot be firmer than the foundation.

To illustrate this matter, let us suppose the appearances and images of things in a glass; for instance, a reflecting telescope, to be the real effects of heavenly bodies (at a distance, and out of sight) which they resemble: if it be so, then, as these images in the telescope have had a past actual existence, and it is become utterly impossible now that it should be otherwise than that they have existed; so they being the true effects of the heavenly bodies they resemble, this Proves the existing of those heavenly bodies to be as real, infallible, firm, and necessary, as the existing, of these effects; the one being connected with, and wholly depending on, the other. — Now let us suppose future existence's some way or other to have influence back, to produce effects beforehand, and cause exact and perfect images of themselves in a glass, a thousand years before they exist, yea, in all preceding ages; but yet that these images are real effects of these future existence's, perfectly dependent on, and, connected with, their cause; these effects and images having already had actual existence, rendering that matter of their existing perfectly firm and stable, and utterly impossible to be otherwise: this proves in like manner, as in the other instance, that the existence of the things, which are their causes, is also equally sure, firm, and necessary; and that it is alike impossible but that they should be, as if they had been already, as their effects have. And if, instead of images in a glass, we suppose the antecedent effects to be perfect ideas of them in the Divine Mind, which have existed there from all eternity, which are as properly effects, as truly and properly connected with their cause, the case is not altered.

Another thing which has been said by some Arminians to take off the force of what is urged from God's prescience, against the contingency of the volition's of moral agents, is to this purpose: — "That when we talk of foreknowledge in God, there is no strict propriety in our so speaking; and that although it be true, that there is in God the most perfect knowledge of all events, from eternity to eternity, yet there is no such thing as before and after in God, but he sees all things by one perfect, unchangeable view, without any succession; To this I answer:

**1.** It has been already shown that all certain knowledge proves the necessity of the truth known; whether it be before, after, or at the same time. Though it be true, that there is no succession in God's knowledge, and the manner of his knowledge is to us inconceivable, yet thus much we

know concerning it, that there is no event, past, present, or to come, that God is ever uncertain of; he never is, never was, and never will be, without infallible knowledge of it; he always sees the existence of it to be certain and infallible. And as he always sees things just as they are in truth, hence there never is in reality any thing, contingent in such a sense, as that possibly it may happen never to exist. If, strictly speaking, there is no foreknowledge in God, it is because those things which are future to us, are as present to God as if they already had existence; and that is as much as to seer, that future events are always in God's view as evident, clear, sure, and necessary, as if they already were. If there never is a time wherein the existence of the event is not present with God, then there never is time wherein it is not as much impossible for it to fail of existence, as if its existence were present, and were already come to pass.

God's viewing, things so perfectly and unchangeably as that there is no succession in his ideas or judgment, does not hinder but that there is properly now, in the mind of God, a certain and perfect knowledge of moral actions of men, which to us are an hundred years hence: yea, the objection supposes this; and therefore it certainly does not hinder but that, by the foregoing, arguments, it is now impossible these moral actions should not come to pass.

We know that God knows the future voluntary actions of men in such a sense beforehand, as that he is able particularly to declare, and foretell them, and write them, or cause the to be written down in a book, as he often has done; and that therefore the necessary connection which there is between God's knowledge and the event known, does as much prove the event to be necessary beforehand as if the Divine knowledge there in the same sense before the event, as the prediction or writing is. If the knowledge be infallible, then the expression of it in the written prediction is infallible; that is, there is an infallible connection between that written prediction and the event. And if so, then it is impossible it should ever be otherwise, than that that prediction and the event should agree; and this is the same thing, as to say, it is impossible but that the event should come to pass; and this is flee same as to say, that its coming to pass is necessary. So that it is manifest, that there being no proper succession in God's mind, makes no alteration as to the necessity of the existence of the events which God knows. Yea,

**2.** This is so far from weakening the proof which has been given of the impossibility of the not coming to pass of future events known, as that it establishes that wherein the strength of the foregoing arguments consists, and shows the clearness of the evidence. For,

**(1.)** The very reason why God's knowledge is without succession, is, because it is absolutely perfect, to the highest possible degree of clearness and certainty: all things, whether past, present, or to come, being viewed with equal evidence and fullness; future things being seen with as much clearness as if they were present; the view is always in absolute perfection; and absolute constant perfection admits of no alteration, and so no succession; the actual existence of the thing known, does not at all increase or acid to the clearness or certainty of the thing known: God calls the things that are not as though they were; their are all one to him as if they had already existed. But herein consists the strength of the demonstration before given, of the impossibility of the not existing of those things, whose existence God knows; that it is as impossible they should fail of existence, as if they existed already. This objection, instead of weakening this argument, sets it in the clearest and strongest light; for it supposes it to be so indeed, that the existence of future events is in God's view so much as if it already had been, that when they come actually to exist, it makes not the least alteration or variation in his view or knowledge of them.

**(2.)** The objection is founded on the immutability of God's knowledge: for it is the immutability of knowledge makes his knowledge to be without succession. But this most directly and plainly demonstrates the thing I insist on, viz. that it is utterly impossible the known events should fail of existence. For if that were possible, then it would be possible for there to be a change in God's knowledge and view of things. For it the known event should fail of existence, and not come into being, as God expected, then God would see it, and so would change his mind, and see his former mistake; and thus there would be change and succession in his knowledge. But as God is immutable, and so it is utterly infinitely impossible that his view should be changed; so it is, for the same reason, just so impossible that the foreknown event should not exist; and that is to be impossible in flee highest degree: and therefore the contrary is necessary. Nothing is more

impossible than that the immutable God should be clanged by the succession of time; who comprehends all things, from eternity to eternity, in one most perfect and unalterable view; so that his whole eternal duration is *vita interminabilis, tota, simul, et pefecta possessio*.

On the whole, I need not fear to say, that there is no geometrical theorem or proposition whatsoever more capable of strict demonstration, than that God's certain prescience of the volition's of moral agents is inconsistent with such a contingency of these events, as it is without all necessity; and so is inconsistent with the Arminian notions of liberty.

**Corol. 2.** Hence the doctrine of the Calvinists, concerning the absolute decrees of God, does not at all infer any more fatality in things, than will demonstrably follow from the doctrine of most Arminian divines, who acknowledge God's omniscience and universal prescience. Therefore all objections they make against the doctrine of the Calvinists, as implying Hobbes's doctrine of necessity, or the Stoical doctrine of fate, be no more against the doctrine of Calvinists than their own doctrine; and therefore it doth not become those divines to raise such an outcry against the Calvinists on this account.

**Corol. 3.** Hence all arguing, from necessity, against the doctrine of the inability of unregenerate men to perform the conditions of salvation, and the commands of God requiring spiritual duties, and against the Calvinistic doctrine of efficacious grace; I say, all arguings of Arminians (such of them as own God's omniscience) against these things, on this ground, that these doctrines, though they do not suppose men to be under any constraint or exaction, yet suppose them under necessity with respect to their moral actions, and those things which are required of them in order to their acceptance with God; and their arguing against the necessity of men's volition's, taken from the reasonableness of God's commands, promises, and threatenings, and the sincerity of his counsels and invitations; and all objections against any doctrines of the Calvinists, as being, inconsistent with human liberty, because they infer necessity; I say, all these arguments and objections must fall to the ground, and be justly esteemed vain and frivolous, as coming from them; being, maintained in an inconsistency

with themselves, and in like manner leveled against their own doctrine, as against thee doctrine of the Calvinists.

## SECTION 13

### **WHETHER WE SUPPOSE THE VOLITIONS OF MORAL AGENTS TO BE CONNECTED WITH ANY THING ANTECEDENT, OR NOT, YET THEY MUST BE NECESSARY IN SUCH A SENSE AS TO OVERTHROW ARMINIAN LIBERTY.**

EVERY act of the will has a cause, or it has not. If it has a cause, then, according to what has already been demonstrated, it is not contingent, but necessary; the effect being, necessarily dependent and consequent on its cause; and that, let the cause be what it will. If the cause is the will itself, by antecedent acts choosing and determining, still the determined and caused act must be a necessary effect. The act, that is the determined effect of the foregoing act which is its cause, cannot prevent the efficiency of its cause, but must be wholly subject to its determination and command, as much as the motions of the hands and feet. The consequent commanded acts of the will are as passive and as necessary, with respect to the antecedent determining acts, as the parts of the body are to the volition's which determine and command them. And therefore, if all the free acts of the will are thus, if they are all determined effects, determined by the will itself, that is, determined by antecedent choice, then they are all necessary; they are all subject to, and decisively fixed by the foregoing act, which is their cause: yea, even the determining act itself; for that must be determined and fixed by another act, preceding, that, if it be a free and voluntary act; and so must be necessary. So that by this all the free acts of the will are necessary, and cannot be free unless they are necessary: because they cannot be free, according, to the Arminian notion of freedom, useless they are determined by the will, which is to be determined by antecedent choice; which being their cause, proves them necessary. And yet they say, necessity is utterly inconsistent with liberty. So that, by their scheme, the acts of the will cannot be free, unless they are necessary, an I yet cannot be free if they be not necessary!

But if the other part of the dilemma be taken, and it be affirmed that the free acts of the will have no cause, and are connected with nothing, whatsoever that goes before then and determines them, in order to maintain their proper and absolute contingency, and this should be allowed to be possible; still it will not serve their turn. For if the volition come to pass by perfect continence, and without any cause at all, then it is certain, no act of the will, no prior act of the soul, was the cause; no determination or choice of the soul had any hand in it. The will, or the soul, was indeed the subject of what happened to it accidentally, but was not the cause. The will is not active in causing or determining, but purely the passive subject; at least according to their notion of action and passion. In this case, contingency does as much prevent the determination of the will, as a proper cause; and as to the will, it was necessary, and could be no otherwise. For to suppose that it could have been otherwise, if the will or soul had pleased, is to suppose that the act is dependent on some prior act of choice or pleasure; contrary to what now is supposed: it is to suppose that it might have been otherwise, if its cause made it or ordered it otherwise. But this does not agree to its having no cause or ordered at all. That must be necessary as to the soul, which is dependent on no free act of the soul: but that which is without a cause, is dependent on no free act of the soul; because, by the supposition, it is dependent on nothing, and is connected with nothing. In such a case, the soul is necessarily subjected to what accident brings to pass, from time to time, as much as the earth, that is inactive, is necessarily subjected to what falls upon it. But this does not consist with the Arminian notion of liberty, which is the will's power of determining itself in its own acts, and being wholly active in it, without passiveness, and without being subject to necessity. Thus, contingency belongs to the Arminian notion of liberty, and yet is inconsistent with it.

I would here observe, that the author of the "Essay on the Freedom of Will in God and the Creature," pages 76, 77, says as follows: "The word chance always means something done without design. Chance and design stand in direct opposition to each other; and chance can never be properly applied to acts of the will, which is the spring of all design, and which designs to choose whatsoever it doth choose, whether there be any superior fitness in the thing which it chooses, or no; and it designs to determine itself to one thing, where two things, perfectly equal, are

proposed, merely because it will.” But herein appears a very great inadvertence in this author. For if “the will be the spring of all design,” as he says, then certainly it is not always the effect of design; and the acts of the will themselves must sometimes come to pass, when they do not spring from design; and consequently come to pass by chance, according to his own definition of chance. And if “the will designs to choose whatsoever it does choose,” and “designs to determine itself,” as he says, then it designs to determine all its designs: which carries us back from one design to a foregoing design determining that, and to another determining that; and so on in infinitum.

The very first design must be the effect of foregoing design, or else it must be by chance, in his notion of it.

Here another alternative may be proposed, relating to the connection of the acts of the will with something, foregoing, that is their cause, not much unlike to the other; which is this: either human liberty is such, that it may well stand with volition’s being necessarily connected with the views of the understanding, and so is consistent with necessity; or it is inconsistent with, and contrary to, such a connection and necessity. The former is directly subversive of the Arminian notion of liberty, consisting in freedom from all necessity. And if the latter be chosen, and it be said that liberty is inconsistent with any such necessary connection of volition with foregoing views of the understanding, it consisting in freedom from any such necessity of the will as that would imply; then the liberty of the soul consists (in part at least) in the freedom from restraint, limitation, and government, in its acting by the understanding, and in liberty and liableness to act contrary to the understanding’s views and dictates; and consequently, the more the soul has of this disengagedness in its acting, the more liberty. Now let it be considered what this brings the noble principle of human liberty to, particularly when it is possessed and enjoyed in its perfection, viz. a full and perfect freedom and liableness to act altogether at random, without the least connection with, or restraint or government by, any dictate of reason, or any thing whatsoever apprehended, considered, or viewed by the understanding; as being inconsistent with the full and perfect sovereignty of the will over its own determinations. The notion mankind have conceived of liberty, is some dignity or privilege, something worth claiming. But what dignity or



privilege is there, in being, given up to such a wild contingency as this, to be perfectly and constantly liable to act unintelligently and unreasonably, and as much without the guidance of understanding, as if we had none, or were as destitute of perception as the smoke that is driven by the wind!

## PART 3

*Wherein is Inquired, Whether any Such Liberty of Will as Arminians Hold, be Necessary to Moral Agency, Virtue and Vice, Praise and Dispraise, etc.*

### SECTION 1.

#### **GOD’S MORAL EXCELLENCY NECESSARY, YET VIRTUOUS AND PRAISEWORTHY.**

HAVING considered the first thing that was proposed to be inquired into, relating, to that freedom of will which Arminians maintain; namely, whether any such thing does, ever did, or ever can exist, or be conceived of; I come now to the second thing proposed to be the subject of inquiry, viz. Whether any such kind of liberty be requisite to moral agency, virtue and vice, upraise and blame, reward and punishment, etc.

I shall begin with some consideration of the virtue and agency of the supreme moral Agent, and Fountain of all agency and virtue.

Dr. Whitby, in his discourse on the “Five Points,” p. 14, says, “If all human actions are necessary, virtue and vice must be empty names; we being capable oft nothing that is blame-worthy, or deserveth praise; for who can blame a person for doing only what he could not help, or judge that he deserveth praise only for what he could not avoid?” To the like purpose he speaks ifs places innumerable; especially in his discourse on the “Freedom of the Will;” constantly maintaining, that a freedom not only from co-action, but necessity, is absolutely requisite, in order to actions being either worthy of blame, or deserving of praise. And to this agrees, as is well known, the current doctrine of Arminian writers, who, in general, hold, that there is no virtue or vice, reward or punishment, nothing, to be commended or blamed, without this freedom. And yet Dr. Whitby, p. 300, allows, that God is without this freedom; and Arminians, so far as I have had opportunity to observe, generally acknowledge that God is necessarily holy, and his will necessarily determined to that which is good.

So that, putting these things together, the infinitely holy God, who always used to be esteemed by God's people not only virtuous, but a Being in whom is all possible virtue, and every virtue in the most absolute purity and perfection, and in infinitely greater brightness and amiableness than in any creature: the most perfect pattern of virtue, and the fountain from whom all others, virtue is but as beams from the sun; and who has been supposed to be, on the account of his virtue and holiness, infinitely more worthy to be esteemed, loved, honored, admired, commended, extolled, and praised, than any creature: and he who is thus every where represented in Scripture; I say, this Being, according to this notion of Dr. Whithy, and other Arminians, has no virtue at all: virtue, when ascribed to him, is but an empty name; and he is deserving of no commendation or praise; because he is under necessity, he cannot avoid being holy and good as he is; therefore no thanks to him for it. It seems, the holiness, justice, faithfulness, etc. of the Most High, must not be accounted to be of the nature of that which is virtuous, and praiseworthy They will not deny, that these things in God are good; but then we must understand them, that they are no more virtuous, or of the nature of any thing commendable, than the good that is in any other being that is not a moral agent; as the brightness of the sun, and the fertility of the earth, are good, but not virtuous, because these properties are necessary to these bodies, and not the fruit of self-determining power.

There needs no other confutation of this notion of God's not being virtuous or praiseworthy, to Christians acquainted with the Bible, but only stating and particularly representing of it. To bring texts of Scripture, wherein God is represented as in every respect in the highest manner virtuous and supremely praise-worthy, would be endless, and is altogether needless to such as have been brought up in the light of the Gospel.

It were to be wished that Dr. Whithy, and other divines of the same sort, had explained themselves, when they have asserted, that that which is necessary, is not deserving of praise; at the same time that they have owned God's perfection to be necessary, and so in effect representing God as not deserving praise. Certainly, if their words have any meaning at all, by praise they must mean the exercise or testimony of some sorts of esteem, respect, or honorable regard And will they then say, that men are worthy of that esteem, respect, and lookout, for their virtue, small and

imperfect as it is, which God is not worthy of, for his infinite righteousness, holiness, and goodness) If so, it must be because of some sort of peculiar excellency in the virtuous man, which is his prerogative, wherein he really has the preference; some dignity that is entirely distinguished from any excellency, amiableness, or honourableness in God; not in imperfection and dependence, but in pre-eminence; which therefore, he does not receive from God, nor is God the fountain or pattern of it; nor can God, in that respect, stand in competition with him as the object of honor and regard; but man may claim a peculiar esteem, commendation, and glory, that God can have no pretension to. Yea, God has no right, by virtue of his necessary holiness, to intermeddle with that grateful respect and praise due to the virtuous man, who chooses virtue in the exercise of a freedom *ad utrumque*, any more than a precious stone, which cannot avoid being, hard and beautiful.

And if it be so, let it be explained what that peculiar respect is that is due to the virtuous man, which differs in nature and kind, in some way of pre-eminence, from all that is due to God. What is the name or description of that peculiar affection? Is it esteem, love, admiration, honor, praise, or gratitude? The Scripture every where represents God as the highest object of all these: there we read of the soul's magnifying the Lord, of loving him with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the mind, and with all the strength; admiring, him, and his righteous acts, or greatly regarding them as marvelous and wonderful; honoring, glorifying, exalting, extolling, blessing, thanking, and praising him; giving unto him all the glory of the good which is done or received, rather than unto men, that no flesh should glory in his presence; but that he should be regarded as the Being to whom all glory is due. What, then, is that respect? What passion, affection, or exercise, is it, that Arminians call praise, diverse from all these things which men are worthy of for their virtue, and which God is not worthy of in any degree?

If that necessity which attends God's moral perfection's and actions be as inconsistent with a being worthy of praise, as a necessity of co-action, as is plainly implied in, or inferred from, Dr. Whitby's discourse; then why should we thank God for his goodness, any more than if he were forced to be good or any more than we should thank one of our fellow-creatures who did us good, not freely, and of good will, or from any kindness of heart, but from mere compulsion or extrinsical necessity? Arminians

suppose that God is necessarily a good and gracious being; for this they make the ground of some of their main arguments against many doctrines maintained by Calvinists; they say these are certainly false, and it is impossible they should be true, because they are not consistent with the goodness of God. This supposes, that it is impossible but that God should be good: for if it be possible that he should be otherwise, then that impossibility of the truth of these doctrines ceases, according to their own argument.

That virtue in God is not, in the most proper sense, rewardable, is not for want of merit in his moral perfection's and actions, sufficient to deserve rewards from his creatures; but because he is infinitely above all capacity of receiving any reward or benefit from the creature; he is already infinitely and unchangeably happy, and we cannot be profitable unto him. But still he is worthy of our supreme benevolence for his virtue; and would be worthy of our beneficence, which is the fruit and expression of benevolence, if our goodness could extend to him. If God deserves to be thanked and praised for his goodness, he would, for the same reason, deserve that we should also requite his kindness, if that were possible. "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?" is the natural language of thankfulness: and so far as in us lies, it is our duty to recompense God's goodness, and render again accordions to benefits received. And that we might have opportunity for so natural an expression of our gratitude to God as beneficence, notwithstanding, his being infinitely above our reach, he has appointed others to be his receivers, and to stand in his stead as the objects of our beneficence; such are especially our indigent brethren.

## SECTION 2

### **THE ACTS OF THE WILL OF THE HUMAN SOUL OF JESUS CHRIST NECESSARILY HOLY, YET TRULY VIRTUOUS, PRAISEWORTHY, REWARDABLE, ETC.**

I HAVE already considered how Dr. Whitby insists upon it, that a freedom, not only from co-action, but necessity, is "requisite either to virtue or vice, praise or dispraise, reward or punishment." He also insists on the

same freedom as absolutely requisite to a person's being the subject of a law, of precepts, or prohibitions; in the book before mentioned, (pp. 301, 314, 328, 339), 340, 341, 349, 347, 361, 373, 410.) And of promises and threatenings, (pp. 298, 301, 305, 311, 339, 340, 363.) And as requisite to a state of trial, (p. 297, etc.)

Now, therefore, with an eye to these things, I would inquire into the moral conduct and practices of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he exhibited in his human nature here in his state of humiliation. And, first, I would show, that his holy behavior was necessary; or that it was impossible it should be otherwise than that he should behave himself politely, and that he should be perfectly holy in each individual act of his life. And, secondly, that his holy behavior was properly the nature of virtue, and man's worthy of praise; and that he was the subject of law, precepts, or commands, promises, and rewards; and that he was in a state of trial.

**1.** It was impossible that the acts of the will of the human soul of Christ should, in any instance, degree, or circumstance, be otherwise than holy, and agreeable to God's nature and will. The following things make this evident.

**1.** God had promised so effectually to preserve and uphold him by his Spirit, under all his temptations, that he could not fail of reaching the end for which he came into the world; which he would have failed of, had he fallen into sin. We have such a promise, <sup><201></sup>Isaiah 42:1, 2, 3, 4, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. — He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law." This promise, of Christ's having God's Spirit put upon him, and his not crying and lifting up his voice, etc. relates to the time of Christ's appearance on earth, as is manifest from the nature of the promise, and also the application of it in the New Testament, <sup><102></sup>Matthew 12:18. And the words imply a promise of his being so upheld by God's Spirit, that he should be preserved from sin; particularly from pride and vain-glory, and from being overcome by any of the temptations he should be under to affect the glory of this world, the pomp of an earthly prince,

or the applause and praise of men: and that he should be so upheld, that he should by no means fail of obtaining the end of his coming into the world, of bringing forth judgment unto victory, and establishing his kingdom of grace in the earth, — and in the following verses this promise is confirmed, with the greatest imaginable solemnity: “Thus saith the Lord, HE that created the heavens and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thee by mine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house. I am JEHOVAH, that is my name,” etc.

Very parallel with these promises is that, <sup>2340</sup>Isaiah 49:7, 8, 9, which also has an apparent respect to the time of Christ’s humiliation on earth: “Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, etc.

And <sup>2341</sup>Isaiah 50:5, 6, we have the Messiah expressing, his assurance that God would help him, by so opening his ear, or inclining, his heart to God’s commandments, that he should not be rebellious, but should persevere, and not apostatize or turn his back: that through God’s help, he should be immovable, in a way of obedience, under the great trials of reproach and suffering he should meet with; setting his face like a flint: so that he may be sold not be ashamed, or frustrated in his design; and finally should be approved and justified, as leaving, done his work faithfully: “The Lord hath opened mine ear; so that I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? Let us stand together. Who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord God will help

me; who is he that shall condemn me? Lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up.”

**2.** The same thing is evident from all the promises which God made to the Messiah, of his future glory, kingdom and success, in his office and character of a Mediator; which glory could not have been obtained if his holiness had failed, and he had been guilty of sin. God’s absolute promise of any things makes the things promised necessary and their failing to take place absolutely impossible: and in like manner it makes those things necessary in which the thing promised depends and without which it cannot take effect. Therefore it appears that it was utterly impossible that Christ’s holiness should fail, from such absolute promises as those,

“The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.” (<sup>110:4</sup> Psalm 110:4)

And from every other promise in that psalm, contained in each verse of it. And <sup>2:7, 8</sup> Psalm 2:7, 8, “I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance,” etc. <sup>45:3, 4</sup> Psalm 45:3, 4, etc. “gird thy sword on thy thigh, O mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty and in thy majesty ride prosperously.” And so every thing that is said from thence to the end of the psalm. And those promises <sup>52:13, 14</sup> Isaiah 52:13, 14, 15; and <sup>53:10, 11, 12</sup> 53:10, 11, 12. And all those promises which God makes to the Messiah, of success, dominion, and glory, in the character of a Redeemer, in Isaiah, chapter 49.

**3.** It was often promised to the church of God of old, for their comfort that God would give them a righteous, sinless Savior, <sup>23:5, 6</sup> Jeremiah 23:5, 6, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous Branch, and King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days shall Judah be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby he shall be called, the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness.” So, <sup>23:15</sup> Jeremiah 23:15. “I will cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.” <sup>9:6, 7</sup> Isaiah 9:6, 7. “For unto us a child is born; — upon the throne of David and of his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will



do this.” Chapter 11 at the beginning: “There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord. With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity. Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.” Chapter <sup><2510></sup>53:13, “My servant shall deal prudently.” Chapter <sup><2510></sup>53:9, “Because he had done no violence, neither was guile found in his mouth.” If it be impossible that these promises should fail, and if it be easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than one not or little of these promises of God to pass away, then it was impossible that God should commit any sin. Christ himself signified, that it was impossible but that the things which were spoken concerning him should be fulfilled.

<sup><2440></sup>Luke 14:44, “That all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalm, concerning me.”

<sup><4185></sup>Matthew 26:5,64, “But how then shall the Scripture be fulfilled, that thus it must be?” <sup><4149></sup>Mark 14:49, “But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.”

And so the Apostle, <sup><4116></sup>Acts 1:16 17, “This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled.

**4.** All the promises, which were made to the church of old, of the Messiah as a future Savior, from that made to our first parents in Paradise, to that which was delivered by the prophet Malachi, show it to be impossible that Christ should not have persevered in perfect holiness. The ancient predictions given to God’s church, of the Messiah as a Savior, were of the nature of promises, as is evident by the predictions themselves, and the manner of delivering them. But they are expressly, and very often, called promises in the New Testament; as in <sup><4164></sup>Luke 1:54, 55, 72, 73; <sup><4130></sup>Acts 13:32, 33; <sup><4101></sup>Romans 1:1, 2, 3; and chapter <sup><4158></sup>15:8, <sup><4103></sup>Hebrews 6:13, etc. These promises were often made with great solemnity, and confirmed with an oath; as in <sup><4126></sup>Genesis 22:16, 17, “By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore: and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” Compare <sup><4172></sup>Luke 1:72, 73; and <sup><4109></sup>Galatians 3:8, 15, 16. The apostle, in <sup><4107></sup>Hebrews 6:17,18, speaking, of this promise to Abraham, says: “Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two

IMMUTABLE things, in which it was IMPOSSIBLE for God to lie, we might have strong consolation.” In which words the necessity of the accomplishment, or (which is the same thing) the impossibility of the contrary, is fully declared. So God confirmed the promise of the great salvation of the Messiah, made to David, by an oath,

“I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant: Thy seed will I establish for ever; and build up thy throne to all generations.” (<sup><1215></sup>Psalm 89:3, 4)

There is nothing that is so abundantly set forth in Scripture as sure and irrefragable, as this promise and oath to David. See Psalm. 89:34, 35, 36; <sup><1215></sup>2 Samuel 23:5; <sup><2501></sup>Isaiah 55:4; <sup><4123></sup>Acts 2:29, 30; and 13:34. The Scripture expressly speaks of it as utterly impossible that this promise and oath to David, concerning the everlasting dominion of the Messiah of his seed, should fail. <sup><2635></sup>Jeremiah 33:15, etc. “In those days, and at that time, I will cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David. For thus saith the Lord, David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel.” verse 20, 21, “If you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that should not have a son to reign upon his throne.” So in verse 25, 20. Thus abundant is the Scripture in representing how impossible it was, that the promises made of old concerning the great salvation and kingdom of the Messiah should fail; which implies, that it was impossible that this Messiah, the second Adam, the promised seed of Abraham and of David should fall from his integrity, as the first Adam did.

**5.** All the promises that were made to the church of God under the Old Testament, of the great enlargement of the church, and advancement of her glory, in the class of the gospel, after the coming of the Messiah; the increase of her light, liberty, holiness, joy, triumph over her enemies, etc. of which so great a part of the Old Testament consists; which are repeated so often, are so variously exhibited, so frequently introduced with great pomp and solemnity, and are so abundantly sealed with typical and symbolical representations; I say, all these promises imply, that the Messiah should perfect the world of redemption; and this implies that he should persevere in the work which the Father had appointed him, being in

all things conformed to his will. These promises were often confirmed by an oath. (See Isaiah 54 with the context; chapter <sup>2308</sup>62:18.) And it is represented as utterly impossible that these promises should fail. (<sup>2309</sup>Isaiah 49:15, with the context; chapter <sup>2540</sup>54:10, with the context; chapter <sup>2504</sup>54:4-8; chapter 40:8, with the context.) And therefore it was impossible that the Messiah should fail, or commit sin.

**6.** It was impossible that the Messiah should fail of persevering in integrity and holiness, as the first Adam did, because this would have been inconsistent with the promises which God made to the blessed virgin his mother, and to her husband, implying that “he should save his people from their sins;” that “God would give him the throne of his father David;” that “he should reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and that “of his kingdom there shall be no end.” These promises were sure, and it was impossible they should fail. And therefore the virgin Mary, in trusting fully to them, acted reasonably, having an immovable foundation of her faith; as Elisabeth observes,

“And blessed is she that believed; for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.” (<sup>4315</sup>Luke 1:45)

**7.** That it should leave been possible that Christ should sin, and so fail in the work of our redemption, does not consist with the eternal purpose and decree of God, revealed in the Scriptures, that he would provide salvation for fallen man in and by Jesus Christ, and that salvation should be offered to sinners through the preaching of the Gospel. Such an absolute decree as this Arminians do not deny. This much at least (out of all controversy) is implied in such Scriptures as <sup>4017</sup>1 Corinthians 2:7; <sup>4006</sup>Ephesians 1:4, 5; and chapter <sup>4003</sup>3:9, 10, <sup>4019</sup>1 Peter 1:19, 20. Such an absolute decree as this, Arminians allow to be signified in these texts. And the Arminians’ election of nations and societies, and general election of the Christian church, and conditional election of particular persons, imply this. God could not decree before the foundation of the world, to save all that should believe in, and obey Christ, unless he had absolutely decreed that salvation should be providers, and effectually wrought out by Christ. And since (as the Arminians themselves strenuously maintain) a decree of God infers necessity; hence it became necessary, that Christ should persevere, and

actually work out salvation for us, and that he should not fail by the commission or sin.

**8.** That it should have been possible for Christ's holiness to fail, is not consistent with what God promised to his Son, before all ages. For, that salvation should be offered to men, through Christ, and bestowed on all his faithful followers, is what is at least implied in that certain and infallible promise spoken of by the apostle,

“In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised  
before the world began.” (~~500B~~ Titus 1:2)

This does not seem to be controverted by Arminians.

**9.** That it should be possible for Christ to fail of doing his Father's will, is inconsistent with the promise made to the Father by the Son, by the Logos that was with the Father from the beginning, before he took the human nature: as may be seen in ~~500B~~ Psalm 40:6, 7, 8, (compared with the apostle's interpretation, ~~500B~~ Hebrews 10:5-9:) “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire: mine ears hast thou opened (or bored); burnt-offering and sin-offering thou hast not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God, and thy law is within my heart,” where is a manifest allusion to the covenant, which the willing servant, who loved his master's service, made with his master, to be his servant for ever, on the day Herein he had his ear bored; which covenant was probably inserted in the public records, called the “volume of the book,” by the judges, who were called to take cognizance of the transaction, ~~120B~~ Exodus 21. If the Logos, who was with the Father before the world, and who made the world, thus engaged in covenant to do the will of the Father in the Human nature, and the promise was as it were recorded, that it might be made sure, doubtless it was impossible that it should fail; and so it was impossible that Christ should fail of doing the will of the Father in the human nature.

**10.** If it was possible for Christ to have failed of doing the will of his Father, and so to have failed of effectually working out redemption for sinners, then the salvation of all the saints, who were saved from the beginning of the world to the death of Christ, was not built on a firm foundation. The Messiah, and the redemption which he was to work out

by his obedience unto death, was the foundation of the salvation of all the posterity of fallen man that ever were saved. Therefore, if when the Old Testament saints had the pardon of their sins and the favor of God promised them, and salvation bestowed upon them, still it was possible that the Messiah, when he came, might commit sin, then all this was on a foundation that was not firm and stable, but liable to fail; something which it was possible might never be. God did as it were trust to what his Son had engaged and promised to do in future time; and depended so much upon it, that he proceeded actually to save men on the account of it, as though it had been already done. But this trust and dependence of God, on the supposition of Christ's being liable to fail of doing his will, was leaning on a stay that was weak, and might possibly break. The saints of old trusted on the promises of a future redemption to be wrought out and completed by the Messiah, and built their comfort upon it: Abraham saw Christ's day, and rejoiced; and he and the other patriarchs died in the faith of the promise of it, (<sup>GEN</sup> Hebrews 11:13.) But on this supposition, their faith, and their comfort, and their salvation, was built on a moveable, fallible foundation; Christ was not then a tried stone, a sure foundation, as in <sup>ISA</sup> Isaiah 28:16. David entirely rested on the covenant of God with him, concerning the future glorious dominion and salvation of the Messiah, of his seed; says it was "all his salvation, and all his desire;" and comforts himself that this covenant was an "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure," <sup>2SAM</sup> 2 Samuel 23:5. But if Christ's virtue might fail, he was mistaken: his great comfort was not built so sure as he thought it was, being founded entirely on the determinations of the free-will of Christ's human soul, which Divas subject to no necessity, and might be determined either one way or the other. Also, the dependence of those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem, and waited for the consolation of Israel, (<sup>LUK</sup> Luke 2:25, 38,) and the confidence of the disciples of Jesus, who forsook all and followed him, that they might enjoy the benefits of his future kingdom, was built on a sandy foundation.

**11.** The man Christ Jesus, before he had finished his course of obedience, and while in the midst of temptations and trials, was abundant in positively predicting his own future glory in his kingdom, and the enlargement of his church, the salvation of the Gentiles through him, etc., and in promises of blessings he would bestow on his true disciples in his

future kingdom; on which promises he required the full dependence of his (John 14.) But the disciples would have no ground for such dependence, if Christ had been liable to fail in his work: and Christ himself would have been guilty of presumption, in so abounding in peremptory promises of great things, which depended on a mere contingency, viz., the determinations of his free-will, consisting in a freedom ad utrumque, to either sin or holiness, standing. In indifference, and incident, in thousands of future instances, to go either one way or the other.

Thus it is evident, that it was impossible that the acts of the will of the human soul of Christ should be otherwise than holy, and conformed to the will of the Father; or, in other words, they were necessarily so conformed. I have been the longer in the proof of this matter, it being a thing denied by some of the greatest Arminians by Episcopius in particular; and because I look upon it as a point clearly and absolutely determining the controversy between Calvinists and Arminians, concerning the necessity of such a freedom of will as is insisted on by the latter, in order to moral agency, virtue, command or prohibition, promise or threatening, reward or punishment, praise or dispraise, merit or demerit. I now therefore proceed,

**II.** To consider whether Christ, in his holy behavior on earth, was not thus a moral agent, subject to commands, promises, etc.

Dr. Whitby very often speaks of what he calls a freedom ad utrumlibet, without necessity, as requisite to law and commands; and speaks of necessity as entirely inconsistent with injunctions and prohibitions. But yet we read of Christens being the subject of the commands of his Father, <sup><608></sup>John 10:18, and <sup><650></sup>15:10. And Christ tells us, that every thing that he said or did was in compliance with “commandments he had received of the Father,” <sup><628></sup>John 12:48, 50, and <sup><648></sup>14:31. And we often read of Christ’s obedience to his Father’s commands, <sup><658></sup>Romans 5:19; <sup><678></sup>Philippians 2:18; <sup><888></sup>Hebrews 5:8.

The fore-mentioned writer represents “promises offered as motives” to persons to do their duty, or “a being moved and induced by promises,” as utterly inconsistent with a state wherein persons has not a liberty and utrumlibet, but are necessarily determined to one. (See particularly, pp 298 and 311.) But the thing, which this writer asserts, is demonstrably false, if the Christian religion be true. If there be any truth in Christianity

or the Holy Scriptures, the man Christ Jesus had his will infallibly, unalterably, and unfrustrably determined to good, and that alone; but yet he had promises of glorious rewards made to him, on condition of his persevering in, and perfecting, the work which God had appointed him; <sup><250></sup>Isaiah 52:10,11,12; Psalm 2 and 110; <sup><250></sup>Isaiah 49:7, 8, 9. In <sup><222></sup>Luke 22:28, 29, Christ says to his disciples, “Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.” The word most properly signifies to appoint by covenant or promise. The plain meaning of Christ’s words is this: “As you have partook of my temptations and trials, and have been steadfast, and have overcome, I promise to make you partakers of my reward, and to give you a kingdom; as the Father hath promised me a kingdom for continuing steadfast, and overcoming in those trials.” And the words are well explained by those in <sup><602></sup>Revelation 3:21,

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”

And Christ hath not only promises of glorious success, and rewards made to his obedience and sufferings, but the Scriptures plainly represent him as using these promises for motives and inducements to obey and suffer; and particularly that promise of a kingdom which the Father had appointed him, or sitting with the Father on his throne; as in <sup><811></sup>Hebrews 12:1, 2

“Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God.”

And how strange would it be to hear any Christian assert, that the holy and excellent temper and behavior of Jesus Christ, and that obedience which he performed under such great trials, was not virtuous or praiseworthy, because his will was not free ad utrumque, to either holiness or sin, but was unalterably determined to one; that, upon this account, there is no virtue at all in all Christ’s humility, meekness, patience, charity, forgiveness of enemies, contempt of the world, heavenly-mindedness, submission to the will of God, perfect obedience to his

commands, (though he was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,) his great compassion to the afflicted, his unparalleled love to mankind, his faithfulness to God and man under such great trials, his praying for his enemies, even when nailing him to the cross; that virtue, when applied to these things, is but an empty name; that there was no merit in any of these things; that is, that Christ was worthy of nothing at all on account of them, worthy of no reward, no praise, no honor or respect from God or man, because his will was not indifferent, and free either to these things or the contrary; but under such a strong inclination or bias to the things that were excellent, as made it impossible that he should choose the contrary, that, upon this account, (to use Dr. Whitby's language,) "it would be sensibly unreasonable" that the human nature should be rewarded for any of these things.

According to this doctrine, that creature who is evidently set forth in Scripture as the "first-born of every creature," as having "in all things the pre-eminence," and as the highest of all creatures in virtue, honor, and worthiness of esteem, praise, and glory, on the account of his virtue, is less worthy of reward or praise than the very least of saints; yea, no more worthy than a clock or mere machine, that is purely passive, and moved by natural necessity.

If we judge by Scriptural representations of things, we have reason to suppose that Christ took on him our nature, and dwelt lavishly in this world, in a suffering state, not only to satisfy for our sins but that he, being in our nature and circumstances, and under our trials, might be our most fit and proper example, leader, and captain, in the exercise of glorious and victorious virtue, and might be a visible instance of the glorious end and reward of it; that we might see in him the beauty, amiableness, and true honor and glory, and exceeding benefit, of that virtue which it is proper for us human beings to practice; and might thereby learn, and be animated, to seek the like glory and honor, and to obtain the like glorious reward. See <sup><B19></sup>Hebrews 2:9-14; with <sup><B18></sup>5:8, 9; and <sup><B11></sup>12:1, 2, 3. <sup><B10></sup>John 15:10. <sup><B17></sup>Romans 8:17. <sup><B12></sup>2 Timothy 2:11, 12. <sup><B13></sup>1 Peter 2:19, 20; and <sup><B14></sup>4:13. But if there was nothing of any virtue or merit, or worthiness of any reward, glory, praise, or commendation at all, in all that he did, because it was all necessary, and he could not help it, then how is there



any thing so proper to animate and incite us, free creatures, by patient continuance in well-doing, to seek for honor, glory, and virtue?

God speaks of himself as peculiarly well pleased with the righteousness of this servant of his.

“The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness’ sake.”

(<sup>3802</sup>Isaiah 42:21)

The sacrifices of old are spoken of as a sweet savor to God, but the obedience of Christ as far more acceptable than they. <sup>3806</sup>Psalm 40:6, 7, “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ear hast thou opened (as thy servant performing willing obedience): burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come (as a servant that cheerfully answers the calls of his master): I delight to do thy will, O my God, and thy law is within my heart.” <sup>3807</sup>Matthew 17:5, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” And Christ tells us expressly, that the Father loves him for that wonderful instance of his obedience, his voluntary yielding himself to death, in compliance with the Father’s command; <sup>3807</sup>John 10:17,18, “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life. No man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of myself. This commandment received I of my Father.”

And if there was no merit in Christ’s obedience unto death, if it was not worthy of praise and of the most glorious regards, the heavenly hosts were exceedingly mistaken, by the account that is given of them in <sup>3808</sup>Revelation 5:8-12: “The four beasts and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art WORTHY to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, WORTHY is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.”

Christ speaks of the eternal life which he was to receive as the reward of his obedience to the Father’s commandments; <sup>3809</sup>John 12:49, 50, “I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a

commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.” God promises to divide him a portion with the great, etc. for his being his righteous servant, for his glorious virtue under such great trials and afflictions; <sup><551></sup>Isaiah 53:11, 12, “He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death. “The Scriptures represent God as rewarding him far above all his other servants; <sup><551></sup>Philippians 2:7, 8, 9, “He took on him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name.” <sup><540></sup>Psalms 14:7, “Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”

There is no room to pretend that the glorious benefits bestowed in consequence of Christ’s obedience are not properly of the nature of a reward. What is a reward, in the most proper sense, but a benefit bestowed in consequence of something morally excellent in quality or behavior, in testimony of well-pleasedness in that moral excellency, and respect and favor on that account? If we consider the nature of a reward most strictly, and make the utmost of it, and add to the things contained in this description proper merit or worthiness, and the bestowment of the benefit in consequence of a promise; still it will be found there is nothing belonging to it, but that the Scripture is most express as to its belonging to the glory bestowed on Christ after his sufferings, as appears from what has been already observed; there was a glorious benefit bestowed in consequence of something morally excellent, being called righteousness and obedience; there was great favor, love, and well-pleasedness, for this righteousness and obedience, in the bestowed; there was proper merit, or worthiness of the benefit, in the obedience; it was bestowed in fulfillment of promises made to that obedience; and was bestowed therefore, or because he had performed that obedience.

I may add to all these things, that Jesus Christ, while here in the flesh, was manifestly in a state of trial. The last Adam, as Christ is called, <sup>43561</sup> Corinthians 15:45; <sup>43564</sup> Romans 5:14, taking, on him the human nature, and so the form of a servant, and being under the law, to stand and act for us, was put into a state of trial, as the first Adam was. Dr. Whitby mentions these three things as evidences of persons being in a state of trial (on the Five Points, pp. 298, 299): namely, their afflictions being spoken of as their trials or temptations, their being the subjects of promises, and their being exposed to Satan's temptations. But Christ was apparently the subject of each of these. Concerning promises made to him, I have spoken already. The difficulties and afflictions he met with in the course of his obedience, are called his temptations or trials; <sup>43568</sup> Luke 22:28, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations, (or trials.)" <sup>43569</sup> Hebrews 2:18, "For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted (or tried), he is able to succor them that are tempted." And chapter 4:15, "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." And as to his being tempted by Satan, it is what none will dispute.

## SECTION 3

### **THE CASE OF SUCH AS ARE GIVEN UP OF GOD TO SIN, AND OF FALLEN MAN IN GENERAL, PROVES MORAL NECESSITY AND INABILITY TO BE CONSISTENT WITH BLAME-WORTHINESS.**

DR. WHITBY asserts freedom, not only from co-action, but necessity, to be essential to any thing deserving the name of sin, and to an action's being culpable, in these words (Discourse on the Five Points, edit. 3, p. 348): "If they be thus necessitated, then neither their sins of omission or commission could deserve that name; it being essential to the nature of sin, according to St. Austin's definition, that it be an action 'a quo liberum est abstinere'. Three things seem plainly necessary to make an action or omission culpable: 1. That it be in our power to perform or forbear it; for, as Origen and all the fathers say, no man is blameworthy for not doing what he could not do." And elsewhere the Doctor insists, that "when any

do evil of necessity, what they do is no vice, that they are guilty of no fault, are worthy of no blame, dispraise, or dishonor, but are unblameable.

If these things are true, in Dr. Whitby's sense of necessity, they will prove all such to be blameless who are given up of God to sin, in That they commit after they are thus given up. That there is such a thing, as men's being judicially given up to sin, is certain, if the Scripture rightly informs us, such a thing beings often there spoken of; as in <sup>PSALM</sup> Psalm 81:12, "So I gave them up to their own hearts' lust, and they walked in their own counsels." 7:42, "Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven." <sup>ROMANS</sup> Romans 1:24, "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves." Verse 26, "For this cause God gave them up to vile affections." Verse 28, "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave then over to a reprobate mind, to do those things that are not convenient."

It is needless to stand particularly to inquire what God's "giving men up to their own hearts' lusts" signifies; it is sufficient to observe, that hereby is certainly meant God's so ordering or disposing things, in some respect or other, either by doing or forbearing to do, as that the consequence should be men's continuing in their sins. So much as men are given up to, so much is the consequence of their being given up, whether that be less or more. If God does not order things so, by action or permission, that sin will be the consequence, then the event proves that they are not given up to that consequence. If good be the consequence, instead of evil, then God's mercy is to be acknowledged in that good; which mercy must be contrary to God's judgment in giving ups to evil. If the event must prove that they are given up to evil as the consequence, then the persons who are the subjects of his judgment must be the subjects of such an event, and so the event is necessary.

If not only co-action, but all necessity, will prove men blameless, then Judas was blameless, after Christ had given him over, and had already declared his certain damnation, and that he should verily betray him. He was guilty of no sin in betraying his Master, on this supposition; though his so doing is spoken of by Christ as the most aggravated sin, more heinous than the sin of Pilate in crucifying him. And the Jews in Egypt in

Jeremiah's time, were guilty of no sin, in their not worshipping the true God, after God had "SWORN by his great names that his name should be no more named in the mouth of any man of Judah, in all the land of Egypt," <sup>244B</sup> Jeremiah 44:26.

Dr. Whitby (Disc. on the Five Points, pp. 302, 303) denies that men, in this world, are ever so given up by God to sin, that their wills should be necessarily determined to evil; though he owns, that hereby it may become exceeding difficult for men to do good, having a strong bent and powerful inclination to what is evil. — But if we should allow the case to be just as he represents, the judgment of giving up to sin will no better agree with his notions of that liberty which is essential to praise or blame, than if we should suppose it to render the avoiding of sin impossible. For if an impossibility of avoiding sin wholly excuses a man, then, for the same reason, its being difficult to avoid it excuses him in part, and this just in proportion to the degree of difficulty. If the influence of moral impossibility or inability be the same, to excuse persons in not doing, or not avoiding any thing, as that of natural inability, (which is supposed,) then undoubtedly, in like manner, moral difficulty has the same influence to excuse with natural difficulty. But all allow that natural impossibility wholly excuses, and also that natural difficulty excuses in part, and makes the act or omission less blameable in proportion to the difficulty. All natural difficulty, according to the plainest dictates of the light of nature, excuses in some degree, so that the neglect is not so blameable, as if there had been no difficulty in the case: and so the greater the difficulty is, still the more excusable, in proportion to the increase of the difficulty. And as natural impossibility wholly excuses and excludes all blame, so the nearer the difficulty approaches to impossibility, still the nearer a person is to blamelessness in proportion to that approach. And if the case of moral impossibility or necessity be just the same with natural necessity or co-action, as to influence to excuse a neglect, then also, for the same reason, the case of natural difficulty does not differ in influence, to excuse a neglect, from moral difficulty, arising from a strong bias or bent to evil, such as Dr. Whitby owns in the case of those that are given up to their own hearts lusts. So that the fault of such persons must be lessened, in proportion to the difficulty, and approach to impossibility. If ten degrees of moral difficulty make the action quite impossible, and so wholly excuse,

then if there be nine degrees of difficulty, the person is in great part excused, and is nine degrees in ten less blameworthy than if there had been no difficulty at all; and he has but one degree of blameworthiness. The reason is plain, on Arminian principles, viz. because as difficulty, by antecedent bent and bias on the will, is increased, liberty of indifference, and self-determination in the will, is diminished: so much hindrance and impediment is there in the way of the will's acting freely, by mere self-determination. And if ten degrees of such hindrance take away all such liberty, then nine degrees take away nine parts in ten, and leave but one degree of liberty. And therefore there is but one degree of blameableness, *ceteris paribus*, in the neglect; the man being no further blameable in what he does or neglects than he has liberty in that affair: for blame or praise (say they) arises wholly from a good use or abuse of liberty.

From all which it follows, that a strong bent and bias one way, and difficulty of going the contrary, never cause a person to be at all more exposed to sin, or any thing blameable: because, as the difficulty is increased, so much the less is required and expected. Though in one respect exposedness to sin or fault is increased, viz. by an increase of exposedness to the evil action or omission, yet it is diminished in another respect to balance it, namely, as the sinfulness or blameableness of the action or omission is diminished in the same proportion. So that, on the whole, the affair, as to exposedness to guilt or blame, is left just as it was.

To illustrate this, let us suppose a scale of a balance to be intelligent, and a free agent, and indued with a self-moving power, by virtue of which it could act and produce effects to a certain degree, ex. gr. to move itself up or down with a force equal to a weight of ten pounds; and that it might therefore be required of it, in ordinary circumstances, to move itself down with that force, for which it has power and full liberty, and therefore would be blameworthy if it failed of it. But then let us suppose a weight of ten pounds to be put in the opposite scale, which in force entirely counterbalances its self-moving power, and so renders it impossible for it to move down at all; and therefore wholly excuses it from any such motion. But if we suppose there be only nine pounds in the opposite scale, this renders its motion not impossible, but yet more difficult; so that it can now only move down with the force of one pound; but, however, this is all that is required of it under these circumstances; it is wholly

excused from nine parts of its motion: and if the scale, under these circumstances, neglects to move, and remains at rest, all that it will be blamed for, will be its neglect of that one-tenth part of its motion; which it had as much liberty and advantage for, as in usual circumstances it has for the greater motion which in such a case would be required. So that this new difficulty does not at all increase its exposedness to any thing blameworthy.

And thus the very supposition of difficulty in the way of a man's duty, or proclivity to sin, through a being, given up to hardness of heart, or indeed by any other means whatsoever, is an inconsistency, according to Dr. Whitby's notions of liberty, virtue and vice, blame and praise. The avoiding sin and blame, and the doing what is virtuous and praiseworthy, must be always equally easy.

Dr. Whitby's notions of liberty, obligation, virtue, sin, etc. lead him into another inconsistency. He abundantly insists that necessity is inconsistent with the nature of sin or fault. He says, in the fore-mentioned treatise, p. 14, "Who can blame a person for doing what he could not help?" And page 15, "It being sensibly unjust to punish any man for doing that which it was never in his power to avoid?" And in p. 341, to confirm his opinion, he quotes one of the fathers, saying, "Why doth God command, if man hath not free will and power to obey?" And again, in the same and the next page, "Who will not cry out, that it is folly to command him that hath not liberty, to do what is commanded; and that it is unjust to condemn him that has it not in his power to do what is required?" And in p. 373, he cites another, saying, "A law is given to him that can turn to both parts; i.e. obey or transgress it; but no law can be against him who is bound by nature."

And yet the same Dr. Whitby asserts, that fallen man is not able to perform perfect obedience. In p. 165, he has these words: "The nature of Adam had power to continue innocent and without sin; whereas it is certain our nature never had so." But if we have not power to continue innocent and without sin, then sin is inconsistent with necessity, and we may be sinful in that which we have not power to avoid; and those things cannot be true, which he asserts elsewhere, namely, "That if we be necessitated, neither sins of omission nor commission would deserve that

name,”(p. 348.) If we have it not in our power to be innocent, then we have it not in our power to be blameless; and if so, we are under a necessity of being blameworthy. And how does this consist with what he so often asserts that necessity is inconsistent with blame or praise? If we have it not in our power to perform perfect obedience to all the commands of God, then we are under a necessity of breaking some commands, in some degree; having no power to perform so much as is commanded. And if so, why does he cry out of the unreasonableness and folly of commanding beyond what men have power to do?

And Arminians in general are very inconsistent with themselves in what they say of the inability of fallen man in this respect. They strenuously maintain, that it would be unjust in God to require any thing of us beyond our present power and ability to perform; and also hold, that we are now unable to perform perfect obedience, and that Christ died to satisfy for the imperfections of our obedience, and has made way, that our imperfect obedience might be accepted instead of perfect; wherein they seem insensibly to run themselves into the grossest inconsistency. For (as I have observed elsewhere) “they hold, that God, in mercy to mankind, has abolished that rigorous constitution or law that they were under originally; and instead of it, has introduced a more mild constitution, and put us under a new law, which requires no more than imperfect sincere obedience, in compliance with our poor, infirm, impotent circumstances since the fall.”

Now, how can these things, be made consistent? I would ask, what law these imperfections of our obedience are a breach of? If they are a breach of no law that we were ever under, then they are not sins. And if they be not sins, what need of Christ’s dying to satisfy for them? But if they are sins, and the breach of some law, what law is it? They cannot be a breach of their new law; for that requires no other than imperfect obedience, or obedience with imperfections: and therefore to have obedience attended with imperfections, is no breach of it; for it is as much as it requires. And they cannot be a breach of their old law; for that, they say, is entirely abolished; and we never were under it. They say it would not be just in God to require of us perfect obedience, because it would not be just to require more than we can perform, or to punish us for failing of it. And, therefore, by their own scheme, the imperfections of our obedience do not



deserve to be punished. What need, therefore of Christ's dying, to satisfy for them? What need of his suffering, to satisfy for that which is no fault, and in its own nature deserves no suffering?

What need of Christ's dying to purchase, that our imperfect obedience should be accepted, when, according to their scheme, it would be unjust in itself, that any other obedience than imperfect should be required? What need of Christ's dying to make way for God's accepting such an obedience, as it would be unjust in him not to accept? Is there any need of Christ's dying to prevail with God not to do unrighteously? If it be said, that Christ died to satisfy that old law for us, that so we might not be under it, but that there might be room for our being under a more mild law; still I would inquire, what need of Christ's dying, that we might not be under a law, which (by their principles) it would be in itself unjust that we should be under, whether Christ had died or no, because, in our present state, we are not able to keep it? So the Arminians are inconsistent with themselves, not only in what they say of the need of Christ's satisfaction to atone for those imperfections which we cannot avoid, but also in what they say of the grace of God, granted to enable men to perform the sincere obedience of the new law. "I grant, says Dr. Stebbing, "indeed, that by reason of original sin, we are utterly disabled for the performance of the condition, without new grace from God. But I say, then, that he gives such a grace to all of us, by which the performance of the condition is truly possible: and upon this ground he may and doth most righteously require it." If Dr. Stebbing intends to speak properly, by grace he must mean, that assistance which is of grace, or of free favor and kindness. But yet in the same place he speaks of it as very unreasonable, unjust, and cruel, for God to require that as the condition of pardon, that is become impossible by original sin. If it be so, what grace is there in giving assistance and ability to perform the condition of pardons? Or why is that called by the name of grace, that is an absolute debt, which God is bound to bestow, and which it would be unjust and cruel in him to withhold, seeing he requires that, as the condition of pardon, which he cannot perform without it?

## SECTION 4

### COMMAND AND OBLIGATION TO OBEDIENCE CONSISTENT WITH MORAL INABILITY TO OBEY.

It being so much insisted on by Arminian writers, that necessity is inconsistent with law or command, and particularly, that it is absurd to suppose God by his command should require that of men which they are unable to do — not allowing in this case for any difference that there is between natural and moral inability — I would therefore now particularly consider this matter.

And, for the greater clearness, I would distinctly lay down the following things.

**I.** The will itself, and not only those actions, which are the effects of the will, is the proper object of precept or command. This is, such or such a state or act of men's wills is in many cases properly required of them by commands; and not only those alterations in the state of their bodies or minds that are the consequences of volition. This is most manifest; for it is the soul only that is properly and directly the subject of precepts or commands; that only being capable of receiving, or perceiving commands. The motions or state of the body are matter of command, only as they are subject to the soul, and connected with its acts. But now the soul has no other faculty whereby it can, in the most direct and proper sense, consent, yield to, or comply with, any command, but the faculty of the wills; and it is by this faculty only that the soul can directly disobey, or refuse compliance; for the very notions of consenting, yielding, accepting, complying, refusing, rejecting, etc. are, according to the meaning of the terms, nothing but certain acts of the will. Obedience, in the primary nature of it, is the submitting and yielding of the will of one to the will of another. Disobedience is the not consenting, not complying of the will of the commanded to the manifested will of the commander. Other acts that are not the acts of the will, as certain motions of the body and alterations in the soul, are obedience or disobedience only indirectly as they are connected with the state or actions of the will, according to an established law of nature. So that it is manifest, the will itself may be required: and the

being, of a good will is the most proper, direct, and immediate subject of command; and, if this cannot be prescribed or required by command or precept, nothing can; for other things can be required no otherwise than as they depend upon, and are the fruits of, a good will.

**Corol. 1.** If there be several acts of the will, or a series of acts, one following another, and one the effect of another, the first and determining act is properly the subject of command, and not only the consequent acts, which are dependent upon it. Yea, it is this more especially which is that which command or precept has a proper respect to; because it is this act that determines the whole affair: in this act the obedience or disobedience lies, in a peculiar manner; the consequent acts being all subject to it, and governed and determined by it. This determining governing act must be the proper object of precept, or none.

**Corol. 2.** It also follows, from what has been observed, that if there be any sort of act or exertion of the soul, prior to all free acts of the will or acts of choice in the case, directing and determining what the acts of the will shall be, — that act or exertion of the soul cannot properly be subject to any command or precept, in any respect whatsoever, either directly or indirectly, immediately or remotely. Such acts cannot be subject to commands directly, because they are no acts of the will; being by the supposition prior to all acts of the will, determining and giving rise to all its acts: they not being acts of the will, there can be in them no consent to, or compliance with, any command. Neither can they be subject to command or precept indirectly or remotely; for they are not so much as the effects or consequences of the will, being prior to all its acts. So that if there be any obedience in that original act of the soul, determining all volitions, it is an act of obedience wherein the will has no concern at all; it preceding every act of will. And, therefore, if the soul either obeys or disobeys in this act, it is wholly involuntarily; there is no willing obedience or rebellion, no compliance or opposition of the will in the affair: and what sort of obedience or rebellion is this?

And thus the Arminian notion of the freedom of the will consisting in the soul's determining its own acts of will, instead of being essential to moral

agency, and to men's being the subjects of moral government, is utterly inconsistent with it. For if the soul determines all its acts of will, it is therein subject to no command or moral government, as has been now observed; because its original determining act is no act of still or choice, it being prior, by the supposition, to every act of will. And the soul cannot be the subject of command in the act of the will itself, which depends on the foregoing determining act, and is determined by it; inasmuch as this is necessary, being the necessary consequence and effect of that prior determining act, which is not voluntary. Nor can the man be the subject of command or government in his external actions; because these are all necessary, being the necessary effects of the acts of the will themselves. So that mankind, according to this scheme, are subjects of command or moral government in nothing at all; and all their moral agency is entirely excluded, and no room for virtue or vice in the world.

So that it is the Arminian scheme, and not the scheme of the Calvinists, that is utterly inconsistent with moral government, and with all use of laws, precepts, prohibitions, promises, or threatenings. Neither is there any way whatsoever to make their principles consist with these things. For if it be said, that there is no prior determining act of the soul, preceding the acts of the will, but that volitions are events that come to pass by pure accident without any determining cause, this is most palpably inconsistent with all use of laws and precepts; for nothing is more plain than that laws can be of no use to direct and regulate perfect accident; which by the supposition of its being pure accident, is in no case regulated by any thing preceding; but happens, this way or that, perfectly by chance, without any cause or rule. The perfect uselessness of laws and precepts also follows from the Arminian notion of indifference, as essential to that liberty which is requisite to virtue or vice. For the end of laws is to bind to one side: and the end of commands is to turn the will one way: and therefore they are of no use unless they turn or bias the will that way. But if liberty consists in indifference, then their biasing the will one way only destroys liberty, as it puts the will out of equilibrium. So that the will, having a bias, through the influence of binding law, laid upon it, is not wholly left to itself, to determine itself which way it will, without influence from without.

**II.** Having shown that the will itself, especially in those acts which are original, leading and determining in any case, is the proper subject of precept and command, and not only those alterations in the body, etc. which are the effects of the will; I now proceed, in the second place, to observe, that the very opposition or defect of the will itself, in that act which is its original and determining act in the case; I say, the will's opposition in this act to a thing proposed or commanded, or its failing of compliance, implies a moral inability to that thing: or in other words, whenever a command requires a certain state or act of the will, and the person commanded, notwithstanding, the command and the circumstances under which it is exhibited, still finds his will opposite or wanting, in that, belong, to its state or acts, which is original and determining in the affair, that man is morally unable to obey that command.

This is manifest from what was observed in the first part concerning the nature of moral inability, as distinguished from natural: where it was observed, that a man may then be said to be morally unable to do a thing, when he is under the influence or prevalence of a contrary inclination; or has a want of inclination, under such circumstances and views. It is also evident, from what has been before proved, that the will is always, and in every individual act, necessarily determined by the strongest motive; and so is always unable to go against the motive, which, all things considered, has now the greatest strength and advantage to move the will. But no further to insist on these things, the truth of the position now laid down, viz. that when the will is opposite to, or failing of a compliance with a thing in its original determining inclination or act, it is not able to comply, appears by the consideration of these two things.

**1.** The will in the time of that diverse or opposite leading act or inclination, and when actually under the influence of it, is not able to exert itself to the contrary, to make an alteration, in order to a compliance. The inclination is unable to change itself; and that for this plain reason, that it is unable to incline to change itself: Present choice cannot at present choose to be otherwise: for that would be at present to choose something diverse from what is at present chosen. If the will, all things now considered, inclines or chooses to go that way; then it cannot choose, all things now considered, to go the other way, and so cannot choose to be made to go the other way. To suppose that the mind is now sincerely inclined to change itself to a

different inclination, is to suppose the mind is now truly inclined otherwise than it is now inclined. The will may oppose some future remote not that it is exposed to, but not its own present act.

**2.** As it is impossible that the will should comply with the thing commanded, with respect to its leading act, by an act of its own in the time of that diverse or opposite leading and original act, or after it has actually come under the influence of that determining choice or inclination; so it is impossible it should be determined to a compliance by any foregoing act; for, by the very supposition, there is no foregoing act; the opposite or non-complying act being that act which is original and determining in the case. Therefore it must be so, that if this first determining act be found non-complying, on the proposal of the command, the mind is morally unable to obey. For, to suppose it to be able to obey, is to suppose it to be able to determine and cause its first determining act to be otherwise, and that it has power better to govern and regulate its first governing and regulating act, which is absurd; for it is to suppose a prior act of the will, determining its first determining act; that is, an act prior to the first, and leading and governing the original and governing act of all; which is a contradiction.

Here, if it should be said, that although the mind has not any ability to will contrary to what it does will, in the original and leading act of the will, because there is supposed to be no prior act to determine and order it otherwise, and the will cannot immediately change itself, because it cannot at present incline to a change; yet, the mind has an ability for the present to forbear to proceed to action, and taking time for deliberation; which may be an occasion of the change of the inclination.

I answer,

**(1.)** In this objection, that seems to be forgotten which was observed before, viz. that the determining to take the matter into consideration, is itself an act of the will; and if this be all the act wherein the mind exercises ability and freedom, then this, by the supposition, must be all that can be commanded or required by precept. And if this act be the commanding act, then all that has been observed concerning the commanding act of the will remains true, that the very want of it is a moral inability to exert it, etc.

(2.) We are speaking concerning the first and leading act of the will in the case, or about the affair; and if a determining to deliberate, or, on the contrary, to proceed immediately without deliberating, be the first and leading act; or whether it be or no, if there be another act before it, which determines that; or whatever be the original and leading act; still, the foregoing proof stands good, that the non-compliance of the leading act implies moral inability to comply.

If it should be objected, that these things make all moral inability equal, and suppose men morally unable to will otherwise than they actually do will, in all cases, and equally so in every instance;

In answer to this objection, I desire two things may be observed. First, That if by being equally unable be meant as really unable; then so far as the inability is merely moral, it is true, the will, in every instance, acts by moral necessity, and is morally unable to act otherwise, as truly and properly in one case as another; as, I humbly conceive, has been perfectly and abundantly demonstrated by what has been said in the preceding part of this Essay. But yet, in some respect, the inability may be said to be greater in some instances than others: though the man may be truly unable, (if moral inability can truly be called inability,) yet he may be further from being able to do some things than others; as it is in things which men are naturally unable to do. A person, whose strength is no more than sufficient to lift the weight of one hundred pounds, is as truly and really unable to lift one hundred and one pounds, as ten thousand pounds; hut yet he is further from being able to lift the latter weight than the former; and so, according to common use of speech, has a greater inability for it. So it is in moral inability. A man is truly morally unable to choose contrary to a present inclination, which in the least degree prevails; or, contrary to that motive which, all things considered, has strength and advantage now to move the will, in the least degree, superior to all other motives in view: but yet he is further from ability to resist a very strong habit, and a violent and deeply-rooted inclination, or a motive lastly exceeding all others in strength. And again, the inability may, in some reselects, be called greater in some instances than others, as it may be more general and extensive to all acts of that kind. So, men may be said to be unable in a different sense, and to be further from moral ability, who have that moral inability which in general and habitual, than they who have only

that inability which is occasional and particular. Thus, in cases of natural inability; he that is born blind may be said to be unable to see, in a different manner, and is, in some respects, further from being able to see, than he whose sight is hindered by a transient cloud or mist.

And besides, that which was observed in the first part of this discourse, concerning the inability which attends a strong and settled habit, should be here remembered; viz. that fixed habit is attended with this peculiar moral inability by which it is distinguished from occasional volition, namely, that endeavors to avoid future volitions of that kind, which are agreeable to such a habit, much more frequently and commonly prove vain and insufficient. For though it is impossible there should be any true sincere desires and endeavors against a present volition or choice, yet there may be against volitions of that kind, when viewed at a distance. A person may desire and use means to prevent future exercises of a certain inclination; and, in order to it, may wish the habit might be removed; but his desires and endeavors may be ineffectual. The man may be said in some sense to be unable; yea, even as the word unable is a relative term, and has relation to ineffectual endeavors; yet not with regard to present, but remote endeavors.

Secondly, It must be borne in mind, according to what was observed before, that indeed no inability whatsoever, which is merely moral, is properly called by the name of inability; and that, in the strictest propriety of speech, a man may be said to have a thing in his power, if he has it at his election; and he cannot be said to be unable to do a thing, when he can, if he now pleases, or whenever he has a proper, direct, and immediate desire for it. As to those desires and endeavors that may be against the exercises of a strong habit, with regard to which men may be said to be unable to avoid those exercises, they are remote desires and endeavors in two respects. First, as to time: they are never against present volitions, but only against volitions of such a kind, when viewed at a distance. Secondly, as to their nature: these opposite desires are not directly and properly against the habit and inclination itself, or the volitions in which it is exercised; for these, in themselves considered, are agreeable; but against something else that attends them, or is their consequence: the opposition of the mind is leveled entirely against this; the inclination or volitions themselves are not at all opposed directly, and



for their own sake; but only indirectly and remotely, on the account of something alien and foreign.

**III.** Though the opposition of the will itself, or the very want of will, to a thing commanded, implies a moral inability to that thing; yet, if it be, as has been already shown, that the being of a good state or act of will, is a thing most properly required by command; then, in some cases, such a state or act of will may properly be required, which at present is not, and which may also be wanting after it is commanded. And therefore those things may properly be commanded, which men have a moral inability for.

Such a state, or act of the will may be required by command as does not already exist. For if that volition only may be commanded to be which already is, there could be no use of precept; commands in all cases would be perfectly vain and impertinent. And not only may such a will be required, as is wanting before the command is given, but also such as may possibly be wanting afterwards, — such as the exhibition of the command may not be effectual to produce or excite. Otherwise, no such thing as disobedience to a proper and rightful command is possible in any case: and there is no case supposable or possible wherein there can be an inexcusable or faulty disobedience, — which Arminians cannot affirm, consistently with their principles: for this makes obedience to just and proper commands always necessary, and disobedience impossible. And so the Arminian would overthrow himself, yielding the very point we are upon, which he so strenuously denies, viz. that law and command are consistent with necessity.

If merely that inability will excuse disobedience, which is implied in the opposition or defect of inclination remaining after the command is exhibited, then wickedness always carries that in it which excuses it. It is evermore so, that by how much the more wickedness there is in a man's heart, by so much is his inclination to evil the stronger, and by so much the more, therefore, has he of moral inability to the good required. His moral inability, consisting in the strength of his evil inclination, is the very thing wherein his wickedness consists; and yet, according to Arminian principles, it must be a thing inconsistent with wickedness; and by how much the more he has of it, by so much is he the further from wickedness.

Therefore, on the whole, it is manifest, that moral inability alone (which consists in disinclination) never renders any thing improperly the subject matter of precept or command, and never can excuse any person in disobedience or want of conformity to a command. Natural inability, arising from the want of natural capacity, or external hinderance, (which alone is properly called inability,) without doubt wholly excuses, or makes a thing improperly the matter of command. If men are excused from doing or acting any good thing, supposed to be commanded, it must be through some defect or obstacle that is not in the will itself, but intrinsic to it; either in the capacity of understanding, or body, or outward circumstances.

Here two or three things may be observed:

**1.** As to spiritual duties or acts, or any good thing in the state or imminent acts of the will itself, or of the affections (which are only certain modes of the exercise of the will,) if persons are justly excused, it must be through want of capacity in the natural faculty of understanding. Thus, the same spiritual duties, or holy affections and exercises of heart, cannot be required of men as may be of angels; the capacity of understanding being so much inferior. So, men cannot be required to love those amiable persons whom they leave had no opportunity to see, or hear, or come to the knowledge of, in any way agreeable to the natural state and capacity of the human understanding. But the insufficiency of motives will not excuse; unless their being insufficient arises not from the moral state of the will or inclination itself, but from the state of the natural understanding. The great kindness and generosity of another may be a motive insufficient to excite gratitude in the person that receives the kindness, through his vile and ungrateful temper; in this case the insufficiency of the motive arises from the state of the will or inclination of heart, and does not at all excuse. But if this generosity is not sufficient to excite gratitude, being, unknown, there being no means of information adequate to the state and measure of the person's faculties, this insufficiency is attended with a natural inability, which entirely excuses.

**2.** As to such motions of body, or exercises and alterations of mind, which do not consist in the imminent acts or state of the will itself, but are supposed to be required as effects of the will; I say, in such supposed

effects of the will, in cases wherein there is no want of a capacity of understanding, that inability, and that only, excuses, which consists in want of connection between them and the will. If the will fully complies, and the proposed effect does not prove, according to the laws of nature, to be connected with his volition, the man is perfectly excused: he has a natural inability to the thing required. For the will itself; as has been observed, is all that can be directly and immediately required by command; and other things only indirectly, as connected with the will. If therefore, there be a full compliance of will, the person has done his duty; and if other things do not prove to be connected with his volition, that is not owing to him.

**3.** Both these kinds of natural inability that have been mentioned, and so all inability that excuses, may be resolved into one thing; namely, want of natural capacity or strength; either capacity of understanding, or external strength. For when there are external defects and obstacles, they would be no obstacles, were it not for the imperfection and limitations of understanding and strength.

Corol. If things for which men have a moral inability may properly be the matter of precept or command, then they may also of invitation and counsel. Commands and invitations come very much to the same thing; the difference is only circumstantial: commands are as much a manifestation of the will of him that speaks, as invitations, and as much testimonies of expectation of compliance. The difference between them lies in nothing that touches the affair in hand. The main difference between command and invitation consists in the enforcement of the will of him who commands or invites. In the latter it is his kindness, the goodness which his will arises from: in the former it is his authority. But whatever be the ground of the will of him that speaks, or the enforcement of what he says, yet seeing neither his will nor expectation is any more testified in the one case than the other, therefore a person's being directed by invitation, is no more an evidence of insincerity in him that directs, in manifesting either a will or expectation which he has not, than his being known to be morally unable to do what he is directed to by command. So that all this grand objection of Arminians against the inability of fallen men to exert faith in Christ, or to perform other spiritual gospel duties, front the sincerity of God's counsels and invitations, must be without force.

## SECTION 5

### **THAT SINCERITY OF DESIRES AND ENDEAVORS, WHICH IS SUPPOSED TO EXCUSE IN THE NON-PERFORMANCE OF THINGS IN THEMSELVES GOOD PARTICULARLY CONSIDERED.**

It is what is much insisted on by many, that some men, though they are not able to perform spiritual duties, such as repentance of sin, love to God, a cordial acceptance of Christ as exhibited and offered in the gospel, etc., yet they may sincerely desire and endeavor these things, and therefore must be excused; it being unreasonable to blame them for the omission of those things which they sincerely desire and endeavor to do, but cannot do.

Concerning this matter, the following things may be observed:

- 1.** What is here supposed, is a great mistake, and gross absurdity; even that men may sincerely choose and desire those spiritual duties of love, acceptance, choice, rejection, etc., consisting in the exercise of the will itself, or in the disposition and inclination of the heart; and yet not be able to perform or exert them. This is absurd, because it is absurd to suppose that a man should directly, properly, and sincerely incline to have an inclination, which at the same time is contrary to his inclination; for that is to suppose him not to be inclined to that which he is inclined to. If a man, in the state and acts of his will and inclination, does properly and directly fall in with those duties, he therein performs them: for the duties themselves consist in that very thing, they consist in the state and acts of the will being so formed and directed. If the soul properly and sincerely falls in with a certain proposed act of will or choice, the soul therein makes that choice its own. Even as when a moving body falls in with a proposed direction of its motion, that is the same thing as to move in that direction
- 2.** That which is called a desire and willingness for those inward duties, in such as do not perform, has respect to these duties only indirectly and remotely, and is improperly represented as a willingness for them; not only because (as was observed before) it respects those good volitions only in a distant view, and with respect to future time; but also because evermore, not these things themselves, but something else, that is alien and

foreign, is the object that terminates these volitions and desires. A drunkard, who continues in his drunkenness, being under the power of a love and violent appetite to strong drink, and without any love to virtue, but being also extremely covetous and close, and very much exercised and grieved at the diminution of his estate, and prospect of poverty, may in a sort desire the virtue of temperance; and though his present will is to gratify his extravagant appetite, yet he may wish he had a heart to forbear feature acts of intemperance, and forsake his excesses, through an unwillingness to part with his money: but still he goes on with his drunkenness; his lavishes and endeavors are insufficient and ineffectual: such a man has no proper, direct, sincere willingness to forsake this vice, and the vicious deeds which belong to it; for he acts voluntarily in continuing to drink to excess: his desire is very improperly called a willingness to be temperate; it is no true desire of that virtue, for it is not that virtue that terminates his wishes, nor have they any direct respect at all to it. It is only the saving his money, and avoiding poverty, that terminates and exhausts the whole strength of his desire. The virtue of temperance is regarded only very indirectly and improperly, even as a necessary means of gratifying the vice of covetousness.

So, a man of an exceeding, corrupt and wicked heart, who has no love to God and Jesus Christ, but, on the contrary, being very profanely and carnally inclined, has the greatest distaste of the things of religion, and enmity against them; yet being of a family that, from one generation to another, have most of them died in youth of an hereditary consumption; and so having little hope of living long, and having been instructed in the necessity of a supreme love to Christ, and gratitude for his death and sufferings, in order to his salvation from eternal misery; if, under these circumstances, he should, through fear of eternal torments, wish he had such a disposition, but his profane and carnal heart remaining, he continues still in his habitual distaste of, and enmity to, God and religion, and wholly without any exercise of that love and gratitude, (as doubtless the very devils themselves, notwithstanding all the devilishness of their temper, would wish for a holy heart, if by that means they could get out of hell:) in this case, there is no sincere willingness to love Christ, and choose him as his chief good: these holy dispositions and exercises are not at all the direct object of the will; they truly share no part of the inclination or desire of

the soul; but all is terminated on deliverance from torment: and these graces and pious volitions, notwithstanding this forced consent, are looked upon undesirable; as when a sick man desires a dose he greatly abhors, to save his life. From these things it appears:

**3.** That this indirect willingness, which has been spoken of, is not that exercise of the will which the command requires, but is entirely a different one; being a volition of a different nature, and terminated altogether on different objects; wholly falling short of that virtue of will which the command has respect to.

**4.** This other volition, which has only some indirect concern with the duty required, cannot excuse for the want of that good will itself which is commanded; being, not the thing which answers and fulfill the command, and being wholly destitute of the virtue which the command seeks.

Further to illustrate this matter. If a child has a most excellent father, that has ever treated him with fatherly kindness and tenderness, and has every way, in the highest degree, merited his love and dutiful regard, being withal very wealthy; but the son is of so vile a disposition, that he inveterately hates his father, and yet, apprehending that his hatred him is like to prove his ruin, by bringing him finally to poverty and abject circumstances, through his father's disinheriting him, or otherwise — which is exceeding cross to his avarice and ambition — he therefore wishes it were otherwise; but yet remaining under the invincible lower of his vile and malignant disposition, he continues still in his settled hatred of his father. Now, if such a son's indirect willingness to have love and honor towards his father at all acquits or excuses before God, for his failing of actually exercising those dispositions towards him, which God requires, it must be on one of these accounts:

**(1.)** Either that it answers and fulfils the command. But this it does not, by the supposition; because the thing commanded is love and honor to his worthy parent. If the command be proper and just, as is supposed, to the thing commanded; and so nothing, else but that can answer the obligation. Or,

(2.) It must be at least, because there is that virtue or goodness in his indirect willingness, that is equivalent to the virtue required; and so balances or countervails it, and makes up for the want of it.

But that also is contrary to the supposition. The willingness the son has merely from a regard to money and honor, has no goodness in it to countervail the want of the pious filial respect required. Sincerity and reality, in that indirect willingness which has been spoken of does not make it the better. That which is real and hearty is often called sincere, whether it be in virtue or vice. Some persons are sincerely bad; others are sincerely good; and others may be sincere and hearty in things, which are in their own nature indifferent; as a man may be sincerely desirous of eating when he is hungry. But a being, sincere, hearty, and in good earnest, is no virtue, unless it be in a thing that is virtuous. A man may be sincere and hearty in joining a crew of pirates or a gang, of robbers. When the devils cried out, and besought Christ not to torment them, it was no mere pretense; they were very hearty in their desires not to be tormented: but this did not make their will or desires virtues. And if men have sincere desires, virtue in their kind and nature no better, it can be no excuse for the want of any required virtue. And as a man's being sincere in such an indirect desire or willingness to do his duty as has been mentioned, cannot excuse for the want of performance, so it is with endeavors arising from such a willingness. The endeavors can have no more goodness in them than the will which they are the effect and expression of. And, therefore, however sincere and read, and however great a person's endeavors are, yea, though they should be to the utmost of his ability, unless the will which they proceed from be truly good and virtuous, they can be of no avail, influence, or weight, to any purpose whatsoever, in a moral sense or respect. That which is not truly virtuous in God's sight, is looked upon by him as good for nothing; and so can be of no value, weight, or influence in his account, to recommend, satisfy, excuse, or make up for any moral defect. For nothing can counterbalance evil but good. If evil be in one scale, and we put a great deal into the other, sincere and earnest desires, and many and great endeavors; yet, if there be no real goodness in all, there is no weight in it; and so it does nothing towards balancing, the real weight which is in the opposite scale. It is only like the subtracting a thousand noughts from before a real number, which leaves the sum just as it was.

Indeed, such endeavors may have a negatively good influence. Those things which have no positive virtue have no positive moral influence; yet they may be an occasion of persons avoiding some positive evils. As, if a man were in the water with a neighbor that he had ill-will to, who could not swim, holding him up by his hand; which neighbor was much in debt to him; and shout I be tempted to let him sink and drown, but should refuse to comply with the temptation, not from love to his neighbor, but from the love of money, and because by his drowning he should lose his debt, that which he does in preserving his neighbor from drowning is nothing, good in the sight of God: yet hereby he avoids the greater guilt that would have been contracted if he had designedly let his neighbor sink and perish. But when Arminians, in their disputes with Calvinists, insist so much on sincere desires and endeavors, as what must excuse men, must be accepted of God, etc., it is manifest they have respect to borne positive moral weight or influence of those desires and endeavors. Accepting, justifying, or excusing, on the account of sincere honest endeavors (as they are called,) and men's doing what they can, etc., has relation to some moral value, something that is accepted as good, and, as such, countervailing some defect.

But there is a great and unknown deceit arising from the ambiguity of the phrase, sincere endeavors. Indeed, there is a vast indistinctness and unfixedness in most, or at least very many, of the terms used to express things pertaining to moral and spiritual matters. Whence arise innumerable mistakes, strong prejudices, inextricable confusion, and endless controversy. The word sincere is most commonly, used to signify something that is good: men are habituated to understand by it the same as honest and upright; which terms excite an idea of something good in the strictest and highest sense; good in the sight of Him who sees not only the outward appearance, but the heart. And, therefore, men think that if a person be sincere, he will certainly be accepted. If it be said that any one is sincere in his endeavors, this suggests to men's minds as much as that his heart and will is good, that there is no defect of duty as to virtuous inclination; he honestly and uprightly desires and endeavors to do as he is required; and this leads them to suppose, that it would be very hard and unreasonable to punish him only because he is unsuccessful in his



endeavors, the thing endeavored being beyond his power. Whereas it ought to be observed, that the word sincere has these different significations:

**1.** Sincerity, as the word is sometimes used, signifies no more than reality of will and endeavor, with respect to any thing that is professed or pretended, without any consideration of the nature of the principle or aim whence this real will and true endeavor arises. If a man has some real desire to obtain a thing, either direct or indirect, or does really endeavor after a thing, he is said sincerely to desire or endeavor it; without any consideration of the goodness or virtuousness of the principle he acts from, or any excellency or worthiness of the end he acts for. Thus, a man who is kind to his neighbour's wife who is sick and languishing, and very helpful in her case, makes a show of desiring and endeavoring her restoration to health and vigor; and not only makes such a show, but there is a reality in his presence — he does heartily and earnestly desire to have her health restored, and uses his true and utmost endeavors for it; he is said sincerely to desire and endeavor it, because he does so truly or really; though perhaps the principle he acts from is no other than a vile and scandalous passion; having lived in adultery with her, he earnestly desires to have her health and vigor restored, that he may return to his criminal pleasures with her. Or,

**2.** By sincerity is meant, not merely a reality of will and endeavor of some sort or other, and from some consideration or other, but a virtuous sincerity. That is, that in the performance of those particular acts that are the matter of virtue or duty, there be not only the matter, but the form and essence of virtue, consisting in the aim that governs the act, and the principle exercised in it. There is not only the reality of the act, that is as it were the body of the duty; but also the soul, which should properly belong to such a body. In this sense, a man is said to be sincere, when he acts with a pure intention; not from sinister views, or by-ends: he not only in reality desires and seeks the thing to be done, or qualification to be obtained, for some end or other; but he wills the thing directly and properly, as neither forced nor bribed: the virtue of the thing is properly the object of the will.

In the former sense, a man is said to be sincere, in opposition to a mere pretense and show of the particular thing to be done or exhibited, without

any real desire or endeavor at all. In the latter sense, a man is said to be sincere, in opposition to that show of virtue there is in merely doing the matter of duty, without the reality of the virtue itself in the soul, and the essence of it, which there is a show of. A man may be sincere in the former sense, and yet in the latter be in the sight of God, who searches the heart, a vile hypocrite.

In the latter kind of sincerity, only, is there any thing truly valuable or acceptable in the sight of God. And this is the thing, which in Scripture is called sincerity, uprightness, integrity, truth in the inward parts, and a being of a perfect heart. And if there be such a sincerity, and such a degree of it as there ought to be, and there be any thing further that the man is not able to perform, or which does not prove to be connected with his sincere desires and endeavors, the man is wholly excused and acquitted in the sight of God; his will shall surely be accepted for his deed: and such a sincere will and endeavor is all that in strictness is required of him by any command of God. But as to the other kind of sincerity of desires and endeavors, it, having no virtue in it, (as was observed before,) can be of no avail before God, in any case, to recommend, satisfy, or excuse, and has no positive moral weight or influence whatsoever

**Corol. 1.** Hence it may be inferred, that nothing in the reason and nature of things appears from the consideration of any moral weight of that former kind of sincerity, which has been spoken of, at all obliging us to believe, or leading us to suppose, that God has made any positive promises of salvation, or grace, or any saving assistance, or any spiritual benefit whatsoever, to any desires, prayers, endeavors, striving, or obedience of those who hitherto have no true virtue or holiness in their hearts; though we should suppose all the sincerity, and the utmost degree of endeavor, that is possible to be in a person without holiness.

Some object against God's requiring, as the condition of salvation, those holy exercises which are the result of a supernatural renovation: such as a supreme respect to Christ, love to God, loving holiness for its own sake, etc.; that these inward dispositions and exercises are above men's power, as they are by nature; and therefore that we may conclude, that when men are brought to be sincere in their endeavors, and do as well as they can,

they are accepted; and that this must be all that God requires in order to men's being, received as the objects of his favor, and must be what God has appointed as the condition of salvation: concerning which I would observe, that in such a manner of speaking of "men's being accepted because they are sincere, and do as well as they can," there is evidently a supposition of some virtue, some degree of that which is truly good, though it does not go so far as were to be wished. For if men do what they can, unless their so doing be from some good principle, disposition, or exercise of heart, some virtuous inclination or act of the will, their so doing, what they can, is in some respect not a whit better than if they did nothing at all. In such a case, there is no more positive moral goodness in a man's doing, what he can, than in the wind-mill's doing what it can; because the action does no more proceed from virtue, and there is nothing in such sincerity of endeavor, or doing what we can, that should render it any more a proper or fit recommendation to positive favor and acceptance, or the condition of any reward or actual benefit, than doing nothing; for both the one and the other are alike nothing, as to any true moral weight or value.

**Corol. 2.** Hence also it follows, there is nothings that appears in the reason and nature of things which can justly lead us to determine, that God will certainly give the necessary means of salvation, or some way or other bestow true holiness and eternal life on those heathen who are sincere (in the sense above explained) in their endeavors to find out the will of the Deity, and to ease him, according to their light, that they may escape his future displeasure and wrath, and obtain happiness in the future state, through his favor.

## SECTION 6

### **LIBERTY OF INDIFFERENCE NOT ONLY NOT NECESSARY TO VIRTUE, BUT UTTERLY INCONSISTENT WITH IT; AND ALL EITHER VIRTUOUS OR VICIOUS HABITS OR INCLINATIONS INCONSISTENT WITH ARMINIAN NOTIONS OF LIBERTY AND MORAL AGENCY.**

To suppose such a freedoms of will as Arminians talk of, to be requisite to virtue and vice, is many ways contrary to common sense.

If indifference belongs to liberty of will, as Arminians suppose, and it be essential to a virtuous action that it be performed in a state of liberty, as they also suppose, it will follow, that it is essential to a virtuous action that it be performed in a state of indifference: and if it be performed in a state of indifference, then doubtless it must be performed in the time of indifference. And so it will follow, that in order to the virtuousness of an act, the heart must be indifferent in the time of the performance of that act, and the more indifferent and cold the heart is with relation to the act which is performed, so much the better; because the act is performed with so much the greater liberty. But is this agreeable to the light of nature? Is it agreeable to the notions which mankind, in all ages, have of virtue; that it lies in that which is contrary to indifference, even in the tendency and inclination of the heart to virtuous action; and that the stronger the inclinations, and so the further from indifference, the more virtuous the heart, and so much the more praiseworthy the act which proceeds from it? If we should suppose (contrary to what has been before demonstrated) that there may be all act of will in a state of indifference; for instance, this act, viz. the will's determining to put itself out of a state of indifference, and give itself a preponderation one way; then it would follow, on Arminian principles, that this act or determination of the will is that alone wherein virtue consists, because this only is performed, while the mind remains in a state of indifference, and so in a state of liberty; for when once the mind is put out of its equilibrium, it is no longer in such a state: and therefore all the acts which follow afterwards, proceeding from bias, can have the nature neither of virtue nor vice. Or if the thing which the will can do, while yet in a state of indifference, and so of liberty, be only to

suspend acting, and determine to take the matter into consideration, then this determination is that alone wherein virtue consists, and not proceeding to action after the scale is turned by consideration. So that it will follow, from these principles, all that is done after the mind, by any means, is once out of its equilibrium, and already possessed by an inclination, and arising from that inclination, has nothing of the nature of virtue or vice, and is worthy of neither blame nor praise. But how plainly contrary is this to the universal sense of mankind, and to the notion they have of sincerely virtuous actions! which is, that they are actions which proceed from a heart well disposed and inclined; and the stronger and the more fixed and determined the good disposition of the heart, the greater the sincerity of virtue, and so the more of the truth and reality of it. But if there be any acts which are done in a state of equilibrium, or spring immediately from perfect indifference and coldness of heart, they cannot arise from any good principle or disposition in the heart; and consequently, according to common sense, have no sincere goodness in them, having no virtue of heart in them. To have a virtuous heart, is to have a heart that favors virtue, and is friendly to it, and not one perfectly cold and indifferent about it.

And besides, the actions that are done in a state of indifference, or that arise immediately out of such a state, cannot be virtuous, because, by the supposition, they are not determined by any preceding, choice. For if there be preceding, choice, then choice intervenes between the act and the state of indifference; which is contrary to the supposition of the act's arising immediately out of indifference. But those acts which are not determined by preceding choice, cannot be virtuous or vicious, by Arminian principles, because they are not determined by the will. So that neither one way nor the other can any actions be virtuous or vicious, according to Arminian principles. If the action be determined by preceding act of choice, it cannot be virtuous; because the action is not done in a state of indifference, nor does it immediately rise from such a state; and so is not done in a state of liberty. If the action be not determined by a preceding act of choice, then it cannot be virtuous; because then the will is not self-determined in it. So that it is made certain, that neither virtue nor vice can ever find any place in the universe. Moreover, that it is necessary to a virtuous action that it be performed in a state of indifference, under a notion of that being a state of liberty, is contrary to common sense; as it is a

dictate of common Excise, that indifference itself in many cases is vicious, and so to a high degree. As if, when I see my neighbor or near friend, and one who has in the highest degree merited of me, in extreme distress and really to perish, I find an indifference in my heart with respect to any thing proposed to be done, which I can easily do, for his relief. So, if it should be proposed to me to blaspheme God, or kill my father, or do numberless other things, which might be mentioned, the being indifferent, for a moment, would be highly vicious and vile.

And it may be further observed, that to suppose this liberty of indifference is essential to virtue and vice, destroys the great difference of degrees of the guilt of different crimes, and takes away the heinousness of the most flagitious, horrid iniquities; such as adultery, bestiality, murder, perjury, blasphemy, etc. For according to these principles, there is no harm at all in having the mind in a state of perfect indifference with respect to these crimes; nay, it is absolutely necessary in order to any virtue in avoiding them, or vice in doing them. But for the mind to be in a state of indifference with respect to them, is to be next door to doing them; it is then infinitely near to choosing, and so committing the fact; for equilibrium is the next step to a degree of preponderation; and one, even the least degree of preponderation (all things considered) is choice. And not only so, but for the will to be in a state of perfect equilibrium with respect to such crimes, is for the mind to be in such a state as to be full as likely to choose them as to refuse them, to do them as to omit them. And if our minds must be in such a state, wherein it is as near to choosing as refusing, and wherein it must of necessity, according to the nature of things, be as likely to commit them as to refrain from them, where is the exceeding heinousness of choosing and committing them? If there be no harm in often being in such a state wherein the probability of doing and forbearing are exactly equal, there being an equilibrium, and no more tendency to one than the other, then, according to the nature and laws of such a contingency, it may be expected as an inevitable consequence of such a disposition of things, that we should choose them as often as we reject them; that it should generally so fall out, is necessary, as equality in the effect is the natural consequence of the equal tendency of the cause, or of the antecedent state of things from which the effect arises. Why then should we be so exceedingly to blame if it does so fall out?

It is many ways apparent, that the Arminian scheme of liberty is utterly inconsistent with the being of any such things as either virtuous or vicious habits or dispositions. If liberty of indifference be essential to moral agency, then there can be no virtue in any habitual inclinations of the heart; which are contrary to indifference, and imply in their nature the very destruction and exclusion of it. They suppose nothing can be virtuous in which no liberty is exercised; but how absurd is it to talk of exercising indifference under bias and preponderation!

And if self-determining power in the will be necessary to moral agency, praise, blame, etc., then nothing done by the will can be any further praise or blame-worthy, than so far as the will is moved, swayed, and determined by itself, and the scales turned by the sovereign power the will has over itself. And therefore the will must not be put out of its balance already, the preponderation must not be determined and effected before-hand, and so the self-determining act anticipated. Thus it appears another way, that habitual bias is insistent with that liberty which Arminians suppose to be necessary to virtue or vice; and so it follows, that habitual bias itself cannot be either virtuous or vicious.

The same thing follows from their doctrine concerning the inconsistency of necessity with liberty, praise, dispraise, etc. None will deny, that bias and inclinations may-be so strong as to be invincible, and leave no possibility of the will's determining contrary to it; and so be attended with necessity. This Dr Whitby allows concerning the will of God, angels, and glorified saints, with respect to good; and the will of devils with respect to evil. Therefore, if necessity be inconsistent with liberty; then, when fixed inclination is to such a degree of strength, it utterly excludes all virtue, vice, praise, or blame. And if so, then the nearer habits are to this strength, the more do they impede liberty, and so diminish praise and blame. If very strong habits destroy liberty, the lesser ones proportionately hinder it, according to their degree of strength. And therefore it will follow that then is the act most virtuous or vicious when performed without any inclination or habitual bias at all, because it is then performed with most liberty.

Every prepossessing fixed bias on the mind brings a degree of moral inability for the contrary; because, so far as the minding is biased and

prepossessed so much hinderance is there of the contrary. And therefore, if moral inability be inconsistent with moral agency, or the nature of virtue and vice, then, so far as there is any such thing as evil disposition of heart, or habitual depravity of inclination, whether covetousness, pride, malice, cruelty, or whatever else, so much the more excusable persons are, so much the less have their evil acts of this kind the nature of vice. And, on the contrary, whatever excellent dispositions and inclinations they have, so much are they the less virtuous.

It is evident, that no habitual disposition of heart, whether it be to a greater or less degree, can be in any degree virtuous or vicious; or the actions which proceed from them at all praise or blame-worthy. Because, though we should suppose the habit not to be of such strength as wholly to take away all moral ability and self-determining power; or hinder but that, although the act be partly from bias, yet it may be in part from self-determination; yet in this case, all that is from antecedent bias must be set aside, as of no consideration; and in estimating the degree of virtue or vice, no more must be considered than what arises from self-determining power, without any influence of that bias, because liberty is exercised in no more; so that all that is the exercise of habitual inclination, is thrown away, as not belonging to the morality of the action. By which it appears, that no exercise of these habits, let them be stronger or weaker, can ever have any thing, of the nature of either virtue or vice.

Here if any one should say, that notwithstanding all these things, there may be the nature of virtue and vice in the habits of the mind, because these habits may be the effects of those acts wherein the mind exercised liberty; that however the fore-mentioned reasons will prove that no habits which are natural, or that are born or created with us, can be either virtuous or vicious, yet they will not prove this of habits which have been acquired and established by repeated free acts.

To such an objector I would say that this evasion will not at all help the matter. For if freedom of will be essential to the very nature of virtue and vice, then there is no virtue or vice but only in that very thing wherein this liberty is exercised. If a man, in one or more things that he does, exercises liberty, and then by those acts is brought into such circumstances that his liberty ceases, and there follows a long series of acts or events that come



to pass necessarily; those consequent acts are not virtuous or vicious, rewardable or punishable; but only the free acts that established this necessity; for in them alone was the man free. The following effects, that are necessary, have no more of the nature of virtue or vice, than health or sickness of body have properly the nature of virtue or vice, being the effects of a course of free acts of temperance or intemperance; or than the good qualities of a clock are of the nature of virtue, which are the effects of free acts of the artificer; or the goodness and sweetness of the fruits of a garden are moral virtues, being the effects of the free and faithful acts of the gardener. If liberty be absolutely requisite to the morality of actions, and necessity wholly inconsistent with it, as Arminians greatly insist; then no necessary effects whatsoever, let the cause be never so good or bad, can be virtuous or vicious; but the virtue or vice must be only in the free cause. Agreeably to this, Dr. Whitby supposes the necessity that attends the good and evil habits of the saints in heaven, and damned in hell, which are the consequence of their free acts in their state of probation, are not rewardable or punishable.

On the whole it appears, that if the notions of Arminians concerning liberty and moral agency be true, it will follow, that there is no virtue in any such habits or qualities as humility, meekness, patience, mercy, gratitude, generosity, heavenly-mindedness; nothing at all praiseworthy in loving Christ above father and mother, wife and children, or our own lives; or in delight in holiness, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, love to enemies, universal benevolence to mankind; and, on the other hand, there is nothing at all vicious, or worthy of dispraise, in the most sordid, beastly, malignant, devilish dispositions; in being ungrateful, profane, habitually hating God and things sacred and holy; or in being most treacherous, envious, and cruel towards men. For all these things are dispositions and inclinations of the heart. And, in short, there is no such thing as any virtuous or vicious quality of mind no such thing as inherent virtue and holiness, or vice and sin; and the stronger those habits or dispositions are, which used to be called virtuous and vicious, the further they are from being so indeed; the more violent men's lusts are, the more fixed their pride, envy, ingratitude, and maliciousness, still the further are they from being blameworthy. If there be a man that, by his own repeated acts, or by any other means, is come to be of the most hellish disposition, desperately

inclined to treat his neighbors with injuriousness, contempt, and malignity: the further they should be from any disposition to be angry with him, or in the least to blame him. So, on the other hand, if there be a person, who is of a most excellent spirit, strongly inclining him to the most amiable actions, admirably meek, benevolent, etc. so much is he further from any thing rewardable or commendable. On which principles, the man Jesus Christ was very far from being praiseworthy for those acts of holiness and kindness which he performed, these propensities being strong in his heart. And, above all, the infinitely holy and gracious God is infinitely remote from any thing commendable, his good inclinations being infinitely strong, and he, therefore, at the utmost possible distance from being at liberty. And in all cases, the stronger the inclinations of any are to virtue, and the more they love it, the less virtuous they are; and the more they love wickedness, the less vicious. — Whether these things are agreeable to Scripture, let every Christian, and every man who has read the Bible, judge: and whether they are agreeable to common sense, let every one judge that has human understanding in exercise.

And, if we pursue these principles, we shall find that virtue and vice are wholly excluded out of the world; and that there never was, nor ever can be, any such thing as one or the other, either in God, angels, or men. No propensity, disposition, or habit, can be virtuous or vicious, as has been shown: because they, so far as they take place, destroy the freedom of the will, the foundation of all moral agency, and exclude all capacity of either virtue or vice. — And if habits and dispositions themselves be not virtuous nor vicious, neither can the exercise of these dispositions be so; for the exercise of bias is not the exercise of free self determining will, and so there is no exercise of liberty in it. Consequently, no man is virtuous or vicious, either in being well or ill disposed, nor in acting from a good or bad disposition. And whether this bias or disposition be habitual or not, if it exists but a moment before the act of will, which is the effect of it, it alters not the case, as to the necessity of the effect. Or if there be no previous disposition at all, either habitual or occasional, that determines the act, then it is not choice that determines it: it is therefore a contingency, that happens to the man, arising from nothing in him, and is necessary, as to any inclination or choice of his; and, therefore, cannot make him either the better or worse, any more than a tree is better than other trees, because it

oftener happens to be lit upon by a swan or nightingale: or a rock more vicious than other rocks, because rattlesnakes have happened oftener to crawl over it. So that there is no virtue nor vice in good or bad dispositions, either fixed or transient; nor any virtue or vice in acting from any good or bad previous inclination; nor yet any virtue or vice, in acting wholly without any previous inclination. Where, then, shall we find room for virtue or vice?

## SECTION 7

### **ARMINIAN NOTIONS OF MORAL AGENCY INCONSISTENT WITH ALL INFLUENCE OF MOTIVE AND INDUCEMENT, IN EITHER VIRTUOUS OR VICIOUS ACTIONS.**

As Arminian notions of that liberty, which is essential to virtue or vice, are inconsistent with common sense, in their being inconsistent with all virtuous or vicious habits and dispositions; so they are no less so in their inconsistency with all influence of motives in moral actions.

It is equally against those notions of liberty of will, whether there be, previous to the act of choice, a preponderancy of the inclination, or a preponderancy of those circumstances which have a tendency to move the inclination. And, indeed, it comes to just the same thing: to say, the circumstances of the mind are such as to tend to sway and turn its inclination one way, is the same thing as to say, the inclination of the mind, as, under such circumstances, tends that way.

Or if any think it most proper to say, that motives do alter the inclination, and give a new bias to the mind, it will not alter the case, as to the present argument. For if motives operate by giving the mind an inclination, then they operate by destroying the mind's indifference, and laying, it under a bias. But to do this, is to destroy the Arminian freedom: it is not to leave the will to its own self-determination, but to bring it into subjection to the power of something extrinsic, which operates upon it, sways and determines it, previous to its own determination. So that what is done from motive, cannot be either virtuous or vicious. And besides, if the acts of the will are excited by motives, those motives are the causes of those

acts of the will; which makes the acts of the will necessary as effects necessarily follow the efficiency of the cause. And if the influence and power of the motive causes the volition, then the influence of the motive determines volitions, and volition does not determine itself; and so is not free, in the sense of Arminians, (as has been largely shown already,) and consequently can be neither virtuous nor vicious.

The supposition which has already been taken notice of, as an insufficient evasion in other cases, would be, in like manner, impertinently alleged in this case; namely, the supposition that liberty consists in a power of suspending action for the present, in order to deliberation. If it should be said, though it be true that the will is under a necessity of finally following the strongest motive, yet it may, for the present, forbear to act upon the motive presented, till there has been opportunity thoroughly to consider it, and compare its real weight with the merit of other motives: I answer as follows:

Here, again, it must be remembered, that if determining thus to suspend and consider, be that act of the will, wherein alone liberty is exercised, then in this all virtue and vice must consist; and the acts that follow this consideration, and are the effects of it, being necessary, are no more virtuous or vicious than some good or bad events, which happen when they are fast asleep, and are the consequence of what they did when they were awake. Therefore, I would here observe two things:

- 1.** To suppose that all virtue and vice, in every case, consists in determining, whether to take time for consideration or not, is not agreeable to common sense. For according to such a supposition, the most horrid crimes, adultery, murder, sodomy, blasphemy, etc. do not at all consist in the horrid nature of the things themselves, but only in the neglect of thorough consideration before they were perpetrated; which brings their viciousness to a small matter, and makes all crimes equal. If it be said, that neglect of consideration, when such heinous evils are proposed to choice, is worse than in other cases: I answer, this is inconsistent, as it supposes the very thing to be, which at the same time, is supposed not to be; it supposes all moral evil, all viciousness and heinousness, does not consist merely in the want of consideration. It supposes some crimes in themselves, in their own nature, to be more heinous than others,

antecedent to consideration or inconsideration which lays the person under a previous obligation to consider in some cases more than others.

**2.** If it were so, that all virtue and vice, in every case, consisted only in the act of the will, whereby it determines whether to consider or no, it would not alter the case in the least, as to the present argument. For still in this act of the will on this determination, it is induced by some motive, and necessarily follows the strongest motive; and so is necessarily, even in that act wherein alone it is either virtuous or vicious.

One thing more I would observe, concerning the inconsistency of Arminian notions of moral agency with influence of motives. I suppose, none will deny, that it is possible for motives to be set before the mind so powerful, and exhibited in so strong a light, and under so advantageous circumstances, as to be invincible; and such as the mind cannot but yield to. In this case, Arminians will doubtless say, liberty is destroyed. And if so, then if motives are exhibited with half so much power, they hinder liberty in proportion to their strength, and go half-way towards destroying it. If a thousand degrees of motive abolish all liberty, then five hundred take it half away. If one degree of the influence of motive does not at all infringe or diminish liberty, then no more do two degrees; for nothing doubled, is still nothing. And if two degrees do not diminish the will's liberty, no more do four, eight, sixteen, or six thousand. For nothing, multiplied never so much, comes to but nothing. If there be nothing in the nature of motive or moral suasion, that is at all opposite to liberty, shall the greatest degree of it cannot hurt liberty. But if there be any thing in the nature of the thing that is against liberty, then the least degree of it hurts it in some degree, and consequently hurts and diminishes virtue. If invincible motives to that action which is good, take away all the freedom of the act, and so all the virtue of it; then the more forcible the motives are, so much the worse, so much the less virtue; and the weaker the motives are, the better for the cause of virtue; and none is best of all.

Now, let it be considered, whether these things are agreeable to common sense. If it should be allowed, that there are some instances wherein the soul chooses without any motive, what virtue can there be in such a choice? I am sure there is no prudence or wisdom in it. Such a choice is made for no good end; for it is for no end at all. If it were for any end, the

view of the end would be the motive exciting to the act; and if the act be for no good end, and so from no good aim, then there is no good intention in it: and, therefore according, to all our natural notions of virtue, no more virtue in it than in the motion of the smoke, which is driven to and fro by the winds without any aim or end in the thing moved, and which knows not whither, nor why and wherefore, it is moved.

**Corol. 1.** By these things it appears, that the argument against the Calvinists, taken from the use of counsels, exhortations, invitations, expostulations, etc. so much insisted on by Arminians, is truly against themselves. For these things can operate no other way to any good effect, than as in them is exhibited motive and inducement, tending, to excite and determine the acts of the will. But it follows, on their principles, that the acts of will excited by such causes, cannot be virtuous; because, so far as they are from these, they are not from the will's self-determining power. Hence it will follow, that it is not worth the while to offer any arguments to persuade men to any virtuous volition or voluntary action; it is in vain to set before them the wisdom and amiableness of ways of virtue, or the odiousness and folly of ways of vice. This notion of liberty and moral agency frustrates all endeavors to draw men to virtue by instruction or persuasion, precept, or example: for though these things may induce men to what is materially virtuous, yet at the same time they take away the form of virtue, because they destroy liberty; as they, by their own power, put the will out of its equilibrium, determine and turn the scale, and take the work of self-determining power out of its hands. And the clearer the instructions that are given, the more powerful the arguments that are used, and the more moving the persuasions or examples, the more likely they are to frustrate their own design; because they have so much the greater tendency to put the will out of its balance, to hinder its freedom of self-determination; and so to exclude the very form of virtue, and the essence of whatsoever is praiseworthy.

So, it clearly follows, from these principles, that God has no hand in any man's virtue, nor does at all promote it, either by a physical or moral influence; that none of the moral methods he uses with men to promote virtue in the world, have tendency to the attainment of that end; that all the instructions which he has given to men, from the beginning of the

world to this day, by prophets or apostles, or by his Son Jesus Christ, that all his counsels, invitations, promises, threatenings, warnings, and expostulations; that all means he has used with men, in ordinances or providences; yea, all influences of his Spirit, ordinary and extraordinary, have had no tendency at all to excite any one virtuous act of the mind, or to promote any thing morally good and commendable, in any respect. For there is no way that these, or any other means, can promote virtue, but one of these three. Either,

**(1.)** by a physical operation on the heart. But all effects that are wrought in men in this way, have no virtue in them, by the concurring voice of all Arminians. Or,

**(2.)** morally, by exhibiting motives to the understanding, to excite good acts in the will. But it has been demonstrated, that volitions, which are excited by motives, are necessary, and not excited by a self-moving power; and therefore, by their principles, there is no virtue in them. Or,

**(3.)** by merely giving the will an opportunity to determine itself concerning the objects proposed, either to choose or reject, by its own uncaused, unmoved, uninfluenced self-determination. And if this be all, then all those means do no more to promote virtue than vice: for they do nothing but give the will opportunity to determine itself either way, either to good or bad, without laying it under any bias to either; and so there is really as much of an opportunity given to determine in favor of evil as of good.

Thus, that horrid blasphemous consequence will certainly follow from the Arminian doctrine which they charge on others; namely, that God acts an inconsistent part in using so many counsels, warnings, invitations, entreaties, etc. with sinners, to induce them to forsake sin, and turn to the ways of virtue; and that all are insincere and fallacious. It will follow, from their doctrine, that God does these things when he knows, at the same time, that they have no manner of tendency to promote the effect he seems to aim at; yea, knows that if they have any influence, this very influence will be inconsistent with such an effect, and will prevent it. But what an imputation of insincerity would this fix on Him who is infinitely holy and true! So that their's is the doctrine which, if pursued in its

consequences, does horribly reflect on the Most High, and fix on him the charge of hypocrisy; and not the doctrine of the Calvinist, according, to their frequent and vehement exclamations and invectives.

**Corol. 2.** From what has been observed in this section, it again appears, that Arminian principles and notions, when fairly examined and pursued in their demonstrable consequences, do evidently shut all virtue out of the world, and make it impossible that there should ever be any such thing in any case, or that any such thing should ever be conceived of. For, by these principles, the very notion of virtue or vice implies absurdity and contradiction. For it is absurd in itself and contrary to common sense, to suppose a virtuous act of mind without any good intention or aim; and by their principles, it is absurd to suppose a virtuous act with a good intention or aim; for to act for an end, is to act from a motive. So that if we rely on these principles, there can be no virtuous act with a good design and end; and it is self-evident, there can be none without: consequently there can be no virtuous act at all.

**Corol. 3.** It is manifest, that Arminian notions of moral agency, and the being of a faculty of will, cannot consist together: and that if there be any such thing as either a virtuous or vicious act, it cannot be an act of the will; no will can be at all concerned in it. For that act which is performed without inclination, without motive, without end, must be performed without any concern of the will. To suppose an act of the will without these, implies a contradiction. If the soul in its act has no motive or end; then, in that act (as was observed before,) it seeks nothing, goes after nothing, exerts no inclination to any thing; and this implies, that in that act it desires nothing, and chooses nothing; so that there is no act of choice in the case: and that is as much as to say, there is no act of will in the case; — Which very effectually shuts all vicious and virtuous acts out of the universe; inasmuch as, according to this, there can be no virtuous or vicious act wherein the will is concerned; and according to the plainest dictates of reason, and the light of nature, and also the principles of Arminians themselves, there can be no virtuous or vicious act wherein the will is not concerned. And therefore there is no room for any virtuous or vicious acts at all.



**Corol. 4.** If none of the moral actions of intelligent beings are influenced by either previous inclination or motive, another strange thing will follow; and this is, that God not only cannot foreknow any of the future moral actions of his creatures, but he can make no conjecture, can give no probable guess, concerning them. For, all conjecture in things of this nature must depend on some discerning or apprehension of these two things, previous disposition and motive, which, as has been observed, Arminian notions of moral agency, in their real consequence, altogether exclude.

## PART 4

*Wherein the Chief Grounds of the Reasonings of Arminians, in Support and Defence of the Forementioned, Notions of Liberty, Moral Agency, etc. and Against the Opposite Doctrine, are Considered.*

### SECTION 1

#### **THE ESSENCE OF THE VIRTUE AND VICE OF DISPOSITIONS OF THE HEART, AND ACTS OF THE WILL, LIES NOT IN THEIR CAUSE, BUT THEIR NATURE.**

ONE main foundation of the reasons which are brought to establish the fore-mentioned notions of liberty, virtue, vice, etc. is a supposition, that the virtuousness of the dispositions, or acts of the will, consists not in the nature of these dispositions or acts, but wholly in the origin or cause of them: so that if the disposition of the mind, or acts of the will, be never so good, yet if the cause of the disposition or act be not our virtue, there is nothing virtuous or praiseworthy in it; and, on the contrary, if the will, in its inclination or acts, be never so bad, yet unless it arises from something that is our vice or fault, there is nothing vicious or blameworthy in it. Hence their grand objection and pretended demonstration, or self-evidence, against any virtue and commendableness, or vice and blameworthiness, of those habits or acts of the will, which are not from some virtuous or vicious determination of the will itself.

Now, if this matter be well considered, it will appear to be altogether a mistake, yea, a gross absurdity; and that it is most certain, that if there be any such things as a virtuous or vicious disposition, or volition of mind, the virtuousness or viciousness of them consists not in the origin or cause of these things, but in the nature of them.

If the essence of virtuousness or commendableness, and of viciousness or fault, does not lie in the nature of the dispositions or acts of mind, which said to be our virtue or our fault, but in their cause, then it is certain it lies

no where at all. Thus, for instance, if the vice of a vicious act of will lies not in the nature of the act, but the cause; so that its being of a bad nature will not make it at all our fault, unless it arises from some faulty determination of ours, as its cause, or something in us that is our fault; then, for the same reason, neither can the viciousness of that cause lie in the nature of the thing itself, but in its cause: that evil determination of ours is not our fault, merely because it is of a bad nature, unless it arises from some cause in us that is our fault. And when we are come to this higher cause, still the reason of the thing holds good; though this cause be of a bad nature, yet we are not at all to blame on that account, unless it arises from something faulty in us. Nor yet can blameworthiness lie in the nature of this cause but in the cause of that. And thus we must drive faultiness back from step to step, from a lower cause to a higher, in infinitum; and that is thoroughly to banish it from the world, and to allow it no possibility of existence any where in the universality of things. On these principles, vice, or moral evil cannot exist in any thing that is an effect; because fault does not consist in the nature of things, but in their cause; as well as because effects are necessary, being unavoidably connected with their cause: therefore the cause only is to blame. And so it follows, that faultiness can lie only in that cause, which is a cause only, and no effect of anything. Nor yet can it lie in this; for then it must lie in the nature of the thing itself; not in its being from any determination of ours, nor anything faulty in us, which is the cause, nor indeed from any cause at all; for, by the supposition, it is no effect, and has no cause. And thus he that will maintain it is not the nature of habits or acts of will that makes them virtuous or faulty, but the cause, must immediately run himself out of his own assertion; and, in maintaining it, will insensibly contradict and deny it.

This is certain, that if effects are vicious and faulty, not from their nature, or from any thing, inherent in them, but because they are from a bad cause, it must be on account of the badness of the cause: a bad effect in the will must be bad, because the cause is bad, or of an evil nature, or has badness as a quality inherent in it: and a good effect in the will must be good, by reason of the goodness of the cause, or its being of a good kind and nature. And if this be what is meant, the very supposition of fault and praise lying not in the nature of the thing, but the cause, contradicts itself, and

does at least resolve the essence of virtue and vice into the nature of things, and supposes it originally to consist in that. — And if a caviller has a mind to run from the absurdity, by staying, “No, the fault of the thing, which is the cause, lies not in this, that the cause itself is of an evil nature, but that the cause is evil in that sense, that it is front another bad cause,” — still the absurdity will follow him; for if so, then the cause before charged is at once acquitted, and all the blame must be laid to the higher cause, and must consist in that’s being evil, or of an evil nature. So now we are come again to lay the blame of the thing blameworthy, to the nature of the thing, and not to the cause. And if any is so foolish as to go higher still, and ascend from step to step, till he is come to that which is the first cause concerned in the whole affair, and will say, all the blame lies in that; then, at last, he must be forced to own, that the faultiness of the thing which he supposes alone blameworthy, lies wholly in the nature of the thing, and not in the original or cause of it; for the supposition is, that it has no original, it is determined by no act of ours, is caused by nothing, faulty in us, being absolutely without any cause. And so the race is at an end, but the evader is taken in his flight!

It is agreeable to the natural notions of mankind, that moral evil, with its desert of dislike and abhorrence, and all its other ill-deservings, consists in a certain deformity in the nature of certain dispositions of the heart and acts of the will; and not in the deformity of something else, diverse from the very thing itself, which deserves abhorrence, supposed to be the cause of it; — which would be absurd, because that would be to suppose a thing that is innocent and not evil, is truly evil and faulty, because another thing is evil. It implies a contradiction; for it would be to suppose, the very thing, which is morally evil and blameworthy, is innocent and not blameworthy; but that something else, which is its cause, is only to blame. To say, that vice does not consist in the thing which is vicious, but in its cause, is the same as to say, that vice does not consist in vice, but in that which produces it.

It is true a cause may be to blame for being the cause of vice: it may be wickedness in the cause that it produces wickedness. But it would imply a contradiction, to suppose that these two are the same individual wickedness. The wicked act of the cause in producing wickedness, is one wickedness; and the wickedness produced, if there be any produced, is

another. And therefore the wickedness of the latter does not lie in the former, but is distinct from it; and the wickedness of both lies in the evil nature of the things, which are wicked.

The thing, which makes sin hateful, is that by which it deserves punishment; which is but the expression of hatred. And that, which renders virtue lovely, is the same with that on the account of which, it is fit to receive praise and reward; which are but the expressions of esteem and love. But that which makes vice hateful, is its hateful nature; and that which renders virtue lovely, is its amiable nature. It is a certain beauty or deformity that are inherent in that good or evil will, which is the soul of virtue and vice (and not in the occasion of it), which is their worthiness of esteem or disesteem, praise, or dispraise, according to the common sense of mankind. If the cause or occasion of the rise of a hateful disposition or act of will, be also hateful, suppose another antecedent evil will; that is entirely another sin, and deserves punishment by itself, under a distinct consideration. There is worthiness of dispraise in the nature of an evil volition, and not wholly in some foregoing act, which is its cause; otherwise the evil volition, which is the effect, is no moral evil, any more than sickness, or some other natural calamity, which arises from a cause morally evil.

Thus, for instance, ingratitude is hateful and worthy of dispraise, according to common sense; not because something as bad, or worse than ingratitude, was the cause that produced it; but because it is hateful in itself, by its own inherent deformity. So, the love of virtue is amiable and worthy of praise, not merely because something else went before this love of virtue in our minds, which caused it to take place there; — for instance, our own choice; we choose to love virtue, and, by some method or other, wrought ourselves into the love of it; — but because of the amiableness and condescendency of such a disposition and inclination of heart. If that was the case, that we did choose to love virtue, and so produced that love in ourselves, this choice itself could be no otherwise amiable or praiseworthy, than as love to virtue, or some other amiable inclination, was exercised and implied in it. If that choice was amiable at all, it must be so on account of some amiable quality in the nature of the choice. If we chose to love virtue, not in love to virtue, or any thing that was good and exercised no sort of good disposition to the choice, the choice itself was

not virtuous nor worthy of any praise, according to common sense, because the choice was not of a good nature.

It may not be improper here to take notice of something said by an author, that has lately made a mighty noise in America. “A necessary holiness (says her ) is no holiness. Adam could not be originally created in righteousness and true holiness, because he must choose to be righteous, before he could be righteous. And therefore he must exist, he must be created; yea, he must exercise thought and reflection, before he was righteous.” There is much more to the same effect in that place, and also in pp. 437, 438, 439, 440. If these things are so, it will certainly follow, that the first choosing to be righteous is no righteous choice; there is no righteousness or holiness in it, because no choosing to be righteous goes before it. For he plainly speaks of choosing to be righteous, as what must go before righteousness; and that which follows the choice, being the effect of the choice, cannot be righteousness or holiness; for an effect is a thing necessary, and cannot prevent the influence or efficacy of its cause; and therefore is unavoidably dependent upon the cause; and he says a necessary holiness is no holiness. So that neither can a choice of righteousness be righteousness or holiness, nor can any thing that is consequent on that choice, and the effect of it, be righteousness or holiness; nor can any thing that is without choice, be righteousness or holiness. So that by this scheme, all righteousness and holiness is at once shut out of the world, and no door left open by which it can ever possibly enter into the world.

I suppose the way that men came to entertain this absurd inconsistent notion, with respect to internal inclinations and volitions themselves (or notions that imply it,) viz. that the essence of their moral good or evil lies not in their nature, but their cause, was, that it is indeed a very plain dictate of common sense, that it is so with respect to all outward actions and sensible motions of the body, that the moral good or evil of them does not lie at all in the motions themselves which, taken by themselves, are nothing of a moral nature; and the essence of all the moral good or evil that concerns them, lies in those internal dispositions and volitions which are the cause of them. Now, being always used to determine this, without hesitation or dispute, concerning external actions, which are the things that, in the common use of language, are signified by such phrases as

men's actions, or their doings; hence, when they came to speak of volitions, and internal exercises of their inclinations, under the same denomination of their actions, or what they do, they unwarily determined the case must also be the same with these as with external actions; not considering the vast difference in the nature of the case.

If any shall still object and say, why is it not necessary that the cause should be considered, in order to determine whether any thing be worthy of blame or praise? is it agreeable to reason and common sense, that a man is to be praised or blamed for that which he is not the cause or author of, and has no hand in?

I answer: Such phrases as being the cause, being the author, having a hand, and the like, are ambiguous. They are most vulgarly understood fine being the designing voluntary cause, or cause by antecedent choice; and it is most certain, that men are not, in this sense, the causes or authors of the first act of their wills, in any case, as certain as any thing is or ever can be; for nothing can be more certain than that a thing is not before it is, nor a thing of the same kind before the first thing, of that kind, and so no choice before the first choice. — As the phrase, being the author, may be understood, not of being the producer by an antecedent act of will, but as a person may be said to be the author of the act of will itself, by his being the immediate agent, or the being that is acting, or in exercise in that act; if the phrase of being the author is used to signify this, then doubtless common sense requires men's being the authors of their own acts of will, in order to their being esteemed worthy of praise or dispraise, on account of them. And common sense teaches, that they must be the authors of external actions, in the former sense, namely, their being the causes of them by an act of will or choice, in order to their being justly blamed or praised: but it teaches no such thing with respect to the acts of the will themselves. But this may appear more manifest by the things, which will be observed in the following section.

## SECTION 2

### **THE FALSENESS AND INCONSISTENCE OF THAT METAPHYSICAL NOTION OF ACTION AND AGENCY WHICH SEEMS TO BE GENERALLY ENTERTAINED BY THE DEFENDERS OF THE ARMINIAN DOCTRINE CONCERNING LIBERTY, MORAL AGENCY, ETC.**

ONE thing, that is made very much a ground of argument and supposed demonstration by Arminians, in defense of the fore-mentioned principles concerning moral agency, virtue, vice, etc., is their metaphysical notion of agency and action. They say, unless the soul has a self-determining power, it has no power of action; if its volitions be not caused by itself, but are excited and determined by some extrinsic cause, they cannot be the soul's own acts; and that the soul cannot be active, but must be wholly passive, in those effects which it is the subject of necessarily, and not from its own free determination.

Mr. Chubb lays the foundation of his scheme of liberty, and of his arguments to support it, very much in this position, that man is an agent, and capable of action, — which doubtless is true: but self-determination belongs to his notion of action, and is the very essence of it; whence he infers, that it is impossible for a man to act and be acted upon, in the same thing, at the same time; and that nothing that is an action, can be the effect of the action of another: and he insists, that a necessary agent, or an agent that is necessarily determined to act, is a plain contradiction.

But those are a precarious sort of demonstrations, which men build on the meaning that they arbitrarily affix to a word; especially when that meaning is abstruse, inconsistent, and entirely diverse from the original sense of the word in common speech.

That the meaning of the word action, as Mr. Chubb and many others use it, is utterly unintelligible and inconsistent, is manifest, because it belongs to their notion of an action, that it is something wherein is no passion or passiveness; that is, (according to their sense of passiveness,) it is under the power, influence, or action of no cause. And this implies that action has no cause, and is no effect; for to be an effect implies passiveness, or



the being subject to the power and action of its cause. And yet they hold, that the mind's action is the effect of its own determination; yea, the mind's free and voluntary determination, which is the same with free choice. So that action is the effect of something preceding, even a preceding act of choice: and consequently, in this effect, the mind is passive, subject to the power and action of the preceding cause, which is the foregoing choice, and therefore cannot be active. So that here we have this contradiction, that action is always the effect of foregoing, choice, and therefore cannot be action; because it is passive to the power of that preceding causal choice; and the mind cannot be active and passive in the same thing, at the same time. Again, they say, necessity is utterly inconsistent with action, and a necessary action is a contradiction; and so their notion of action implies contingency, and excludes all necessity. And, therefore, their notion of action implies, that it has no necessary dependence or connection with any thing foregoing; for such a dependence or connection excludes contingency, and implies necessity. And yet their notion of action implies necessity, and supposes that it is necessary, and cannot be contingent. For they suppose, that whatever is properly called action, must be determined by the will and free choice; and this is as much as to say, that it must be necessary, being, dependent upon, and determined by, something foregoing, namely, a foregoing, act of choice. Again, it belongs to their notion of actions, of that which is a proper and mere act, that it is the beginning of motion, or of exertion of power; but yet it is implied in their notion of action, that it is not the beginning, of motion or exertion of power, but is consequent and dependent on a preceding exertion of power, viz. the power of will and choice; for they say there is no proper action but what is freely chosen, or, which is the same thing, determined by a foregoing act of free choice. But if any of them shall see cause to deny this, and say they hold no such thing, as that every action is chosen or determined by a foregoing choice, but that the very first exertion of will only, undetermined by any preceding act, is properly called action; then I say, such a man's notion of action implies necessity; for what the mind is the subject of, without the determination of its own previous choice, it is the subject of necessarily, as to any hand that free choice has in the affair, and without any ability the mind I as to prevent it by any will or election of its own; because, by the supposition, it precludes all previous acts of still or choice in the case, which might

prevent it. So that it is again, in this other way, implied in their notion of act, that it is both necessary and not necessary. Again, it belongs to their notion of an act, that it is no effect of a predetermining bias or preponderation, but springs immediately out of indifference; and this implies, that it cannot be from foregoing choice, which is foregoing preponderation: if it be not habitual, but occasional, yet if it causes the act, it is truly previous, efficacious, and determining. And yet, at the same time, it is essential to their notion of the act, that it is what the agent is the author of, freely and voluntarily, and that is by previous choice and design.

So that, according to their notion of the act, considered with regard to its consequences, these following things are all essential to it; viz. That it should be necessary, and not necessary; that it should be from a cause, and no cause; that it should be the fruit of choice and design, and not the fruit of choice and design; that it should be the beginning of motion or exertion, and yet consequent on previous exertion; that it should be before it is; that it should spring immediately out of indifference and equilibrium, and yet be the effect of preponderation; that it should be self-originated, and also

have its original from something else; that it is what the mind causes itself, of its own will, and can produce or prevent, according to its choice or pleasure, and yet what the mind has no power to prevent, precluding all previous choice in the affair. So that an act, according to their metaphysical notion of it, is something of which there is no idea; it is nothing but a confusion of the mind, excited by words, without any distinct meaning, and is an absolute nonentity; and that in two respects.

(1.) There is nothing in the world that ever was, is, or can be, to answer the things which must belong to its description, according to what they suppose to be essential to it. And

(2,) there neither is, nor ever was, nor can be, any notion or idea to answer the word, as they use and explain it.

For, if we should suppose any such notion, it would many ways destroy itself. But it is impossible any idea or notion should subsist in the mind, whose very nature and essence which constitutes it, destroys it. If some learned philosopher, who had been abroad, in giving an account of the

curious observations he had made in his travels, should say, “he had been in Terra del Fuego, and there had seen an animal, which he calls by a certain name, that begat and brought forth itself, and yet had a sire and dam distinct from itself; that it had an appetite, and was hungry before it had a being; that his master, who led him, and governed him at his pleasure, was always governed by him, and driven by him where he pleased; that when he moved, he always took a step before the first step; that he went with his head first, and yet always went tail foremost; and this, though he had neither tail nor head:” it would be no impudence at all to tell such a traveler, though a learned man, that he himself had no notion or idea of such an animal as he gave an account of, and never had, nor ever would have.

As the fore-mentioned notion of action is very inconsistent, so it is wholly diverse from the original meaning of the word. The more usual signification of it, in vulgar speech, seems to be some motion or exertion of power, that is voluntary, or that is the effect of the will, and is used in the same sense as doing; and most commonly it is used to signify outward actions. So thinking is often distinguished from acting, and desiring and willing from doing.

Besides this more usual and proper signification of the word action, there are other ways in which the word is used that are less proper, which yet have place in common speech. Oftentimes it is used to signify some motion or alteration in inanimate things, with relation to some object and effect. So, the spiring of a watch is said to act upon the chain and wheels; the sunbeams, to act upon plants and trees; and the fire, to act upon wood, Sometimes the more is used to signify motions, alterations, and exertions of power, which are seen in corporeal things, considered absolutely; especially when these motions seen to arise from some internal cause which is hidden; so that they have a greater resemblance of those motions of our bodies which are the effects of natural volition, or invisible exertions of will. So, the fermentation of liquor, the operations of the loadstone, and of electrical bodies, are called the action of these things. And sometimes, the word action is used to signify the exercise of thought, or of will and inclination: so meditating, loving, hating, inclining, disinclining, choosing, and refusing, may be sometimes called acting; though more rarely (unless it be by philosophers and metaphysicians) than in any of the other senses.

But the word is never used in vulgar speech in that sense which Arminian divines use it in, namely, for the self-determinate exercise of the will, or an exertion of the soul, that arises without any necessary connection with any thing foregoing. If a man does something voluntarily, or as the effect of his choice, then, in the most proper sense, and as the word is most originally and common used, he is said to act; but whether that choice or volition be self-determined, or no; whether it be connected with foregoing habitual bias; whether it be the certain effect of the strongest motive, or some intrinsic cause, never causes, never comes into consideration in the meaning of the word.

And if the word action is arbitrarily used by some need otherwise, to suit some scheme of metaphysics or morality, no argument can reasonably be founded on such a use of this term, to prove any thing but their own pleasure. For divines and philosophers strenuously to urge such arguments, as though they were sufficient to support and demonstrate a whole scheme of moral philosophy and divinity, is certainly to erect a mighty edifice on the sand, or rather on a shadow. And though it may now perhaps, through custom, have become natural for them to use the word in this sense, (if that may be called a sense or meaning, which is inconsistent with itself,) yet this does not prove that it is agreeable to the natural notions men have of things, or that there can be any thing in the creation that should answer such a meaning. And though they appeal to experience, yet the truth is, that men are so far from experiencing any such thing, that it is impossible for them to leave any conception of it.

If it should be objected, that action and passion are doubtless words of a contrary signification; but to suppose that the agent, in its action, is under the power and influence of something intrinsic, is to confound action and passion, and make them the same thing:

I answer, that action and passion are doubtless, as they are sometimes used, words of opposite signification; but not as signifying opposite existences, but only opposite relations. The words cause and effect are terms of opposite signification; but, nevertheless, if I assert that the same thing, may, at the same time, in different respects and relations, be both cause and effect, this will not prove that I confound the terms. The soul may be both active and passive in the same thing in different respects;

active with relation to one thing, and passive with relation to another. The word passion, when set in opposition to action, or rather activeness, is merely a relative: it signifies no effect or cause, nor any proper existence; but is the same with passiveness, or a being passive, or a being acted upon by something. Which is a mere relation of a thing to some power or force exert should be self-determined in it, and that the will should be the cause of it, was probably this, — that, according to the sense of mankind, and the common use of language, it is so, with respect to men's external actions, which are what originally, and according to the vulgar use and most proper sense of the word, are called actions. Men in these are self-directed, self-determined, and their wills are the cause of the motions of their bodies, and the external things that are done; so that unless men do them voluntarily, and of choice, and the action be determined by their antecedent volition, it is no action or doing of theirs. Hence some metaphysicians have been led unwarily, but exceeding, absurdly, to suppose the same concerning volition itself, that that also must be determined by the will; which is to be determined by antecedent volition, as the motion of the body is; not considering the contradiction it implies.

But it is very evident, that in the metaphysical distinction between action and passion, (though long since become common and the general vogue,) due care has not been taken to conform language to the nature of things, or to any distinct, clear ideas; — as it is in innumerable other philosophical, metaphysical terms, used in these disputes; which has occasioned inexpressible difficulty, contention, error, and confusion.

And thus probably it came to be thought that necessity was inconsistent with action, as these terms are applied to volition. First, these terms, action and necessity, are changed from their original meaning, as signifying external voluntary action and constraint, (in which meaning they are evidently inconsistent,) to signify quite other things, viz. volition itself, and certainty of existence. And when the change of signification is made, care is not taken to make proper allowances and abatements for the difference of sense; but still the same things are unwarily attributed to action and necessity, in the new meaning of the words, which plainly belonged to them in their first sense; and on this ground, maxims are established without any real foundation, as though they were the most certain truths, and the most evident dictates of reason.

But, however strenuously it is maintained, that what is necessary cannot be properly called action, and that necessary action is a contradiction, yet it is probable there are few Arminian divines, who, if thoroughly tried, would stand to these principles. They will allow, that God is, in the highest sense, an active being, and the highest fountain of life and action; and they would not probably deny, that those that are called God's acts of righteousness, holiness, and faithfulness, are truly and properly God's acts, and God is really a holy agent in them; and yet, I trust, they will not deny, that God necessarily acts justly and faithfully, and that it is impossible for him to act unrighteously and unholily.

## SECTION 3

### **THE REASONS WHY SOME THINK IT CONTRARY TO COMMON SENSE, TO SUPPOSE THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE NECESSARY, TO BE WORTHY OF EITHER PRAISE OR BLAME.**

It is abundantly affirmed and urged by Arminian writers, that it is contrary to common sense, and the natural notions and apprehensions of mankind, to suppose otherwise than that necessity (making no distinction between natural and moral necessity) its inconsistent with virtue and vice, praise and blame, reward and punishment. And their arguments from hence have been greatly triumphed in; and have been not a little perplexing to many, who have been friendly to the truth, as clearly revealed in the holy Scriptures: it has seemed to them indeed difficult, to reconcile Calvinistic doctrines with the notions men commonly only have of justice and equity. And the true reasons of it seem to be these that follow.

**I.** It is indeed a very plain dictate of common sense, that natural necessity is wholly inconsistent with just praise or blame. If men do things which in themselves are very good, fit to be brought to pass, and very happy effects, properly against their wills, and cannot help it; or do them from a necessity that is without their wills, or with which their wills have no concern or connection; then it is a plain dictate of common sense, that it is none of their virtue, nor any moral good in them; and that they are not worthy to be rewarded or praised, or at all esteemed, honored, or loved on that account. And, on the other hand, that if; from like necessity, they do

those things which in themselves are very unhappy and pernicious, and do them because they cannot help it; the necessity is such, that it is all one whether they will them or no; and the reason why they are done, is from necessity only, and not from their wills: it is a very plain dictate of common sense, that they are not at all to blame; there is no vice, fault, or moral evil at all in the effect done; nor are they who are thus necessitated, in any wise worthy to be punished, hated, or in the least disrespected, on that account.

In like manner, if things, in them selves good and desirable, are absolutely impossible, with a natural impossibility, the universal reason of mankind teaches, that this wholly and perfectly excuses persons in their not doing them.

And it is also a plain dictate of common sense, that if the doing things in themselves good, or avoiding things in themselves evil, is not. absolutely impossible, with such a natural impossibility, but very difficult, with a natural difficulty, that is, a difficulty prior to, and not at all consisting in, will and inclination itself, and which would remain the same, let the inclination be what it will; then a person's neglect or omission is excused in some measure, though not wholly; his sin is less aggravated than if the thing to be done were easy. And if instead of difficulty and hinderance, there be a contrary natural propensity in the state of things to the thing to be done, or effect to be brought to pass, abstracted from any consideration of the inclination of the heart; though the propensity be not so great as to amount to a natural necessity, yet being some approach to it, so that the doing the good thing be very much from this natural tendency in the state of things, and but little from a good inclination; then it is a dictate of common sense, that there is so much the less virtue in what is done; and so it is less praiseworthy and rewardable. The reason is easy, viz. because such a natural propensity or tendency is an approach to natural necessity; and the greater the propensity, still so much the nearer is the approach to necessity. And, therefore, as natural necessity takes away or shuts out all virtue, so this propensity approaches to an abolition of virtue; that is, it diminishes it. And, on the other hand, natural difficulty, in the state of things, is an approach to natural impossibility. And as the latter, when it is complete and absolute, wholly takes away blame, so such difficulty

takes away some blame, or diminishes blame; and makes the thing done to be less worthy of punishment.

**II.** Men, in their first use of such phrases as these, must, cannot, cannot help it, cannot avoid it, necessary, unable, impossible, unavoidable, irresistible, etc., use them to signify a necessity of constraint or restraint, a natural necessity or impossibility; or some necessity that the will has nothing to do in; which may be, whether men will or no; and which may be supposed to be just the same, let men's inclinations and desires be what they evils. Such kind of terms, in their original use, I suppose, among all nations, are relative; carrying in their signification (as was before observed) a reference or respect to some contrary will, desire, or endeavor, which, it is supposed, is, or may be, in the case. All men find, and begin to find in early childhood, that there are innumerable things that cannot be done, which they desire to do; and innumerable things, which they are averse to, that must be, — they cannot avoid them, they will be, whether they choose them or no. It is to express this necessity, which men so soon and so often find, and which so greatly and early affects them in innumerable cases, that such terms and phrases are first formed; and it is to signify such a necessity, that they are first used, and that they are most constantly used, in the common affairs of life; and not to signify any such metaphysical, speculative, and abstract notion, as that connection in the nature or course of things, which is between the subject and predicate of a proposition, and which is the foundation of the certain truth of that proposition; to signify which, they who employ themselves in philosophical inquiries into the first origin and metaphysical relations and dependencies of things, have borrowed these terms, for want of others. But we grow up from our cradles in a use of such terms and phrases entirely different from this, and carrying a sense exceeding diverse from that in which they are commonly used in the controversy between Arminians and Calvinists. And it being, as was said before, dictate of the universal sense of mankind, evident to us as soon as we begin to think, that the necessity signified by these terms, in the sense in which we first learn them, does excuse persons and free them from all fault or blame; hence our idea of excusableness or faultlessness is tied to these terms and phrases by a strong habit, which is begun in childhood, as soon as we



begin to speak, and grows up with us, and is strengthened by constant use and custom, the connection growing stronger and stronger.

The habitual connection which is in men's minds between blamelessness and those forementioned terms, must, cannot, unable, necessary, impossible, unavoidable, etc. becomes very strong; because as soon as ever men begin to use reason and speech, they have occasion to excuse themselves, from the natural necessity signified by these terms, in numerous instances — I cannot do it; I could not help it. And all mankind have constant and daily occasion to use such phrases in this sense, to excuse themselves and others, in almost all the concerns of life, with respect to disappointments and things that happen, which concern and affect ourselves and others, that are hurtful, or disagreeable to us or them, or things desirable, that we or others fail of. That a being accustomed to an union of different ideas, from early childhood, makes the habitual connection exceeding strong, as though such connection were owing to nature, is manifest in innumerable instances. It is altogether by such an habitual connection of ideas, that men judge of the bigness or distance of the objects of sight, from their appearance. Thus, it is owing to such a connection early established, and growing up with a person, that he judges a mountain, which he sees at ten miles distance, to be bigger than his nose, or further off than the end of it. Having, been used so long to join a considerable distance and magnitude with such an appearance, men imagine it is by a dictate of natural sense: whereas, it would be quite otherwise with one that had his eyes newly opened, who had been born blind: he would have the same visible appearance, but natural sense would dictate no such thing, concerning the magnitude or distance of what appeared.

**III.** When men, after they had been so habituated to connect ideas of innocency or blamelessness with such terms, that the union seems to be the effect of mere nature, come to hear the same terms used, and learn to use them themselves, in the forementioned new and metaphysical sense, to signify quite another sort of necessity, which has no such kind of relation to a contrary supposable will and endeavor; the notion of plain and manifest blamelessness, by this means, is, by a strong prejudice, insensibly and unwarily transferred to a case to which it by no means belongs: the change of the use of the terms, to a signification which is very

diverse, not being taken notice of, or adverted to. And there are several reasons why it is not.

**1.** The terms, as used by philosophers, are not very distinct and clear in their meaning: few use them in a fixed, determined sense. On the contrary, their meaning, is very vague and confused, — which is what commonly happens to the words used to signify things intellectual and moral, and to express what. Mr. Locke calls mixed modes. If men had a clear and distinct understanding of what is intended by these metaphysical terms, they would be able more easily to compare them with their original and common sense; and so would not be so easily led into delusion by any sort of terms in the world, as by words of this sort.

**2.** The change of the signification of the terms, is the more insensible, because the things signified, though indeed very different, yet do in some generals agree. In necessity, that which is vulgarly so called, there is a strong, connection between the thing said to be necessary, and some thing antecedent to it in the order of nature; so there is also in philosophical necessity. And though in both kinds of necessity the connection cannot be called by that name, with relation to an opposite will or endeavor, to which it is superior; which is the case in vulgar necessity; yet, in both the connection is prior to will and endeavor, and so, in some respect, superior. In both kinds of necessity, there is a foundation for some certainty of the proposition that affirms the event. — The terms need being the same, and the things signified agreeing, in these and some other general circumstances; and the expressions, as used by philosophers, being, not well defined, and so of obscure and loose signification; hence persons are not aware of the great difference: and the notions of innocence or faultiness, which were so strongly associated with them, and were strictly united in their minds, ever since they can remember, remain united with them still, as if the union were altogether natural and necessary; and they that go about to make a separation, seem to them to do great violence, even to nature itself:

**IV.** Another reason why it appears difficult to reconcile it with reason, that men should be blamed for that which is necessary with a moral necessity, (which, as was observed before, is a species of philosophical necessity,) is, that for want of due consideration, men inwardly entertain that apprehension, that this necessity may be against men's wills and

sincere endeavors. They go away with that notion, that men may truly will, and wish, and strive, that it may be otherwise, but that invincible necessity stands in the way. And many think thus concerning themselves: some, that are wicked men, think they wish that they were good, that they love God and holiness; but yet do not find that their wishes produce the effect. — The reasons why men think so, are as follow:

**(1.)** They find what may be called an indirect willingness to have a better will, in the manner before observed. For it is impossible, and a contradiction, to suppose the will to be directly and properly against itself: And they do not consider, that this indirect willingness is entirely a different thing, from properly willing, the thing that is the duty and virtue required; and that there is no virtue in that sort of willingness which they leave. They do not consider, that the volitions which a wicked man may have that he loved God, are no acts of the will at all against the moral evil of not loving God; but only some disagreeable consequences. But the making, the requisite distinction requires more care of reflection and thought than most men are used to. And men, through a prejudice in their own favor, are disposed to think well of their own desires and dispositions, and to account them good and virtuous, though their respect to virtue be only indirect and remote, and it is nothing, at all that is virtuous that truly excites or terminates their inclinations.

**(2.)** Another thing that insensibly lends and beguiles men, into supposition that this moral necessity or impossibility is, or may be, against men's wills and true endeavors, is the derivation and formation of the terms themselves, that are often used to express it, which is such as seems directly to point to, and holds this forth. Such words, for instance, as unable, unavoidable, impossible, irresistible, which carry a plain reference to a supposable power exerted, endeavors used, resistance made, in opposition to the necessity; and the persons that hear them, not considering, nor suspecting but that they are used in their proper sense; that sense being therefore understood, there does naturally, and as it were necessarily, arise in their minds a supposition, that it may be so indeed, that true desires and endeavors may take place, but that invincible necessity stands in the way, and renders them vain and to no effect.

**V.** Another thing, which makes persons more ready to suppose it to be contrary to reason, that men should be exposed to the punishments threatened to sin, for doing those things which are morally necessary, or not doing those things morally impossible, is, that imagination strengthens the argument, and adds greatly to the power and influence of the seeming reasons against it, from the greatness of that punishment. To allow that they play be justly, exposed to a small punishment, would not be so difficult. Whereas, if there were any good reason in the case, if it were truly a dictate of reason, that such necessity was inconsistent with faultiness, or just punishment, the demonstration would be equally certain with respect to a small punishment, or any punishment at all, as a very great one; but it is not equally easy to the imagination. They that argue against the justice of damning men for those things that are thus necessary, seem to make their argument the stronger, by setting forth the greatness of the punishment in strong expressions: — “That a man should be cast into eternal burnings, that he should be made to fry in hell to all eternity, for those things which he lead no power to avoid, and was under a fatal, unfrustrable, invincible necessity of doing.”

## SECTION 4

### **IT IS AGREEABLE TO COMMON SENSE, AND THE NATURAL NOTIONS OF MANKIND, TO SUPPOSE: MORAL NECESSITY TO BE CONSISTENT WITH PRAISE AND BLAME, REWARD AND PUNISHMENT.**

WHETHER the reasons that have been given, why it appears difficult to some persons to reconcile with common sense the praising or blaming, rewarding or punishing those things which are morally necessary, are thought satisfactory, or not; yet it most evidently appears, by the following things, that if this matter be rightly understood, setting aside all delusion arising from the impropriety and ambiguity of terms, this is not at all inconsistent with the natural apprehensions of mankind, and that sense of things which is found every where in the common people, who are furthest from having their thoughts perverted from their natural channel, by metaphysical and philosophical subtleties; but, on the

contrary, altogether agreeable to, and the very voice and dictate of, this natural and vulgar sense.

**1.** This will appear, if we consider what the vulgar notion of blameworthiness is. The idea which the common people, through all ages and nations, have of faultiness, I suppose to be plainly this; a person's being or doing wrong, with his own will and pleasure; containing these two things:

**1.** His doing wrong when he does as he pleases:

**2.** His pleasures being wrong.

Or, in other words, perhaps more intelligibly expressing their notion, a person's having his heart wrong; and doing wrong from his heart. And this is the sum total of the matter.

The common people do not ascend up in their reflections and abstractions to the metaphysical sources, relations, and dependencies of things, in order to form their notion of faultiness or blameworthiness. They do not wait till they have decided by their refinings, what first determines the will; whether it be determined by some" thing extrinsic or intrinsic; whether volition determines volition, or whether the understanding, determines the will; whether there be any such thing as mwta physicians mean by contingency (if they have any meaning); whether there be a sort of a strange, unaccountable sovereignty in the will, in the exercise of which, by its own sovereign acts, it brings to pass all its own sovereign acts. They do not take any part of their notion of fault or blame from the resolution of any such question. If this were the case, there are multitudes, yea, the far greater part of mankind, nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand, would live and die without having any such notion as that of fault ever entering into their heads, or without so much as one having any conception that any body was to be either blamed or commended for any thing. To be sure it would be a long time before men came to have such notions.

Whereas it is manifest, they are some of the first notions that appear in children; who discover, as soon as they can think, or speak, or act at all as rational creatures, a sense of desert. And certainly, in forming their notion of it, they make no use of metaphysics. All the ground they go upon consists in these two things, experience, and a natural sensation of a

certain fitness or agreeableness which there is in uniting such moral evil as is above described, viz. a being or doing wrong with the will, and resentment in others, and pain inflicted on the person in whom this moral evil is. Which natural sense is what we call by the name of conscience.

It is true, the common people and children, in their notion of any faulty act or deed, of any person, do suppose that it is the person's own act and deed. But this is all that belongs to what they understand by a thing's being a person's own deed or action; even that it is something done by him of choice. That some exercise or motion should begin of itself, does not belong to their notion of an action or doing. If so, it would belong to their notion of it, that it is something which is the cause of its own beginning; and that is as much as to say, that it is before it begins to be. Nor is their notion of an action, some motion or exercise that begins accidentally, without any cause or reason; for that is contrary to one of the prime dictates of common sense, namely, that every thing that begins to be, has some cause or reason why it is.

The common people, in their notion of a faulty or praiseworthy deed or work done by any one, do suppose that the man does it in the exercise of liberty. But then their notion of liberty is only a person's having opportunity of doing as he pleases. They have no notion of liberty consisting in the will's first acting, and so causing its own acts; and determining, and so causing its own determinations; or choosing, and so causing its own choice. Such a notion of liberty is what none have, but those that have darkened their own minds with confused metaphysical speculation, and abstruse and ambiguous terms. If a man is not restrained from acting as his will determines, or constrained to act otherwise, then he has liberty, according, to common notions of liberty, without taking into the idea that grand contradiction of all, the determinations of a man's free will being the effects of the determinations of his free will — Nor have men commonly any notion of freedom consisting in indifference. For if so, then it would be agreeable to their notion, that the greater indifference men act with, the more freedom they act with; whereas the rever. is true. He that, in acting, proceeds with the fullest inclination, does what he does with the greatest freedom, according, to common. And so far is it from being agreeable to common sense, that such liberty as consists in indifference is requisite to praise or blame, that, on the contrary, the

dictate of every man's natural sense through the world is, that the further he is from being indifferent in his acting good or evil, and the more he does either with full and strong, inclination, the more is he esteemed or abhorred, commended or condemned.

II. If it were inconsistent with the common sense of mankind, that men should be either to be blamed or commended in any volitions they have or fail of, in case of moral necessity or impossibility; then it would surely also be agreeable to the same sense and reason of mankind, that the nearer the case approaches to such a moral necessity or impossibility, either through a strong, antecedent moral propensity, on the one hand, or a great antecedent opposition and difficulty on the other, the nearer does it approach to a being neither blameable nor commendable; so that acts exerted with such preceding, propensity, would be worthy of proportionably less praise; and when omitted the act being attended with such difficulty, the omission would be worthy of less blame. It is so, as was observed before, with natural necessity and impossibility, propensity and difficulty: as it is a plain dictate of the sense of all mankind, that natural necessity and impossibility take away all blame and praise; and therefore, that the nearer the approach is to these, through previous propensity or difficulty, so praise and blame are proportionately diminished. And if it were as much a dictate of common sense, that moral necessity of doing or impossibility of avoiding takes away all praise and blame, as that natural necessity or impossibility does this; then, by a perfect parity of reason, it would be as much the dictate of common sense, that an approach to moral necessity of doing, or impossibility of avoiding, diminishes praise and blame, as that an approach to natural necessity and impossibility does so. It is equally the voice of common sense, that persons are excusable in part in neglecting things difficult against their wills, as that they are excusable wholly in neglecting things impossible against their wills. And if it made no difference, whether the impossibility revere natural and against the will, or moral lying in the will, with regard to excusableness; so neither would it make any difference, whether the difficulty, or approach to necessity, be natural against the will, or moral, lying in the propensity of the will.

But it is apparent, that the rever. of these things is true. If there been approach to a moral necessity in a man's exertion of good acts of will,

they being the exercise of a strong propensity to good, and a very powerful love to virtue; it is so far from being the dictate of common sense, that he is less virtuous, and the less to be esteemed, loved, and praised; that it is agreeable to the natural notions of all mankind, that he is so much the better man, worthy of greater respect, and higher commendation. And the stronger the inclination is, and the nearer it approaches to necessity in that respect; or to impossibility of neglecting the virtuous act, or of doing a vicious one; still the more virtuous, and worthy of higher commendation. And, on the other hand, if a man exerts evil acts of mind; as for instance, acts of pride or malice, from a rooted and strong limit or principle of haughtiness and maliciousness, and a violent propensity of heart to such acts; according to the natural sense of men, he is so far from being the less hateful and blameable on that account, that he is so much the more worthy to be detested and condemned by all that observe him.

Moreover, it is manifest that it is no part of the notion, which mankind commonly have of a blameable or praiseworthy act of the will, that it is an act which is not determined by an antecedent bias or motive, but by the sovereign power of the will itself; because, if so, the greater hand such causes have in determining any acts of the will, so much the less virtuous or vicious would they be accounted; and the less hand, the more virtuous or vicious. Whereas the rever. is true: men do not think a good act to be the less praiseworthy for the agent's being much determined in it by a good inclination or a good motive, but the more. And if good inclination or motive has but little influence in determining the agent, they do not think his act so much the more virtuous, but the less. And so concerning evil acts, which are determined by evil motives or inclinations.

Yea, if it be supposed, that good or evil dispositions are implanted in the hearts of men by nature itself; (which, it is certain, is vulgarly supposed in innumerable cases,) yet it is not commonly supposed, that men are worthy of no praise or dispraise for such dispositions; although what is natural is undoubtedly necessary, nature being prior to all acts of the will whatsoever. Thus, for instance, if a man appears to be of a very haughty or malicious disposition, and is supposed to be so by his natural temper, it is no vulgar notion, no dictate of the common sense and apprehension of need, that such dispositions are no vices or moral evils, or that such



persons are not worthy of disesteem, or odium and dishonor; or that the proud or malicious acts which flow from such natural dispositions, are worthy of no resentment. Yea, such vile natural dispositions, and the strength of them, will commonly be mentioned rather as an aggravation of the wicked acts that come from such a fountain, than an extenuation of them. Its being natural for men to act thus, is often observed by men in the height of their indignation: they will say, “It is his very nature; he is of a vile natural temper; it is as natural to him to act so, as it is to breathe; he cannot help serving the devil,” etc. But it is not thus with regard to hurtful, mischievous things, that any are the subjects or occasions of, by natural necessity, against their inclinations. In such a case, the necessity, by the common voice of mankind, will be swollen of as a full excuse. — Thus, it is very plain, that common sense makes a vast difference between these two kinds of necessity, as to the judgment it makes of their influence on the moral quality and desert of men’s actions.

And these dictates of men’s minds are so natural and necessary, that it may be very much doubted whether the Arminians themselves have ever got rid of them; yea, their greatest doctors, that have gone furthest in defense of their metaphysical notions of liberty, and have brought their arguments to their greatest strength, and, as they suppose, to a demonstration, against the consistence of virtue and vice with any necessity; it is to be questioned, whether there is so much as one of them, but that, if he suffered very much from the injurious acts of a man under the power of an invincible haughtiness and malignancy of temper, would not, from the fore-mentioned natural sense of mind, resent it far otherwise, than if as great sufferings came upon him from the wind that blows, and fire that burns, by natural necessity; and otherwise than he would, if he suffered as much from the conduct of a man perfectly delirious; yea, though he first brought his distraction upon him some way by his own fault.

Some seem to disdain the distinction that we make between natural and moral necessity, as though it were altogether impertinent in this controversy: “that which is necessary (say they) is necessary; it is that which must be, and cannot be prevented. And that which is impossible, is impossible, and cannot be done: and therefore none can be to blame for not doing it.” And such comparisons are made use of, as the commanding of a

man to walk who has lost his legs, and condemning and punishing him for not obeying; inviting and calling upon a man who is shut up in a strong prison, to come forth, etc. But, in these things, Arminians are very unreasonable. Let common sense determine whether there be not a great difference between these two cases; the one, that of a man who has offended his prince, and is cast into prison; and after he has lain there a while, the king, comes to him calls him to come forth to him; and tells him, that if he will do so, and will fall down before him, and humbly beg his pardon, he shall be forgiven and set at liberty, and also be greatly enriched, and advanced to honor; the prisoner heartily repents of the folly and wickedness of his offense against his prince, is thoroughly disposed to abase himself, and accept of the king's offer; but is confined by strong walls, with gates of brass, and bars of iron. The other case is, that of a man who is of a very unreasonable spirit, of a haughty, ungrateful, wilful disposition; and, moreover, has been brought up in traitorous principles, and has his heart possessed with an extreme and inveterate enmity to his lawful sovereign; and for his rebellion is cast into prison, and lies long there, loaden with heavy chains, and in miserable circumstances. At length the compassionate prince comes to the prison, orders his chains to be knocked off, and his prison-doors to be set wide open; calls to him, and tells him, if he will come forth to him, and fall down before him, acknowledge that he has treated him unworthily, and ask his forgiveness, he shall be forgiven, set at liberty, and set in a place of great dignity and profit in his court. But he is; stout and stomachful, and full of haughty malignity, that he cannot be willing to accept the offer: his rooted strong pride and malice have perfect power over him, and as it were bind him, by binding his heart: the opposition of his heart has the mastery over him, having an influence on his mind far superior to the king's grace and condescension, and to all his kind offers and promises. Now, is it agreeable to common sense to assert, and stand to it, that there is no difference between these two cases, as to any worthiness of blame in the prisoners; because, forsooth, there is a necessity in both, and the required act in each case is impossible? It is true, a man's evil dispositions may be as strong and immoveable as the bars of a castle. But who cannot see, that when a man, in the latter case, is said to be unable to obey the command, the expression is used improperly, and not in the sense it has originally, and in common speech; and that it may properly be said to be in the rebel's

power to come out of prison, seeing he can easily do it if he pleases; though by reason of his vile temper of heart, which is fixed and rooted, it is impossible that it should please him?

UPON the whole, I presume there is no person of good understanding, who impartially considers the things which have been observed, but will allow, that it is not evident, from the dictates of the common sense, or natural notions of mankind, that moral necessity is inconsistent with praise and blame. And, therefore, if the Arminians would prove any such inconsistency, it must be by some philosophical and metaphysical arguments, and not common sense.

There is a grand illusion in the pretended demonstration of Arminians from common sense. The main strength of all these demonstrations lies in that prejudice, that arises through the insensible change of the use and meaning of such terms as liberty, able, unable, necessary, impossible, unavoidable, invincible, action, etc. from their original and vulgar sense, to a metaphysical sense, entirely diverse; and the strong connection of the ideas of blamelessness, etc. with some of these terms, by a habit contracted and established while these terms were used in their first meaning. This prejudice and delusion is the foundation of all those positions they lay down as maxims, lay which most of the Scriptures, which they allege in this controversy, are interpreted, and on which all their pompous demonstrations from Scripture and reason depend. From this secret delusion and prejudice they have almost all their advantages; it is the strength of their bulwarks, and the edge of their weapons. And this is the main ground of all the right they have to treat their neighbors in so assuming a manner, and to insult others, perhaps as wise and good as themselves, as weak bigots, men that dwell in the dark caves of superstition, perversely set, obstinately shutting their eyes against the noon-day light, enemies to common sense, maintaining the first-born of absurdities, etc. etc. But perhaps an impartial consideration of the things which have been observed in the preceding parts of this Inquiry, may enable the lovers of truth better to judge, whose doctrine is indeed absurd, abstruse, self-contradictory, and inconsistent with common sense, and many ways repugnant to the universal dictates of the reason of mankind.

**Corol.** From things which have been observed, it will follow, that it is agreeable to common sense to suppose that the glorified saints have not their freedom at all diminished in any respect: and that God himself has the highest possible freedom according to the true and proper meaning of the term; and that he is, in the highest possible respect, an agent and active in the exercise of his infinite holiness; though he acts therein, in the highest degree necessarily: and his actions of this kind, are in the highest, most absolutely perfect manner, virtuous and praiseworthy; and are so, for that very reason, because they are most perfectly necessary.

## SECTION 5

### **CONCERNING THOSE OBJECTIONS, THAT THIS SCHEME OF NECESSITY RENDERS ALL MEANS AND ENDEAVORS FOR THE AVOIDING OF SIN, OR THE OBTAINING VIRTUE AND HOLINESS, VAIN AND TO NO PURPOSE; AND THAT IT MAKES MEN NO MORE THAN MERE MACHINES IN AFFAIRS OF MORALITY AND RELIGION.**

ARMINIANS say, if it be so, that sin and virtue come to pass by a necessity consisting in a sure connection of causes and effects, antecedents and consequents, it can never be worth the while to use any means or endeavors to obtain the one, and avoid the other; seeing no endeavors can alter the futurity of the event, which is become necessary by a connection already established.

But I desire that this matter may be fully considered; and that it may be examined with a thorough strictness, whether it will follow, that endeavors and means, in order to avoid or obtain any future thing, must be more in vain, on the supposition of such a connection of antecedents and consequents than if the contrary be supposed.

For endeavors to be in vain, is for them not to be successful; that is to say, for them not eventually to be the means of the thing aimed at, which cannot be but in one of these two ways; either, first, That although the means are used, yet the event aimed at does not follow; or, secondly, If the

event does follow, it is not because of the means, or from any connection or dependence of the event on the means: the event would have come to pass as well without the means as with them. If either of these two things is the case, then the means are not properly successful, and are truly in vain. The successfulness or unsuccessfulness of means, in order to an effect, or their being, in vain or not in vain, consists in those means being connected or not connected with the effect, in such a manner as this, viz. that the effect is with the means, and not without them; or, that the being of the effect is, on the one hand, connected with means, and the want of the effect, on the other hand, is connected with the of the means. If there be such a connection as this between means and end, the means are not in vain; the more there is of such a connection the further they are from being in vain; and the less of such a connection, the more they are in vain.

Now, therefore, the question to be answered, (in order to determine, whether it follows from this doctrine of the necessary connection between foregoing things and consequent ones, that means used in order to any effect are more in vain than they would be otherwise), is, whether it follows from it that there is less of the forementioned connection between means and effect; that is, whether, on the supposition of there being, a real and true connection between means and effect, than on the supposition of these being no fixed connection between antecedent things and consequent ones; and the very stating, of this question is sufficient to answer it. It must appear to every one that will open his eyes, that this question cannot be affirmed without the grossest absurdity and inconsistency. Means are foregoing things, and effects are following, things. And if there were no connection between foregoing things and following ones, there could be no connection between means and end; and so all means would be wholly vain and fruitless. For it is by virtue of some connection only, that they become successful. It is some connection observed or revealed, or otherwise known, between antecedent things and following ones, that is what directs in the choice of means. And if there were no such thing as an established connection, there could be no choice as to means; one thing would have no more tendency to an effect than another; there would be no such thing as tendency in the case. All those things which are successful means of other things, do therein prove connected antecedents of them; and therefore, to assert that a fixed connection between antecedents and

consequents makes means vain and useless, or stands in the way to hinder the connection between means and end, is just as ridiculous as to say, that a connection between antecedents and consequents stands in the way to hinder a connection between antecedents and consequents.

Nor can any supposed connection of the succession or train of antecedents and consequents, from the very beginning of all things, the connection being made already sure and necessary, either by established laws of nature, or by these together with a decree of sovereign immediate interpositions of Divine power, on such and such occasions, or any other way (if any other there be); I say, no such necessary connection of a series of antecedents and consequents can in the least tend to hinder, hut that the means we use may belong to the series; and so may be some of those antecedents which are connected with the consequents we aim at in the established course of things. Endeavours which we use, are things that exist; and therefore they belong to the general chain of events; all the parts of which chain are supposed to be connected; and so endeavors are supposed to be connected with some effects, or some consequent things or other. And certainly this does not hinder but that the events they are connected with, may be those which we aim at, and which we choose, because we judge them most likely to have a connection with those events from the established order and course of things which we observe, or from something in Divine revelation.

Let us suppose a real and true connection between a man's having his eyes open in the clear day-light, with good organs of sight, and seeing; so that seeing is connected with his opening his eyes, and not seeing with his not opening his eyes; and also the like connection between such a man's attempting to open his eyes, and his actually doing it: the supposed established connection between these antecedents and consequents, let the connection be never so sure and necessary, certainly does not prove that it is in vain for a man in such circumstances to attempt to open his eyes, in order to seeing: his aiming at that event, and the use of the means, being the effect of his will, does not break the connection, or hinder the success.

So that the objection we are upon does not lie against the doctrine of the necessity of events by a certainty of connection and consequence; on the contrary, it is truly forcible against the Arminian doctrine of contingency

and self-determination; which is inconsistent with such a connection. If there be no connection between those events wherein virtue and vice consist, and any thing antecedent; then there is no connection between these events and any means or endeavors used in order to them; and if so, then those means must be in vain. The less there is of connection between foregoing things and following ones, so much the less there is between means and end, endeavors and success; and in the same proportion are means and endeavors ineffectual and in vain.

It will follow from Arminian principles that there is no degree of connection between virtue or vice, and any foregoing event or thing; or, in other words, that the determination of the existence of virtue or vice does not in the least depend on the influence of any thing that comes to pass antecedently, from which the determination of its existence is, as its cause, means, or ground; because so far as it is so, it is not from self-determination; and, therefore, so far there is nothing of the nature of virtue or vice. And so it follows, that virtue and vice are not at all, in any degree, dependent upon, or connected with, any foregoing event or existence, as its cause, ground, or means. And if so, then all foregoing means must be totally in vain.

Hence it follows, that there cannot, in any consistence with the Arminian scheme, be any reasonable ground of so much as a conjecture concerning the consequence of any means and endeavors, in order to escaping vice, or obtaining virtue, or any choice or preference of means, as having a greater probability of success by some than others; either from any natural connection or dependence of the end on the means, or through any divine constitution, or revealed way of God's bestowing or bringing to pass these things, in consequence of any means, endeavors, prayers, or deeds. Conjectures in this latter case, depend on a supposition, that God himself is the giver, or determining cause, of the events sought; but if they depend on self-determination, then God is not the determining or disposing author of them and if these things are not of his disposal, then no conjecture can be made, from any revelation he has given' concerning any way or method of his disposal of them.

Yea, on these principles, it will not only follow, that men cannot have any reasonable ground of judgment or conjecture that their means and

endeavors to obtain virtue, or avoid vice, will be successful, but they may be sure they will not; they may be certain that they will be in vain; and that if ever the thing, which they seek, comes to pass, it will not be at all owing to the means they use. For means and endeavors can have no effect at all, in order to obtain the end, but in one of those two ways; either

(1.) Through a natural tendency and influence to prepare and dispose the mind more to virtuous acts, either by causing the disposition of the heart to be more in favor of such acts, or by bringing the mind more into the view of powerful motives and inducements; or,

(2.) By putting persons more in the way of God's bestowment of the benefit. But neither of these can be the case.

Not the latter; for, as has been just observed, it does not consist with the Arminian notion of self-determination, which they suppose essential to virtue, that God should be the bestower, or (which is the same thing) the determining disposing author of virtue. Not the former; for natural influence and tendency supposes causality and connection, and supposes necessity of event, which is inconsistent with Arminian liberty. A tendency of means, by biasing the heart in favor of virtue, or by bringing the will under the influence and power of motives in its determinations, are both inconsistent with Arminian liberty of will, consisting in indifference, and sovereign self-determination, as has been largely demonstrated.

But for the more full removal of this prejudice against the doctrine of necessity, which has been maintained, as though it tended to encourage a total neglect of all endeavors as vain; the following things may be considered: —

The question is not, Whether men may not thus improve this doctrine, — we know that many true and wholesome doctrines are abused; but, whether the doctrine gives any just occasion for such an improvement; or whether, on the supposition of the truth of the doctrine, such a use of it would be unreasonable? If any shall affirm, that it would not, but that the very nature of the doctrine is such as gives just occasion for it, it must be on this supposition; namely, that such an invariable necessity of all thing already settled, must render the interposition of all means, endeavors, conclusions, or actions of ours, in order to the obtaining, any future end



whatsoever, perfectly insignificant; because they cannot in the least alter or vary the course and series to things, in any event or circumstance; all being already fixed unalterably by necessity; and that therefore it is folly for men to use any means for any em; but their wisdom to save themselves the trouble of endeavors, and take their ease. No person can draw such an inference from this doctrine, and come to such a conclusion, without contradicting himself, and going counter to the very principles he pretends to act upon; for he comes to conclusion, and takes a course, in order to an end, even his ease, or the saving himself from trouble: he seeks something future, and uses means in order to a future thing, even in his drawing up that conclusion, that he will seek nothing, and use no means in order to any thing in future; he seeks his future ease, and the benefit and comfort of indolence. If prior necessity, that. determines all things, makes vain all actions or conclusions of ours, in order to any thing future; then it makes vain all conclusions and conduct of ours, in order to our future ease. The measure of our ease, with the time, manner, and every circumstance of it, is already fixed, by all-determining necessity, as much as any thing else. If he says within himself, “What future happiness or misery I shall have, is already, in effect, determined by the necessary course and connection of things; therefore, I will save myself the trouble of labor and diligence which cannot add to my determined degree of happiness, or diminish my misery; but will take my ease, and will enjoy the comfort of sloth and negligence,” — such a man contradicts himself; he says, the measure of his future happiness and misery is already fixed, and he will not try to diminish the one, nor add to the other; but yet, in his very conclusion, he contradicts this; for, he takes up this conclusion, to add to his future happiness, by the ease and comfort of his negligence, and to diminish his future trouble and misery by saving himself the trouble of using means and taking pains.

Therefore, persons cannot reasonably make this improvement of the doctrine of necessity, that they will go into a voluntary negligence of means for their own happiness. For the principles they must go upon, in order to this, are inconsistent with their making any improvement at all of the doctrine; for to make some improvement of it, is to be influenced by it, to come to some voluntary conclusion, in regard to their own conduct, with some view, or aim; but this, as has been shown, is inconsistent with

the principles they pretend to act upon. In short, the principles are such as cannot be acted upon at all, or, in any respect, consistently. And therefore, in every presence of acting upon them, or making any improvement at all of them, there is a self-contradiction.

As to that objection against the doctrine, which I have endeavored to prove, that it makes men no more than mere machines; I would say, that notwithstanding this doctrine, man is entirely, perfectly, and unspeakably different from a mere machine, in that he has reason and understanding, and has a faculty of will, and is so capable of volition and choice; and in that his will is guided by the dictates or views of his understanding; and in that his external actions and behavior, and in many respects also his thoughts, and the exercises of his mind, are subject to his will; so that he has liberty to act according to his choice, and do what he pleases; and, by means of these things, is capable of moral limits and moral acts, such inclinations and actions, as, according to the common sense of mankind, are worthy of praise, esteem, love, and reward; or, on the contrary, of disesteem, detestation, indignation, and punishment.

In these things is all the difference from mere machines, as to liberty and agency, that would be any perfection, dignity, or privilege, in any respect; all the difference that can be desired, and all that can be conceived of; and indeed all that the pretensions of the Arminians themselves come to, as they are forced often to explain themselves. (Though their explications overthrow and abolish the things asserted, and pretended to be explained.) For they are forced to explain a self-determining power of will, by a power in the soul to determine as it chooses or wills; which comes to no more than this, that a man has a power of choosing, and in many instances, can do as he chooses, — which is quite a different thing from that contradiction, his having power of choosing his first act of choice in the case.

Or, if their scheme makes any other difference than this between men and machines, it is for the worse; it is so far from supposing men to have a dignity and privilege above machines, that it makes the manner of their being determined still more unhappy. Whereas machines are guided by an understanding cause, by the skillful hand of the workman or owner; the

will of man is left to the guidance of nothing, but absolute blind contingency.

## SECTION 6

### **CONCERNING THAT OBJECTION AGAINST THE DOCTRINE WHICH HAS BEEN MAINTAINED, THAT IT AGREES WITH THE STOICAL DOCTRINE OF FATE, AND THE OPINIONS OF MR. HOBBS.**

WHEN Calvinists oppose the Arminian notion of the freedom of will, and contingency of volitions, and insist that there are no acts of the will, nor any other event whatsoever, but what are attended with some kind of necessity; their opposers cry out of then, as agreeing with the ancient Stoics in their doctrine of fate, and with Mr. Hobbes in his opinion of necessity.

It would not be worth while to take notice of so impertinent an objection, had it not been urged by some of the chief Arminian writers. There were many important truths maintained by the ancient Greek and Roman philosophers, and especially the Stoics, that are never the worse for being held by them. The Stoic philosophers, by the general agreement of Christian divines, and even Arminian divines, were the greatest, wisest, and most virtuous of all the heathen philosophers; and in their doctrine and practice came the nearest to Christianity of any of their sects. How frequently are the sayings of these philosophers, in many of the writings and sermons, even of Arminian divines, produced not as arguments of the falseness of the doctrines which they delivered, but as a confirmation of some of the greatest truths of the Christian religion, relating to the unity and perfections of the Godhead, a future state, the duty and happiness of mankind, etc., as observing how the light of nature, and reason, in the wisest and best of the heathen, harmonized with and confirms the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And it is very remarkable, concerning Dr. Whitby, that although he alleges the agreement of the Stoics with us, wherein he supposes they maintained the like doctrine with us, as an argument against the truth of our doctrine;

yet this very Dr. Whitby alleges the agreement of the Stoics with the Arminians, wherein he supposes they taught the same doctrine with them, as an argument for the truth of their doctrine. So that, when the Stoics agree with them, this (it seems) is a confirmation of their doctrine, and a confutation of ours, as showing that our opinions are contrary to the natural sense and common reason of mankind: nevertheless, when the Stoics agree with us, it argues no such thing in our favor; but, on the contrary, is a great argument against us, and shows our doctrine to be heathenish.

It is observed by some Calvinistic writers, that the Arminians symbolise with the Stoics in some of those doctrines wherein they are opposed by the Calvinists; particularly in their denying an original, innate, total corruption and depravity of heart; and in what they held of man's ability to make himself truly virtuous and conformed to God; and in some other doctrines.

It may be further observed, it is certainly no better objection against our doctrine, that it agrees, in some respects, with the doctrine of the ancient Stoic philosophers, than it is against theirs, wherein they differ from us, that it agrees, in some respects, with the opinion of the very worst of the heathen philosophers, the followers of Epicurus, that father of atheism and licentiousness, and with the doctrine of the Sadducees and Jesuits.

I am not much concerned to know precisely what the ancient Stoic philosophers held concerning fate, in order to determine what is truth; as though it were a sure way to be in the right, to take good heed to differ from them. It seems that they differed among themselves, and probably the doctrine of fate, as maintained by most of them, was, in some respects, erroneous. But whatever their doctrine was, if any of them held such a fate as is repugnant to any liberty, consisting in our doing as we please, I utterly deny such a fate. If they held any such fate as is not consistent with the common and universal notions that mankind have of liberty, activity, moral agency, virtue and vice; I disclaim any such thing, and think I have demonstrated that the scheme I maintain is no such scheme. If the Stoics, by fate, meant any thing of such a nature as can be supposed to stand in the way of the advantage and benefit of the use of means and endeavors, or make it less worth the while for men to desire and seek after

any thing, wherein their virtue and happiness consists; I hold no doctrine that is clogged with any such inconvenience, any more than any other scheme whatsoever; and by no means so much as the Arminians scheme of contingency; us has been shown. If they held any such doctrine of universal fatality as is inconsistent with any kind of liberty, that is or can be any perfection, dignity, privilege or benefit, or any thing desirable, in any respect, for any intelligent creature, or indeed with any liberty that is possible or conceivable; I embrace no such doctrine. If they held any such doctrine of fate as is inconsistent with the world's being in all things subject to the disposal of an intelligent wise Agent, that presides, not as the soul of the world, but as the sovereign Lord of the universe, governing all things by proper will, choice, and design, in the exercise of the most perfect liberty conceivable, without subjection to any constraint, or being properly under the power or influence of any thing before, above, or without himself; I wholly renounce any such doctrine.

As to Mr Hobbes's maintaining, the same doctrine concerning necessity; I confess it happens I never read Mr. Hobbes. Let his opinion be what it will, we need not reject all truth which is demonstrated by clear evidence, merely because it was once held by some bad man. This great truth, that Jesus is the Son of God, was not spoiled because it was once and again proclaimed with a loud voice by the devil. If truth is so defiled, because it is spoken by the mouth, or written by the pen, of some ill-minded mischievous man, that it must never be received, we shall never know when we hold any of the most precious and evident truths by a sure tenure.

And if Mr. Hobbes has made a bad use of this truth, that is to be lamented; but the truth is not to be thought worthy of rejection on that account. It is common for the corruptions of the hearts of evil men to abuse the best things to vile purposes.

I might also take notice of its having been observed, that the Arminians agree with Mr. Hobbes in many more things than the Calvinists, — as, in what he is said to hold concerning, original sin, in denying the necessity of supernatural illumination, in denying infused grace, in denying the doctrine of justification by faith alone; and other things.

## SECTION 7

### CONCERNING THE NECESSITY OF THE DIVINE WILL.

SOME may possibly object against what has been supposed of the absurdity and inconsistency of a self-determining power in the will, and the impossibility of its being otherwise than that the will should be determined in every case by some motive, and by a motive which (as it stands in the view of the understanding) is of superior strength to any appearing on the other side; that if these things are true, it will follow, that not only the will of created minds, but the will of God himself, is necessary in all its determinations. Concerning which, says the author of the *Essay on the Freedom of Will in God and in the Creature*, (pp. 85, 86) “What strange doctrine is this, contrary to all our ideas of the dominion of God? does it not destroy the glory of his liberty of choice, and take away from the Creator and Governor and Benefactor of the world, that most free and sovereign agent, all the glory of this sort of freedom? does it not seemly to make him a kind of mechanical medium of fate, and introduce Mr. Hobbes’s doctrine of fatality and necessity into all things that God hath to do with? Does it not seem to represent the blessed God as a being of vast understanding, as well as power and efficiency, but still to leave him without a will to choose among all the objects within his view? In short, it seems to make the blessed God a sort of almighty minister of fate, under its universal and supreme influence; as it was the professed sentiment of some of the ancients, that fate was above the gods.”

This is declaiming, rather than arguing; and an application to men’s imaginations and prejudices, rather than to mere reason. But I would calmly endeavor to consider, whether there be any reason in this frightful representation. — But before I enter upon a particular consideration of the matter, I would observe this: that it is reasonable to suppose, it should be much more difficult to express or conceive things according to exact metaphysical truth, relating, to the nature and manner of the existence of things in the Divine understanding and will, and the operation of these faculties (if I may so call them) of the Divine mind, than in the human mind; which is infinitely more within our views, and nearer to a proportion to the measure of our comprehension, and more commensurate

to the use and import of human speech. Language is indeed very deficient in regard of terms to express precise truth concerning, our own minds, and their faculties and operations. Words were first formed to express external things; and those that are applied to express things internal and spiritual, are almost all borrowed, and used in a sort of figurative sense. Whence they are, most of them, attended with a great deal of ambiguity and unfixedness in their signification, occasioning innumerable doubts, difficulties, and confusions, in inquiries and controversies about things of this nature. But language is much less adapted to express things in the mind of the incomprehensible Deity precisely as they are.

We find a great deal of difficulty in conceiving exactly of the nature of our own souls. And notwithstanding all the progress which has been made, in past and present ages, in this kind of knowledge, whereby our metaphysics, as it relates to these things, is brought to greater perfection than once it was; yet, here is still work enough left for future inquiries and researches, and room for progress still to be made, for many ages and generations. But we had need to be infinitely able metaphysicians, to conceive with clearness, according to strict, proper, and perfect truth, concerning the nature of the Divine Essence, and the modes of the action and operation of the powers of the Divine Mind.

And it may be noted particularly, that though we are obliged to conceive of some things in God as consequent and dependent on others, and of some things pertaining to the Divine nature and will as the foundation of others, and so before others in the order of nature; as, we must conceive of the knowledge and holiness of God as prior, in the order of nature, to his happiness; the perfection of his understanding, as the foundation of his wise purposes and decrees; the holiness of his nature, as the cause and reason of his holy determinations. And yet, when we speak of cause and effect, antecedent and consequent fundamental and dependent, determining and determined, in the first Being, who is self-existent, independent, of perfect and absolute simplicity and immutability, and the first cause of all things; doubtless there must be less propriety in such representations, than when we speak of derived dependent beings, who are compounded, and liable to perpetual mutation and succession.

Having premised this, I proceed to observe concerning the fore-mentioned author's exclamation about the necessary determination of God's will, in all things, by what he sees to be fittest and best. That all the seeming force of such objections and exclamations must arise from an imagination that there is some sort of privilege or dignity in being without such a moral necessity as will make it impossible to do any other than always choose what is wisest and best; as though there were some disadvantage, meanness, and subjection, in such a necessity; a thing by Enrich the will was confined' kept under, and held in servitude by something, which, as it were, maintained a strong and invincible power and dominion over it, by bonds that held him fast, and that he could, by no means, deliver himself from. Whereas, this must be all mere imagination and delusion. It is no disadvantage or dishonor to a being, necessarily to act in the most excellent and happy manner, from the necessary perfections of his own nature. This argues no imperfection, inferiority, or dependence, nor any want of dignity, privilege, or ascendancy. It is not inconsistent with the absolute and most perfect sovereignty of God. The sovereignty of God is his ability and authority to do whatever pleases him; whereby "he doth according to his will in the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What cost thou?" — The following, things belong to the sovereignty of God: viz.

**(1.)** Supreme, universal, and infinite power: Thereby he is able to do what he pleases, without control, without any confinement of that power, without any subjection, in the least measure, to any other power; and so without any hindrance or restraint, that it should be either impossible, or at all difficult, for him to accomplish his will; and without any dependence of his power on any other power, from whence it should be derived, or which it should stand in any need of; so far from this, that all other power is derived from him, and is absolutely dependent on him.

**(2.)** That he has supreme authority; absolute and most perfect right to do what he wills, without subjection to any superior authority, or any derivation of authority from any other, or limitation by any distinct independent authority, either superior, equal, or inferior; he being the head of all dominion, and fountain of all authority; and also without



restraint by any obligation, implying either subjections derivation, or dependence, or proper limitation.

**(3.)** That his will is supreme, underived, and independent on any thing without himself; being in every thing determined by his own counsel, having no other rule but his own wisdom; his will not being subject to, or restrained by, the will of any other, and other wills being perfectly subject to his.

**(4.)** That his wisdom, which determines his will, is supreme, perfect, underived, self-sufficient, and independent; so that it may be said, as in ~~204~~ Isaiah 40:14,

“With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding”

There is no other Divine sovereignty but this; strange to see men contend, that the Deity is not free, because he is necessarily rational, immutably good and wise; when a man is allowed still the perfecter being, the more fixedly and constantly his will is determined by reason and truth.” — Inquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul. Edit. 3, vol. 2:pp. 403, 404, and this is properly absolute sovereignty: no other is desirable; nor would any other be honorable or happy and, indeed, there is no other conceivable or possible: It is the glory and greatness of the Divine Sovereign, that God’s will is determined by his own infinite, all-sufficient wisdom in every thing; and in nothing at all is either directed by any inferior wisdom, or by no wisdom; whereby it would become senseless arbitrariness, determining and acting without reason, design, or end.

If God’s will is steadily and surely determined in every thing by supreme wisdom, then it is in everything necessarily determined to that which is most wise. And, certainly, it would be a disadvantage and indignity to be otherwise. For if the Divine will was not necessarily determined to that which, in every case, is wisest and best, it must be subject to some degree of undesigning contingency; and so in the same degree liable to evil. To suppose the Divine will liable to be carried hither and thither at random, by the uncertain wind of blind contingency, which is guided by no wisdom, no motive, no intelligent dictate whatsoever, (if any such thing were

possible,) would certainly argue a great degree of imperfection and meanness, infinitely unworthy of the Deity. If it be a disadvantage for the Divine will to be attended with this moral necessity, then the more free from it, and the more left at random, the greater dignity and advantage. And, consequently, to be perfectly free from the direction of understanding, and universally and entirely left to senseless, unmeaning contingency, to act absolutely at random, would be the supreme glory.

It no more argues any dependence of God's will, that his supremely wise volition is necessary, than it argues a dependence of his being, that his existence is necessary. If it be something too low for the Supreme Being to have his will determined by moral necessity, so as necessarily, in every case, to will in the highest degree holily and happily; then why is it not also something too low for him to have his existence, and the infinite perfection of his nature, and his infinite happiness, determined by necessity? It is no more to God's dishonor to be necessarily wise, than to be necessarily holy. And if neither of them be to his dishonor, then it is not to his dishonor necessarily to act holily and wisely. And if it be not dishonorable to be necessarily holy and wise, in the highest possible degree, no more is it mean and dishonorable, necessarily to act boldly and wisely in the highest possible degree; or, which is the same thing, to do that, in every case, which, above all other things, is wisest and best.

The reason why it is not dishonorable to be necessarily most holy, is, because holiness in itself is an excellent and honorable thing. For the same reason, it is no dishonor to be necessarily most wise, and, in every case, to act most wisely, or do the thing which is the wisest of all; for wisdom is also in itself excellent and honorable.

The fore-mentioned author of the "Essay on the Freedom of Will," etc. as has been observed, represents that doctrine of the Divine will's being in every thing necessarily determined by a superior fitness, as making the blessed God a kind of almighty minister and mechanical medium of fate; and he insists, (pp. 93, 94,) that this moral necessity and impossibility is, in effect, the same thing with physical and natural necessity and impossibility; and in pp. 54, 55, he says, "The scheme which determines the will always and certainly by the understanding, and the understanding by the appearance of things, seems to take away the true nature of vice

and virtue. For the sublimest of virtues, and the vilest of vices, seem rather to be matters of fate and necessity, flowing naturally and necessarily from the existence, the circumstances, and present situation of persons and things; for this existence and situation necessarily makes such an appearance to the mind; from this appearance flows a necessary perception and judgment concerning these things: this judgment necessarily determines the will; and thus, by this chain of necessary causes, virtue and vice would lose their nature, and become natural ideas, and necessary things, instead of moral and free actions.”

And yet this same author allows, (pp. 30, 31,) that a perfectly wise being will constantly and certainly choose what is most fit, and says, pp. 102, 103, “I grant, and always have granted, that wheresoever there is such antecedent superior fitness of things, God acts according to it, so as never to contradict it; and, particularly, in all his judicial proceedings as a governor, and distributor of rewards and punishments.” Yea, he says expressly, (p. 42,) “That it is not possible for God to act otherwise than according to this fitness and goodness in things.”

So that, according to this author, putting these several passages of this essay together, there is no virtue, nor any thing of a moral nature, in the most sublime and glorious acts and exercises of God’s holiness, justice, and faithfulness; and he never does any thing which is in itself supremely worthy, and, above all other things, fit and excellent, but only as a kind of mechanical medium of fate, and in what he does as the judge and moral governor of the world, he exercises no moral excellency, exercising no freedom in these things, because he acts by moral necessity, which is, in effect, the same with physical or natural necessity; and therefore he only acts by an Hobbistical fatality; “as a being indeed of vast understanding, as well as power and efficiency, (as he said before,) but without a will to choose, being a kind of almighty minister of fate, acting under its supreme influence.” For he allows, that in all these things, God’s will is determined constantly and certainly by a superior fitness, and that it is not possible for him to act otherwise. And if these things are so, what glory or praise belongs to God for doing holily and justly, or talking the most fit, holy, wise, and excellent course, in any one instance? Whereas, according to the Scriptures, and also the common sense of mankind, it does not, in the least, derogate from the honor of any being, that through the moral

perfection of his nature he necessarily acts with supreme wisdom and holiness; but on the contrary, his praise is the greater; herein consists the height of his glory.

The same author (p. 56,) supposes that herein appears the excellent “character of a wise and good man, that though he can choose contrary to the fitness of things, yet he does not; but suffers himself to be directed by fitness;” and that, in this conduct, “he imitates the blessed God.” And yet he supposes it is contrariwise with the blessed God; not that he suffers himself to be directed by fitness, when he can choose, contrary to the fitness of things, but that he cannot choose contrary to the fitness of things; as he says, (p. 42,) “that it is not possible for God to act otherwise than according to this fitness, where there is any fitness or goodness in things.” Yea, he supposes, (p. 31,) that if a man “were perfectly wise and good, he could not do otherwise than be constantly and certainly determined by the fitness of things.”

One thing more I would observe, before I conclude this section; and that is, that if it derogates nothing from the glory of God to be necessarily determined by superior fitness in some things, then neither does it to be thus determined in all things; from any thing in the nature of such necessity, as at all detracting from God’s freedom, independence, absolute supremacy, or any dignity or glory of his nature, state, or manner of acting; or as implying any infirmity, restraint, or subjection. And if the thing be such as well consists with God’s glory, and has nothing tending, at all to detract from it; then we need not be afraid of ascribing it to God in too many things lest thereby we should detract from God’s glory too much.

## SECTION 8

### **SOME FURTHER OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE MORAL NECESSITY OF GOD’S VOLITIONS CONSIDERED.**

THE author last cited, as has been observed, owns that God, being perfectly wise, will constantly and certainly choose what appears most fit, where there is a superior fitness and goodness in things; and that it is

not possible for him to do otherwise. So that it is in effect confessed, that in those things where there is any real preferableness, it is no dishonor, nothing in any respect unworthy of God, for him to act from necessity: notwithstanding all that can be objected from the agreement of such a necessity with the fate of the Stoics, and the necessity maintained by Mr. Hobbes. From which it will follow, that if it were so, that in all the different things among which God chooses, there were evermore a superior fitness or preferableness on one side, then it would be no dishonor, or any thing, in any respect, unworthy or unbecoming of God, for his will to be necessarily determined in every thing. And if this be allowed, it is a giving up entirely the argument, from the unsuitableness of such a necessity to the liberty, supremacy, independence, and glory of the Divine Being; and a resting the whole weight of the affair on the decision of another point wholly diverse, viz. whether it be so indeed, that in all the various possible things which are in God's view, and may be considered as capable objects of his choice, there is not evermore a preferableness in one thing above another. This is denied by this author, who supposes that, in many instances, between two or more possible things which come within the view of the Divine mind, there is a perfect indifference and equality, as to fitness or tendency, to attain any good end which God can have in view, or to answer any of his designs. Now, therefore, I would consider whether this be evident.

The arguments brought to prove this are of two kinds.

(1.) It is urged, that, in many instances, we must suppose there is absolutely no difference between various possible objects of choice, which God has in view: and,

(2.) That the difference between many things is so inconsiderable, or of such a nature, that it would be unreasonable to suppose it to be of any consequence, or to suppose that any of God's wise designs would not be answered in one way as well as the other. Therefore,

**I.** The first thing to be considered is, whether there are any instances wherein there is a perfect likeness, and absolutely no difference between different objects of choice, that are proposed to the Divine understanding.

And here, in the first place, it may be worthy to be considered, whether the contradiction there is in the terms of the question proposed, does not give reason to suspect that there is an inconsistency in the thing supposed. It is inquired, whether different objects of choice may not be absolutely without difference? If they are absolutely without difference, then how are they different objects of choice? If there be absolutely no difference, in any respect, then there is no variety or distinction; for distinction is only by some difference. And if there be no variety among proposed objects of choice, then there is no opportunity for variety of choice, or difference of determination. For that determination of a thing, which is not different in any respect, is not a different determination, but the same. That this is no quibble, may appear more fully anon.

The arguments to prove that the most high, in some instances, chooses to do one thing rather than another, where the things themselves are perfectly without difference, are two.

**1.** That the various parts of infinite time and space, absolutely considered, are perfectly alike, and do not differ at all one from another; and that therefore, when God determined to create the world in such a part of infinite duration and space, rather than others, he determined and preferred, among various objects, between which there was preferableness, and absolutely no difference.

Ans. This objection supposes an infinite length of time before the world was created, distinguished by successive parts, properly and truly so; or a succession of limited and unmeasurable periods of time, following one another, in an infinitely long series: which must needs be a groundless imagination. The eternal duration which was before the world, being only the eternity of God's existence; which is nothing, else but his immediate, perfect, and invariable possession of the whole of his unlimited life, together and at once; *vitae interminabilis, tota, simul et perfecta possessio*. Which is so generally allowed, that I need not stand to demonstrate it.

So, this objection supposes an extent of space beyond the limits of the creation, of an infinite length, breadth, and depth, truly and properly distinguished into different measurable parts, limited at certain stages, one beyond another, in an infinite series. Which notion of absolute and infinite space is doubtless as unreasonable as that now mentioned of absolute and

infinite duration. It is as improper to imagine that the immensity and omnipresence of God is distinguished by a series of miles and leagues, one beyond another, as that the infinite duration of God is distinguished by months and years, one after another. A diversity and order of distinct parts, limited by certain periods, is as conceivable, and does as naturally obtrude itself on our imagination, in one case as the other; and there is equal reason in each case, to suppose that our imagination deceives us. It is equally improper to talk of months and years of the Divine existence, and mile-squares of Deity: and we equally deceive ourselves when we talk of the world's being differently fixed, with respect to either of these sorts of measures. I think we know not what we mean, if we say, the world might have been differently placed from what it is, in the broad expanse of infinity; or, that it might have been differently fixed in the long, line of eternity: and all arguments and objections, which are built on the imaginations we are apt to have of infinite extension or duration, are buildings founded on shadows, or castles in the air.

**II.** The second argument to prove that the Most High wills one thing rather than another, without any superior fitness or preferableness in the thing preferred, is God's actually placing in different parts of the world particles or atoms of matter that are perfectly equal and alike. The fore-mentioned author says, p. 78, etc. "If one would descend to the minute specific particles of which different bodies are composed, we should see abundant reason to believe that there are thousands of such little particles, or atoms of matter, which are perfectly equal and alike, and could give no distinct determination to the will of God where to place them." He there instances in particles of water, of which there are such immense numbers, which compose the rivers and oceans of this world: and the infinite myriads of the luminous and fiery particles which compose the body of the sun, so many, that it would be very unreasonable to suppose no two of them should be exactly equal and alike.

**Ans. (1.)** To this I answer; that as we must suppose matter to be infinitely divisible, it is very unlikely that any two of all these particles are exactly equal and alike; so unlikely, that it is a thousand to one, yea, an infinite number to one, but it is otherwise; and that although we should allow a great similarity between the different particles of water and fire, as to their general nature and figure; and

however small we suppose those particles to be, it is infinitely unlikely that any two of them should be exactly equal in dimensions and quantity of matter. If we should suppose a great many globes of the same nature with the globe of the earth, it would be very strange if there were any two of them that had exactly the same number of particles of crust and water in them: But infinitely less strange than that two particles of light should have just the same quantity of matter. For a particle of light, according to the doctrine of the infinite divisibility of matter, is composed of infinitely more assignable parts than there are particles of dust and water in the globe of the earth. And as it is infinitely unlikely that any two of these particles should be equal; so it is, that they should be alike in other respects: to instance in the configuration of their surfaces. If there were very many globes, of the nature of the earth, it would be very unlikely that any two should have exactly the same number of particles of dust, water, and stone, in their surfaces, and all posited exactly alike, one with respect to another, without any difference, in any part discernible either by the naked eye or microscope; but infinitely less strange than that two particles of light should be perfectly of the same figure. For there are infinitely more assignable real parts on the surface of a particle of light, than there are particles of dust, water, and stone, on the surface of the terrestrial globe.

**Ans. (2.)** But then, supposing that there are two particles, or atoms of matter, perfectly equal and alike? which God has placed in different parts of the creation; as I will not deny it to be possible for God to make two bodies perfectly alike, and put then in different places; yet it will not follow, that two different or distinct acts or effects of the Divine power have exactly the same fitness for the same end. For these two different bodies are not different or distinct, in any other respects than those wherein they differ; they are two in no other respects than those wherein there is a difference. If they are perfectly equal and alike in themselves, then they can be distinguished, or be distinct, only in those things which are called circumstances: as place, time, rest, motion, or some other present or past circumstances or relations. For it is difference only that constitutes distinction. If God makes two bodies in themselves every way equal and alike, and agreeing perfectly



in all other circumstances and relations but only their place; then in this only is there any distinction or duplicity. The figure is the same, the measure is the same, the solidity and resistance are the same, and every thing the same but only the place. Therefore what the will of God determines is this, namely, that there should be the same figure, the same extension, the same resistance, etc. in two different places. And for this determination he has some reason. There is some end, for which such a determination and act has a peculiar fitness, above all other acts. Here is no one thing determined without an end, and no one thing without a fitness for that end, superior to any thing else. If it be the pleasure of God to cause the same resistance and the same figure to be in two different places and situations, we can no more justly argue from it that here must be some determination or act of God's will that is wholly without motive or end, than we can argue, that whenever, in any case, it is a man's will to speak the same words, or make the same sounds, at two different times, there must be some determination or act of his will, without any motive or end. The difference of place, in the former case, proves no more than the difference of time does in the other. If any one should say, with regard to the former case, that there must be something determined without an end; viz. that of those two similar bodies, this in particular should be made in this place and the other in the other, and should inquire why the Creator did not make them in a transposition, when both are alike, and each would equally have suited either place? The inquiry supposes something that is not true; namely, that the two bodies differ and are distinct in other respects besides their place. So that, with this distinction inherent in them, they might, in their first creation, have been transposed, and each might have begun its existence in the place of the other.

Let us, for clearness sake, suppose that God had, at the beginning, made two globes, each of an inch diameter, both perfect spheres, and perfectly solid, without pores, and perfectly alike in every respect, and placed them near one to another, one towards the right hand, and the other towards the left, without any difference as to time, motion, or rest, past or present, or any circumstance but only their place; and the question should be asked, Why God in their creation placed them so? why that which is made on the right hand, was not made on the left, and vice versa? Let it be well

considered, whether there be any sense in such a question, and whether the inquiry does not suppose something false and absurd. Let it be considered, what the Creator must have done otherwise than he did, what different act of will or power he must have exerted, in order to the thing proposed. All that could have been done, would have been to have made two spheres, perfectly alike, in the same places which he has made them, without any difference of the things made, either in themselves or in any circumstance; so that the whole effect would have been without any difference, and therefore just the same. By the supposition, the two spheres are different in no other respect but their place; and therefore in other respects they are the same. Each has the same roundness; it is not a distinct rotundity, in any other respects but its situation. There are also the same dimensions, differing in nothing but their place. And so of their resistance, and every thing else that belongs to them.

Here, if any chooses to say, “that there is a difference in another respect, viz. that they are not numerically the same; that it is thus with all the qualities that belong to them; that it is confessed they are, in some respects, the same, that is, they are both exactly alike; but yet numerically they differ. Thus the roundness of one is not the same numerical individual roundness with that of the other.” Let this be supposed; then the question about the determination of the Divine will in the affair, is, why did God will that this individual roundness should be at the right hand, and the other individual roundness at the left? why did not he make them in a contrary position? Let any rational person consider, whether such questions be not words without a meaning; as much as if God should see fit, for some ends, to cause the same sounds to be repeated, or made at two different times; the sounds being perfectly the same in every other respect, but only one was a minute after the other; and it should be asked, upon it, why God caused these sounds, numerically different, to succeed one the other in such a manner? Why he did not make that individual sound, which was in the first minute, to be in the second? and the individual sound of the last minute to be in the first; which inquiries would be even ridiculous; as I think every person must see at once, in the case proposed of two sounds, being only the same repeated, absolutely without any difference but that one circumstance of time. If the Most High sees it will answer some goal end, that the same sound should be

made by lightning at two distinct times, and therefore wills that it should be so, must it needs therefore be, that herein there is some act of God's will without any motive or end? God saw fit often, at distinct times, and on different occasions, to say the very same words to Moses; namely, those, I am Jehovah. And would it not be unreasonable to infer, as a certain consequence, from this, that here must be some act or acts of the Divine will, in determining and disposing these words exactly alike, at different times, wholly without aim or inducement? But it would be no more unreasonable, than to say, that there must be an act of God's without any inducement, if he sees it best, and for some reasons, determines that there shall be the same resistance, the same dimensions, and the same figure, in several distinct places.

If, in the instance of the two spheres perfectly alike, it be supposed possible that God might have made them in a contrary position; that which is made at the right hand being made at the left; then I ask, whether it is not evidently equally possible, if God had made but one of them, and that in the place of the right-hand globe, that he might have made that numerically different from what it is, and numerically different from what he did make it; though perfectly alike, and in the same place; and at the same time, and in every respect, in the same circumstances and relations? Namely, whether he might not have made it numerically the same with that which he has now made at the left hand; and so have left that which is now created at the right hand in a state of non-existence? And if so, whether it would not have been possible to have made one in that place, perfectly like these, and yet numerically differing from both? And let it be considered, whether, from this notion of a numerical difference in bodies perfectly equal and alike, which numerical difference is something inherent in the bodies themselves, and diverse from the difference of place or time, or any circumstance whatsoever, it will not follow that there is an infinite number of numerically different possible bodies, perfectly alike, among which God chooses, by a self-determining power, when he goes about to create bodies.

Therefore let us put the case thus: Supposing that God in the beginning had created but one perfectly solid sphere, in a certain place; and it should be inquired, Why God created that individual sphere, in that place, at that time? And why he did not create another sphere perfectly like it, but

numerically different, in the same place, at the same time? Or why he chose to bring into being there that very body rather than any of the infinite number of other bodies perfectly like it; either of which he could have made there as well, and would have answered his end as well? Why he caused to exist, at that place and time, that individual roundness, rather than any other of the infinite number of individual rotundities just like it? Why that individual resistance, rather than any other of the infinite number of possible resistances just like it? And it might as reasonably be asked, Why, when God first caused it to thunder, he caused that individual sound then to be made, and not another just like it? Why did he make choice of this very sound, and reject all the infinite number of other possible sounds just like it, but numerically differings, from it, and all differing one from another? I think every body must be sensible of the absurdity and nonsense of what is supposed in such inquiries. And if we calmly attend to the matter, we shall be convinced, that all such kinds of objections as I am answering, are founded on nothing but the imperfection of our manner of conceiving things, and the obscureness of language, and great want of clearness and precision in the signification of terms.

If any shall find fault with this reasoning, that it is going a great length into metaphysical niceties and subtilties, I answer, The objection which they are in reply to is a metaphysical subtilty, and must be treated according to the nature of it.

**II.** Another thing alleged is, that innumerable things which are determined by the Divine will, and chosen and done by God, rather than others, differ from those that are not chosen, in so inconsiderable a manner, that it would be unreasonable to suppose the difference to be of any consequence, or that there is any superior fitness or goodness that God can have respect to in the determination.

To which I answer: it is impossible for us to determine, with any certainty or evidence, that because the difference is very small, and appears to us of no consideration, therefore there is absolutely no superior goodness, and no valuable end, which can be proposed by the Creator and Governor of the world, in orderings such a difference. The fore-mentioned author mentions many instances. One is, there being one atom in the whole universe more or less. But I think it would be unreasonable to suppose,

that God made one atom in vain, or without any end or motive. He made not one atom but what was a work of his almighty power, as much as the whole globe of the earth, and requires as much of a constant exertion of almighty power to uphold it; and was made and is upheld understandingly, and on design, as much as if no other had been made but that. And it would be as unreasonable to suppose that he made it without any thing really aimed at in so doing, as much as to suppose, that he made the planet Jupiter without aim or design.

It is possible that the most minute effects of the Creator's power, the smallest assignable difference between the things which God has made, may be attended, in the whole series of events, and the whole compass and extent of their influence, with very great and important consequences. If the laws of motion, and gravitation laid down by Sir Isaac Newton hold universally, there is not one atom, nor the least assignable part of an atom, complain, that they should be taken off by minutely examining these subtleties, is a strange kind of procedure." But what has influence, every moment, throughout the whole material universe, to cause every part to be otherwise than it would be, if it were not for that particular corporeal existence. And however the effect is insensible for the present, yet it may, in length of time, become great and important.

To illustrate this, let us suppose two bodies moving the same way, in straight lines, perfectly parallel one to another; but to be diverted from this parallel course, and drawn one from another, as much as might be by the attraction of an atom, at the distance of one of the furthest of the fixed stars from in the earth; these bodies being turned out of the lines of their parallel motion, will, by degrees, get further and further distant one from the other; and though the distance may be imperceptible for a long time, yet at length it may become very great. So, the revolution of a planet round the sun being retarded or accelerated, and the orbit of its revolution made greater or less, and more or less elliptical, and so its periodical time longer or shorter, no more than may be by the influence of the least atom, might, in length of time, perform a whole revolution sooner or later than otherwise it would have done; which might make a vast alteration with regard to millions of important events. So, the influence of the least particle may, for aught we know, have such effect on something in the constitution of some human body, as to cause another thought to arise in

the mind at a certain time, than otherwise would have been; which, in length of time, (yea, and that not very great), might occasion a vast alteration through the whole world of mankind. And so innumerable other ways might be mentioned, wherein the least assignable alteration may possibly be attended with great consequences.

Another argument, which the fore-mentioned author brings against a necessary determination of the Divine will, by a superior fitness, is, that such doctrine derogates from the freeness of God's grace and goodness, in choosing the objects of his favor and bounty, and from the obligation upon men to thankfulness for special benefits. Page 89, etc.

In answer to this objection, I would observe:

- 1.** That it derogates no more from the goodness of God, to suppose the exercise of the benevolence of his nature to be determined by wisdom, than to suppose it determined by chance, and that his favors are bestowed altogether at random, his will being determined by nothing but perfect accident, without any end or design whatsoever; which must be the case, as has been demonstrated, if volition be not determined by a prevailing motive. That which is owing, to perfect contingency, wherein neither previous inducement nor antecedent choice has any hand, is not owing, more to goodness or benevolence, than that which is owing to the influence of a wise end.
- 2.** It is acknowledged, that if the motive that determines the will of God in the choice of the objects of his favors, be any moral quality in the object, recommending that object to his benevolence above others, his choosing that object is not so great a manifestation of the freeness and sovereignty of his grace, as if it were otherwise. But there is no necessity of supposing this, in order to our supposing that he has some wise end in view, in determining to bestow his favors on one person rather than another. We are to distinguish between the merit of the object of God's favor, or a moral qualification of the object attracting that favor and recommending to it, and the natural fitness of such a determination of the act of God's goodness, to answerer come wise design of his own, some end in the view of God's omniscience. It is God's own act that is the proper and immediate object of his volition.

**3.** I suppose that none will deny, but that, in some instances, God acts from wise design in determining the particular subjects of his favors: none will say, I presume, that when God distinguishes, by his bounty, particular societies or persons, he never, in any instance, exercises any wisdom in so doing, aiming at some happy consequence. And, if it be not denied to be so in some instances, then I would inquire, whether, in these instances, God's goodness is less manifested than in those wherein God has no aim or end at all? and whether the subjects have less cause of thankfulness? And if so, who shall be thankful for the bestowment of distinguishing mercy with that enhancing circumstance of the distinctions being made without an end? How shall it be known when God is influenced by some wise aim, and when not? It is very manifest, with respect to the apostle Paul, that God had wise ends in choosing him to be a Christian and an apostle, who had been a persecutor, etc.

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them who should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."

(~~SOLIS~~ 1 Timothy 1:15, 16)

But yet the apostle never looked on it as a diminution of the freedom and riches of Divine grace in his election, which he so often and so greatly magnifies. This brings me to observe:

**4.** Our supposing such a moral necessity in the acts of God's will as has been spoken of; is so far from necessarily derogating from the riches of God's grace to such as are the chosen objects of his favor, that in many instances this moral necessity may arise from goodness, and front the great degree of it. God may choose this object rather than another, as having, a superior fitness to answer the ends, designs, and inclinations of his goodness; being, more sinful, and so more miserable and necessitous than others, the inclinations of Infinite Mercy and Benevolence may be more gratified, and the gracious design of God's sending his Son into the world, may be more abundantly answered, in the exercises of mercy towards such an object, rather than another.

One thing more I would observe, before I finish what I have to say on the head of the necessity of the acts of God's will; and that is, that something

much more like a servile subjection of the Divine Being to fatal necessity, will follow from Arminian principles, than from the doctrines which they oppose. For they (at least most of them) suppose, with respect to all events that happen in the moral world, depending on the volitions of moral agents, which are the most important events of the universe, to which all others are subordinate; I say, they suppose, with respect to these, that God has a certain foreknowledge of them, antecedent to any purposes or decrees of his about them. And if so, they have a fixed certain futurity, prior to any designs or volitions of his, and independent on them, and to which his volitions must be subject, as he would wisely accommodate his affairs to this fixed futurity of the state of things in the moral world. So that here, instead of a moral necessity of God's will, arising from, or consisting in, the infinite perfection and blessedness of the Divine Being, we have a fixed, unalterable state of things, properly distinct from the perfect nature of the Divine Mind, and the state of the Divine will and design, and entirely independent on these things, and which they have no hand in, because they are prior to them; and which God's will is truly subject to, being, obliged to conform or accommodate himself to it, in all his purposes and decrees, and in every thing he does in his disposals and government of the world; the moral world being the end of the natural; so that all is in vain, that is not accommodated to that state of the moral world, which consists in, or depends upon, the acts and state of the wills of moral agents, which had a fixed futurity from eternity. Such a subjection to necessity as this, would truly argue an inferiority and servitude, that would be unworthy of the Supreme Being; and is much more agreeable to the notion which many of the heathen had of fate, as above the gods, than that moral necessity of fitness and wisdom which has been spoken of; and is truly repugnant to the absolute sovereignty of God, and inconsistent with the supremacy of his will; and really subjects the will of the Most High to the will of his creatures, and brings him into dependence upon them.



## SECTION 9

### CONCERNING THAT OBJECTION AGAINST THE DOCTRINE WHICH HAS BEEN MAINTAINED, THAT IT MAKES GOD THE AUTHOR OF SIN.

It is urged by Arminians, that the doctrine of the necessity of men's volitions, or their necessary connection with antecedent events and circumstances, makes the First Cause, and Supreme Ordainer of all things, the author of sin; in that he has so constituted the state and course of things, that sinful volitions become necessary, in consequence of his disposal. Dr Whitby, in his "Discourse on the Freedom of the Will," cites one of the ancients as on his side, declaring that this opinion of the necessity of the will "absolves sinners, as doing nothing of their own accord which was evil, and would cast all the blame of all the wickedness committed in the world upon God, and upon his providence, if that were admitted by the assertors of this fate; whether he himself did necessitate them to do these things, or ordered matters so that they should be constrained to do them by some other cause." And the Doctor says, in another place,) "In the nature of the thing, and in the opinion of the philosophers, *causa deficiens, in rebus necessariis, ad causam per se efficientem reducenda est* — in things necessary, the deficient cause must be reduced to the efficient. And in this case the reason is evident; because the not doing what is required, or not avoiding what is forbidden, being a defect, must follow from the position of the necessary cause of that deficiency."

Concerning this, I would observe the following things:

**I.** If there be any difficulty in this matter, it is nothing peculiar to this scheme; it is no difficulty or disadvantage, wherein it is distinguished from the scheme of Arminians, and, therefore, not reasonably objected to by them.

Dr Whitby supposes, that if sin necessarily follows from God's withholding or if that assistance be not given, which is absolutely necessary to the avoiding of evil; then, in the nature of the thing, God must be as properly the author of that evil, as if he were the efficient cause of it.

From whence, according to what he himself says of the devils and damned spirits, God must be the proper author of their perfect unrestrained wickedness: he must be the efficient cause of the great pride of the devils, and of their perfect malignity against God, Christ, his saints, and all that is good, and of the insatiable cruelty of their disposition. For he allows, that God has so forsaken them, and does so withhold his assistance from them, that they are incapacitated from doing good, and determined only to evil. Our doctrine, in its consequence, makes God the author of men's sin in this world, no more, and in no other sense, than his doctrine, in its consequence, makes God the author of the hellish pride and malice of the devils. And, doubtless, the latter is as odious an effect as the former.

Again, if it will follow at all, that God is the author of sin, from what has been supposed of a sure and infallible connection between antecedents and consequents, it will follow because of this, viz., that for God to be the author or orderer of those things which he knows beforehand, will infallibly be attended with such a consequence, is the same thing, in effect, as for him to be the author of that consequence. But if this be so, this is a difficulty which equally attends the doctrine of Arminians themselves; at least, of those of them who allow God's certain foreknowledge of all events. For, on the supposition of such a foreknowledge, this is the case with respect to every sin that is committed: God knew, that if he ordered and brought to pass such and such events, such sins would infallibly follow. As, for instance, God certainly foreknew, long before Judas was born, that if he ordered things so, that there should be such a man born, at such a time and at such a place, and that his life should be preserved, and that he should, in Divine providence, be led into acquaintance with Jesus, and that his heart should be so influenced by God's Spirit or providence, as to be inclined to be a follower of Christ, and that he should be one of those twelve, which should be chosen constantly to attend him as his family; and that his health should be preserved, so that he should go up to Jerusalem, at the last passover in Christ's life; and it should be so ordered, that Judas should see Christ's kind treatment of the woman who anointed him at Bethany, and have that reproof from Christ which he had at that time, and see and hear other things which excited his enmity against his Master, and other circumstances should be ordered as they were ordered; it would be what would most certainly and infallibly follow' that Judas

would betray his Lord, and would soon after hang himself, and die impenitent, and be sent to hell for his horrid wickedness.

Therefore, this supposed difficulty ought not to be brought as an objection against the scheme which has been maintained, as disagreeing with the Arminian in scheme, seeing it is no difficulty owing to such a disagreement, but a difficulty wherein the Arminians share with us. That must be unreasonably made an objection against our differing from them, which we should not escape or avoid at all by agreeing with them.

And therefore I would observe: —

**II.** They who object, that this doctrine makes God the author of sin, ought distinctly to explain what they mean by that phrase, the author of sin. I know the phrase, as it is commonly used, signifies something very ill. If, by the author of sin, be meant the sinner, the agent, or actor of sin, or the doer of a wicked thing; so it would be a reproach and blasphemy to suppose God to be the author of sin. In this sense, I utterly deny God to be the author of sin; rejecting such an imputation on the Most High, as what is infinitely to be abhorred; and deny any such thing, to be the consequence of what I have laid down. But if, by the author of sin, is meant the permitter, or not a hinderer of sin, and, at the same time, a disposer of the state of events, in such a manner, for wise, holy, and most excellent ends and purposes, that sin, if it be permitted, or not hindered, will most certainly and infallibly follow; — I say, if this be all that is meant by being the author of sin, I do not deny that God is the author of sin, (though I dislike and reject the phrase, as that which by use and custom is apt to carry another sense), it is no reproach for the Most High to be thus the author of sin. This is not to be the actor of sin, but on the contrary, of holiness. What God doth herein is holy, and a glorious exercise of the infinite excellency of his nature. And I do not deny, that God's being thus the author of sin follows from what I have laid down; and I assert, that it equally follows from the doctrine which is maintained by most of the Arminian divines.

That it is most certainly so, that God is in such a manner the disposer and orderer of sin, is evident, if any credit is to be given to the Scripture; as well as because it is impossible, in the nature of things, to be otherwise. In

such a manner God ordered the obstinacy of Pharaoh, in his refusing to obey God's commands, to let the people go.

“I will harden his heart, and he shall not let the people go.”

(<sup><100></sup>Exodus 4:21)

Chapter <sup><100></sup>7:2-5: “ Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that I may lay mine hand upon Egypt, by great judgments,” etc. Chapter <sup><100></sup>9:12: “And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them, as the Lord had spoken unto Moses.” Chapter <sup><100></sup>10:1, 2: “And the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might show these my signs before him; and that thou mayest tell it in the ears of thy son, and thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done amongst them; that ye may know that I am the Lord.” Chapter <sup><100></sup>14:4: “And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honored upon Pharaoh and upon all his host.” Verse 8: “And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel.” And it is certain that, in such a manner, God, for wise and good ends, ordered that event, Joseph's being sold into Egypt by his brethren.

“Now, therefore, be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves; that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life.” (<sup><100></sup>Genesis 45:5)

Verse 7, 8: “God did send me before you to preserve posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance: so that now it was not you that sent me hither, but God.”

“He sent a man before them, even Joseph,  
who was sold for a servant.” (<sup><100></sup>Psalms 107:17)

It is certain, that thus God ordered the sin and folly of Sihon king of the Amorites, in refusing, to let the people of Israel pass by him peaceably.

“But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him; for the Lord thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thine land.” (Deuteronomy 2:30)

It is certain, that God thus ordered the sin and foil, of the kings of Canaan, that they attempted not to make peace with Israel, but, with a stupid boldness and obstinacy, set themselves violently to oppose them and their God.

“For it was of the Lord, to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favor; but that he might destroy them, as the Lord commanded Moses.” (Joshua 11:20)

It is evident, that thus God ordered the treacherous rebellion of Zedekiah against the king of Babylon. Jeremiah 52:3: “For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.” So, 2 Kings 24:20. And it is exceeding manifest, that God thus ordered the rapine and unrighteous ravages of Nebuchadnezzar, in spoiling and ruining the nations round about. Jeremiah 25:9: “Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar my servant, and will bring, them against this land, and against all the nations round about; and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and a hissing, and perpetual desolations.” Chapter 43:10, 11: “I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and I will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid, and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them. And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, and deliver such as are for death to death, and such as are for captivity to captivity, and such as are for the sword to the sword.” Thus God represents himself as sending for Nebuchadnezzar, and talking of him and his armies, and bringing, hint against the nations which there to be destroyed by him, to that very end, that he might utterly destroy them, and make them desolate; and as appointing the way that he should do, so particularly, that the very persons were designed that he should kill with the sword, and those that should be killed with famine and pestilence, and those that should be carried into captivity; and that in doing, all these things he should act as his servant; by which, less cannot be intended, than

that he should serve his purposes and designs. And in <sup><3014></sup>Jeremiah 22:4-6, God declares how he would cause him thus to serve his designs, viz, by bringing, this to pass in his sovereign disposals, as the great Possessor and Governor of the universe, that disposes all things just as pleases him. “Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power, and by my out-stretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now I have given all these lands into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, MY SERVANT; and the beasts of the field have I given also to serve him.” And Nebuchadnezzar is spoken of as doing these these things, by leaving his “arms strengthened” by God, and having “God’s sword put into his hands, for this end.” <sup><3314></sup>Ezekiel 30:24-26. Yea, God speaks of his terribly ravaging and wasting the nations, and cruelly destroying all sorts, without distinction of sex or age, as the weapon in God’s land, and the instrument of his indignation, which God makes use of to fulfill his own purposes, and execute his own vengeance. <sup><3514></sup>Jeremiah 51:20, etc. “Thou art my battle-axe and weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations; and with thee I will destroy kingdoms; and with thee I will break in pieces the horse and his rider, and with thee I will break in pieces the chariot and his rider; with thee also will I break in pieces man and woman; and with thee will I break in pieces old and young; and with thee will I break in pieces the young, man and the maid,” etc. It is represented, that the designs of Nebuchadnezzar, and those that destroyed Jerusalem, never could have been accomplished, had not God determined them as well as they.

“Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, and the Lord commandeth it not ?” (<sup><3814></sup>Lamentations 3:37)

And yet the king of Babylon’s thus destroying the nations, and especially the Jews, is spoken of as his great wickedness, for which God finally destroyed him. <sup><3414></sup>Isaiah 14:4, 5, 6, 19. <sup><3114></sup>Habakkuk 2:5-12, and Jeremiah 1. and 51: It is most manifest, that God, to serve his own designs, providentially ordered Shimei’s cursing, David. <sup><1614></sup>2 Samuel 16:10, 11 “The Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. — Let him curse: for the Lord hath bidden him.”

It is certain, that God thus, for excellent, holy, gracious, and glorious ends, ordered the fact which they committed who were concerned in Christ's death, and that therein they did but fulfill God's designs: as, I trust, no Christian will deny it was the design of God, that Christ should be crucified, and that for this end he came into the world. It is very manifest, by many Scriptures, that the whole affair of Christ's crucifixion, with its circumstances, and the treachery of Judas, that made way for it, was ordered in God's providence, in pursuance of his purpose; notwithstanding the violence that is used with those plain Scriptures, to obscure and pervert the sense of them.

“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.” (<sup>4172</sup>Acts 2:23)

<sup>4171</sup>Luke 22:21, 22: “But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. And truly the Son of Man goeth, as it was determined.”

<sup>4172</sup>Acts 4:27, 28: “For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.” <sup>4173</sup>Acts 3:17, 18: “And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.” So that what these murderers of Christ did, is spoken of as what God brought to pass, or ordered, and that by which he fulfilled his own word in

“the agreeing of the kings of the earth to give their kingdom to the beast,” (<sup>4174</sup>Revelation 17:17)

though it was a very wicked thing in them, is spoken of as “a fulfilling God's will,” and what “God had put into their hearts to do.” It is manifest, that God sometimes permits sin to be committed, and at the same time orders things so, that if he permits the fact, it will come to pass, because, on some accounts, he sees it needful and of importance that it should come to pass.

<sup>4175</sup>Matthew 18:7: “It must needs be that of offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh.” With <sup>4176</sup>1 Corinthians 11:19:

“For there must also be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.”

Thus it is certain and demonstrable, from the holy Scriptures, as well as the nature of things, and the principles of Arminians, that God permits sin; and at the same time, so orders things in his providence, that it certainly and infallibly will come to pass, in consequence of his permission.

I proceed to observe in the next place:

**III.** That there is a great difference between God’s being concerned thus, by his permission, in an event and act, which, in the inherent subject and agent of it, is sin, (though the event will certainly follow on his permission,) and his being concerned in it by producing it and exerting the act of sin; or between his being the orderer of its certain existence, by not hindering it, under certain circumstances, and his being the proper actor or author of it, by a positive agency or efficiency. And this, notwithstanding what Dr Whitby offers about a saying of philosophers, that *causa deficiens, in rebus necessariis, ad causam per se efficientem reducenda est*. As there is a vast difference between the sun’s being the cause of the lightness and warmth of the atmosphere, and brightness of gold and diamonds, by its presence and positive influence; and its being the occasion of darkness and frost in the night, by its motion, whereby it descends below the horizon. The motion of the sun is the occasion of the latter kind of events; but it is not the proper cause efficient, or producer of them; though they are necessarily consequent on that motion, under such circumstances: no more is any action of the Divine Being the cause of the evil of men’s wills. If the sun were the proper cause of cold and darkness, it would be the fountain of these things, as it is the fountain of light and heat; and then something might be argued from the nature of cold and darkness, to a likeness of nature in the sun; and it might be justly inferred, that the sun itself is dark and cold, and that his beams are black and frosty. But from its being the cause no otherwise than by its departure, no such thing can be inferred, but the contrary: it may justly be argued, that the sun is a bright and hot body, if cold and darkness are found to be the consequence of its withdrawment; and the more constantly and necessarily these effects are connected with and confined to its absence, the more



strongly does it argue the sun to be the fountain of light and heat. So, inasmuch as sin is not the fruit of any positive agency or influence of the Most High, but, on the contrary, arises from the withholding of his action and energy, and, under certain circumstances, necessarily follows on the want of his influence; this is no argument that he is sinful, or his operation evil, or has anything of the nature of evil; but, on the contrary, that he, and his agency, are altogether good and holy, and that he is the fountain of all holiness. It would be strange arguing, indeed, because men never commit sin, but only when God leaves them to themselves, and necessarily sin when he does so, that therefore their sin is not from themselves, but from God; and so, that God must be a sinful being: as strange as it would be to argue, because it is always dark when the sun is gone, and never dark when the sun is present, that therefore all darkness is from the sun, and that his disc and beams must needs be black.

**IV.** It properly belongs to the supreme and absolute Governor of the universe, to order all important events within his dominion by his wisdom; but the events in the moral world are of the most important kind; such as the moral actions of intelligent creatures, and their consequences.

These events will be ordered by something. They will either be disposed by wisdom, or they will be disposed by chance; that is, they will be disposed by blind and undesigning causes, if that were possible, and could be called a disposal. Is it not better that the good and evil which happen in God's world, should be ordered, regulated, bounded, and determined, by the good pleasure of an infinitely wise Being, who perfectly comprehends within his understanding and constant view the universality of things, in all their extent and duration, and sees all the influence of every event, with respect to every individual thing and circumstance throughout the grand system, and the whole of the eternal series of consequences, — than to leave these things to fall out by chance, and to be determined by those causes which have no understanding or aim? Doubtless, in these important events, there is a better and a worse, as to the time, subject, place, manner, and circumstances of their coming to pass, with regard to their influence on the state and course of things. And if there be, it is certainly best that they should be determined to that time, place, etc. which is best. And therefore it is in its own nature fit, that wisdom and not chance, should order these things. So that it belongs to the Being who is the Possessor of infinite

wisdom, and is the Creator and Owner of the whole system of created existences, and has the care of all; I say it belongs to him to take care of this matter; and he would not do what is proper for him if he should neglect it. And it is so far from being unholy in him to undertake this affair, that it would rather have been unholy to neglect it; as it would have been a neglecting what fitly appertains to him; and so it would have been a very unfit and unsuitable neglect.

Therefore the sovereignty of God doubtless extends to this matter; especially considering, that if it should be supposed to be otherwise, and God should leave men's volitions, and all moral events, to the determination and disposition of blind unmeaning causes, or they should be left to happen perfectly without a cause; this would be no more consistent with liberty, in any notion of it, and particularly not in the Arminian notion of it, than if these events were subject to the disposal of Divine Providence, and the will of man were determined by circumstances which are ordered and disposed by Divine wisdom, as appears by what has been already observed. But it is evident, that such a providential disposing and determining men's moral actions, though it infers a moral necessity of those actions, yet it does not in the least infringe the real liberty of mankind; the only liberty that common sense teaches to be necessary to moral agency, which, as has been demonstrated, is not inconsistent with such necessity.

On the whole it is manifest, that God may be, in the manner which has been described, the orderer and disposer of that event, which, in the inherent subject and agent, is moral evil; and yet his so doing may be no moral evil. He may will the disposal of such an event, and its coming to pass, for good ends, and his will not be an immoral or sinful will, but a perfectly holy will. And he may actually, in his providence, so dispose and permit things, that the event may be certainly and infallibly connected with such disposal and permission, and his act therein not be an immoral or unholy, but a perfectly holy act. Sin may be an evil thing: and yet that there should be such a disposal and permission as that it should come to pass, may be a good thing. This is no contradiction or inconsistency. Joseph's brethren's selling him into Egypt, consider it only as it was acted by them, and with respect to their views and aims, which were evil, was a very bad thing; but it was a good thing, as it was an event of God's

ordering, and considered with respect to his views and aims, which were good.

“As for you, ye thought evil against me;  
but God meant it unto good.” (Genesis 1:20)

So the crucifixion of Christ, if we consider only those things which belong to the event as it proceeded from his murderers, and are comprehended within the compass of the affair considered as their act, their principles, dispositions, views, and aims; so it was one of the most heinous things that ever was done, in many respects the most horrid of all acts: but consider it as it was willed and ordered of God, in the extent of his designs and views, it was the most admirable and glorious of all events; and God's willing the event was the most holy volition of God that ever was made known to men; and God's act in ordering it was a divine act, which, above all others, manifests the moral excellency of the Divine Being.

The consideration of these things may help us to a sufficient answer to the cavils of Arminians, concerning what has been supposed by many Calvinists, of a distinction between a secret and revealed will of God, and their diversity one from the other; supposing that the Calvinists herein ascribe inconsistent wills to the Most High: which is without any foundation. God's secret and revealed will, or, in other words, his disposing and perceptive will, may be diverse, and exercised in dissimilar acts, the one in disapproving and opposing, the other in willing and determining, without any inconsistency. Because, although these dissimilar exercises of the Divine will may, in some respects, relate to the same things, yet, in strictness, they have different and contrary objects, the one evil, and the other good. Thus, for instance, the crucifixion of Christ was a thing contrary to the revealed or perceptive will of God; because, as it was viewed and done by his malignant murderers, it was a thing infinitely contrary to the holy nature of God, and so necessarily contrary to the holy inclination of his heart, revealed in his law. Yet this does not at all hinder but that the crucifixion of Christ, considered with all those glorious consequences which were within the view of the Divine Omniscience, might be indeed, and therefore might appear to God to be, a glorious event; and consequently be agreeable to his will, though this will may be secret, he not revealed in God's law. And thus considered, the crucifixion of

Christ was not evil, but good. If the secret exercises of God's will were of a kind that is dissimilar, and contrary to his revealed will respecting the same or like objects; if the objects of both were good, or both evil; then, indeed, to ascribe contrary kinds of volition or inclination to God respecting these objects, would be to ascribe an inconsistent will to God: but to ascribe to him different and opposite exercises of heart respecting different objects, and objects contrary one to another, is so far from supposing, God's will to be inconsistent with itself, that it cannot be supposed consistent with itself any other way. For any being to have a will of choice respecting, good, and at the same time, a will of rejection and refusal respecting evil, is to be very consistent; but the contrary, viz. to have the same will towards these contrary objects, and to choose and love both good and evil at the same time, is to be very inconsistent.

There is no inconsistency in supposing, that God may hate a thing as it is in itself, and considered simply as evil, and yet that it may be his will it should come to pass, considering all consequences. I believe there is no person of good understanding, who will venture to say, he is certain that it is impossible it should be best, taking in the whole compass and extent of existence, and all consequences in the endless series of events, that there should be such a thing, as moral evil in the world. And if so, it will certainly follow, that an infinitely wise Being, who always chooses what is best, must choose that there should be such a thing. And if so, then such a choice is not an evil, but a wise and holy choice. And if so, then that providence which is agreeable to such a choice, is a wise and holy providence. Men do will sin as sin, and so are the authors and actors of it: they love it as sin, and for evil ends and purposes. God does not will sin as sin, or for the sake of any thing evil; though it be his pleasure so to order things, that, he permitting, sin will come to pass; for the sake of the great good that by his disposal shall be the consequence. His willing to order things so that evil should come to pass, for the sake of the contrary good, is no argument that he does not hate evil as evil: and if so, then it is no reason why he may not reasonably forbid evil as evil, and punish it as such.

The Arminians themselves must be obliged, whether thee will or no, to allow a distinction of God's will, amounting to just the same thing that Calvinists intend by their distinction of a secret and revealed will. They

must allow a distinction of those things which God thinks best should be, considering all circumstances and consequences, and so are agreeable to his disposing will, and those things which he loves, and are agreeable to his nature, in themselves considered. Who is there that will dare to say, that the hellish pride, malice, and cruelty of devils, are agreeable to God, and what he likes and approves? And yet, I trust, there is no Christian divine but what will allow, that it is agreeable to God's will so to order and dispose things concerning them, so to leave them to themselves, and give them up to their own wickedness, that this perfect wickedness should be a necessary consequence. Be sure Dr. Whitby's words do plainly suppose and allow it.

These following things may be laid down as maxims of plain truth, and indisputable evidence.

1. That God is a perfectly happy being in the most absolute and highest sense possible.
2. That it will follow from hence, that God is free from every thing that is contrary to happiness; and so, that in strict propriety of speech, there is no such thing as any pain, grief, or trouble in God.
3. When any intelligent being is really crossed and disappointed, and things are contrary to what he truly desires, he is the less pleased, or has less pleasure, his pleasure and happiness is diminished, and he suffers what is disagreeable to him, or is the subject of something; that is of a nature contrary to joy and happiness, even pain and grief.

From this last axiom it follows, that if no distinction is to be admitted between God's hatred of sin, and his will with respect to the event and the existence of sin, as the all-wise determiner of all events, under the view of all consequences through the whole compass and series of things; I say, then, it certainly follows, that the coming to pass of every individual act of sin is truly, all things considered, contrary to his will, and that his will really crossed in it; and this in proportion as he hates it. And as God's hatred of sin is infinite, by reason of the infinite contrariety of his holy nature to sin; so his will is infinitely crossed in every act of sin that happens. Which is as much as to say: He endures that which is infinitely disagreeable to him, by means of every act of sin that he sees committed.

And therefore, as appears by the preceding positions, he endures truly and really infinite grief or pain from every sin. And so he must be infinitely crossed, and suffer infinite pain every day, in millions of millions of instances: he must continually be the subject of an immense number of real and truly infinitely great crosses and vexations Which would be to make him infinitely the most miserable of all beings.

If any objector should say: all that these things amount to is, that God may do evil that good may come, which is justly esteemed immoral and sinful in men; and therefore may be justly esteemed inconsistent with the moral perfections of God. I answer: that for God to dispose and permit evil, in the manner that has been spoken of, is not to do evil that good may come; for it is not to do evil at all. In order to a thing's being morally evil, there must be one of these things belonging to it: either it must be a thing unfit and unsuitable in its own nature; or it must have a bad tendency; or it must proceed from an evil disposition, and be done for an evil end. But neither of these things can be attributed to God's ordering and permitting such events, as the immoral acts of creatures for good ends.

**1.** It is not unfit in its own nature, that he should do so. For it is in its own nature fit that infinite wisdom, and not blind chance, should dispose moral good and evil in the world. And it is fit that the Being who has infinite wisdom, and is the Maker, Owner, and supreme Governor of the world, should take care of that matter. And therefore there is no unfitness or unsuitableness in his doing it. It may be unfit, and so immoral, for any other beings to go about to order this affair; because they are not possessed of a wisdom, that in any manner fits them for it; and, in other respects, they are not fit to be trusted with this affair; nor does it belong to them, they not being the owners and lords of the universe.

We need not be afraid to affirm, that if a wise and good man knew with absolute certainty, it would be best, all things considered, that there should be such a thing as moral evil in the world, it would not be contrary to his wisdom and goodness, for him to choose that it should be so. It is no evil desire to desire good, and to desire that which, all things considered, is best. And it is no unwise choice to choose that that should be, which it is best should be; and to choose the existence of that thing concerning which

this is known, viz. that it is best it should be, and so is known in the whole to be most worthy to be chosen. On the contrary, it would be a plain defect in wisdom and goodness, for him not to choose it. And the reason why he might not order it, if he were able, would not be because he might not desire it, but only the ordering of that matter does not belong to him. But it is no harm for him who is, by right, and in the greatest propriety, the supreme orderer of all things, to order every thing in such a manner, as it would be a point of wisdom in him to choose that they should be ordered. If it would be a plain defect of wisdom and goodness in a being, not to choose that that should be, which he certainly knows it would, all things considered, be best should be, (as was but now observed), then it must be impossible for a being who has no defect of wisdom and goodness, to do otherwise than choose it should be; and that for this very reason, because he is perfectly wise and good. And if it be agreeable to perfect Wisdom and Goodness for him to choose that it should be, and the ordering of all things supremely and perfectly belongs to him, it must be agreeable to infinite Wisdom and Goodness to order that it should be. If the choice is good, the ordering and disposing things according to that choice must also be good. It can be no harm in one to whom it belongs, “to do his will in the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth,” to execute a good volition. If this will be good, and the object of his will be, all things considered, good and best, then the choosing or willing it, is not willing evil that good may come. And if so, then his ordering according to that will, is not doing evil that good may come.

**2.** It is not of a bad tendency, for the Supreme Being thus to order and permit that moral evil to be, which it is best should come to pass. For that it is of good tendency, is the very thing supposed in the point now in question. Christ’s crucifixion, though a most horrid fact in then that perpetrated it, was of most glorious tendency, as permitted and ordered of God.

**3.** Nor is there any need of supposing it proceeds from any evil disposition or aim; for by the supposition, what is aimed at is good, and good is the actual issue, in the final result of things.

## SECTION 10

### CONCERNING SIN'S FIRST ENTRANCE INTO THE WORLD.

THE things which have already been offered may serve to obviate or clear many of the objections which might be raised concerning sin's first coming into the world; as though it would follow from the doctrine maintained, that God must be the author of the first sin, through his so disposing things, that it should necessarily follow from his permission, that the sinful act should be committed, etc. I need not, therefore, stand to repeat what has been said already about such a necessity's not proving God to be the author of sin, in any ill sense, or in any such sense as to infringe any liberty of man, concerned in his morel agency, or capacity of blame, guilt, and punishment.

But, if it should nevertheless be said, supposing the case so, that God, when he had made man, might so order his circumstances, that, from these circumstances, together with his withholding further assistance and Divine influence, his sin would infallibly follow, why might not God as well have first made man with a fixed prevailing principle of sin in his heart?

I answer,

**1.** It was meet, if sin did come into existence, and appear in the world, it should arise from the imperfection which properly belongs to a creature, as such, and should appear so to do, that it might appear not to be from God, as the efficient or fountain. But this could not have been, if man had been made at first with sin in his heart; nor unless the abiding principle and habit of sin were first introduced by an evil act of the creature. If sin had not arisen from the imperfection of the creature, it would not have been so visible, that it did not arise from God, as the positive cause, and real source of it. — But it would require room that cannot be here allowed, fully to consider all the difficulties which have been started concerning the first entrance of sin into the world.

And therefore,

**2.** I would observe, that objections against the doctrine that has been laid down, in opposition to the Arminian notion of liberty, from these



difficulties, are altogether impertinent; because no additional difficulty is incurred by adhering to a scheme in this manner differing from theirs, and none would be removed or avoided, by agreeing with, and maintaining theirs. Nothing that the Arminians say about the contingency, or self-determining power of man's will, can serve to explain, with less difficulty, how the first sinful volition of mankind could take place, and man be justly charged with the blame of it. To say, the will was self-determined, or determined by free choice, in that sinful volition, — which is to say, that the first sinful volition was determined by a foregoing sinful volition, — is no solution of the difficulty. It is an old way of solving difficulties, to advance greater, in order to it. To say two and two make nine, or that a child begat his father, solves no difficulty: no more does it, to say, the first sinful act of choice was before the first sinful act of choice, and chose and determined it, and brought it to pass. Nor is it any better solution to say, the first sinful volition chose, determined, and produced itself; which is to say, it was before it was. Nor will it go any further towards helping us over the difficulty, to say, the first sinful volition arose accidentally, without any cause at all, any more than it will solve that difficult question, How the world could be made out of nothing? to say, it came into being out of nothing, without any cause, as has been already observed. And if we should allow that that could be, that the first evil volition should arise by perfect accident, without any cause, it would relieve no difficulty, about God's laying the blame of it to man. For how was man to blame for perfect accident, which had no cause, and which, therefore, he (to be sure) was not the cause of, any more than if it came by some external causes? — Such kind of solutions are no better, than if some person, going about to solve some of the strange mathematical paradoxes about infinitely great and small quantities, as, that some infinitely great quantities are infinitely greater than some other infinitely great quantities; and also that some infinitely small quantities are infinitely less than others, which yet are infinitely little, in order to a solution, should say, that mankind have been under a mistake, in supposing a greater quantity to exceed a smaller; and that a hundred multiplied by ten makes but a single unit.

## SECTION 11

### OF A SUPPOSED INCONSISTENCE OF THESE PRINCIPLES WITH GOD'S MORAL CHARACTER.

THE things which have been already observed may be sufficient to answer most of the objections, and silence the great exclamations of Arminians against the Calvinists, from the supposed inconsistency of Calvinistic principles with the moral perfections of God, as exercised in his government of mankind. The consistence of such a doctrine of necessity as has been maintained, with the fitness and reasonableness of God's commands, promises and threatenings, rewards and punishments, has been particularly considered: the cavils of our opponents, as though our doctrine of necessity made God the author of sin, have been answered; and also their objection against these principles, as inconsistent with God's sincerity in his counsels, invitations, and persuasions, has been already obviated, in what has been observed respecting the consistence of what Calvinists suppose concerning the secret and revealed will of God: by that it appears, there is no repugnance in supposing it may be the secret will of God, that his ordination and permission of events should be such, that it shall be a certain consequence, that a thing never will come to pass, which yet it is man's duty to do, and so God's perceptive will that he should do; and this is the same thing as to say, God may sincerely command and require him to do it. And if he may be sincere in commanding him, he may, for the same reason, be sincere in counselling, inviting, and using persuasions with him to do it. Counsels and invitations are manifestations of God's perceptive will, or of what God loves, and what is in itself, and as man's act, agreeable to his heart; and not of his disposing will, and what he chooses as a part of his own infinite scheme of things. It has been particularly shown, Part III. Section 4: that such a necessity as has been maintained, is not inconsistent with the propriety and fitness of Divine commands; and for the same reason, not inconsistent with the sincerity of invitations and counsels, in the corollary at the end of that section. Yea, it hath been shown, Part 3 section 7: corol. 1. that this objection of Arminians, concerning, the sincerity and use of Divine exhortations, invitations, and counsels, is demonstrably against themselves.

Notwithstanding, I would further observe, that the difficulty of reconciling the sincerity of counsels, invitations, and persuasions, with such an antecedent known hardness of all events as has been supposed, is not peculiar to this scheme, as distinguished from that of the generality of Arminians, which acknowledge the absolute foreknowledge and therefore it would be unreasonably brought as an objection against my differing, from them. The main seeming difficulty in the case is this: that God, in counselling, inviting, and persuading, makes a show of aiming at, seeking, and using endeavors for the thing exhorted and persuaded to; whereas, it is impossible for any intelligent being truly to seek, of use endenvours for a thing, which he at the same time knows, most perfectly, will not come to pass, and that it is absurd to suppose, he makes the obtaining of a thing his end, in his calls and counsels, which he, at the same time, infallibly knows will not be obtained by these means. Now, if God knows this, in the utmost certainty and perfection, the way by which he comes by this knowledge makes no difference. If he knows it is by the necessity which he sees in things, or by some other means, it alters not the case. But it is in effect allowed by Arminians themselves, that God's inviting and persuading men to do things, which he, at the same time, certainly knows will not be done, is no evidence of insincerity; because they allow, that God has a certain foreknowled of all men's sinful actions and omissions. And as this is thus implicitly allowed by most Arminians, so all that pretend to own the Scriptures to be the word of God, must be constrained to allow it. — God commanded and counselled Pharaoh to let his people go, and used arguments and persuasions to induce him to it; he laid before him arguments taken from his infinite greatness and almighty power, (<sup>Exodus</sup> 7:16,) and fore warned him of the fatal consequences of his refusal, from time to time; (chapter <sup>Exodus</sup> 8:1, 2, 20, 21; chapter <sup>Exodus</sup> 9:1-5, 13-17; and <sup>Exodus</sup> 10:3, 6.) He commanded Moses, and the elders of Israel, to go and beseech Pharaoh to let the people go; and at the same time told them, he knew surely that he would not comply to it. <sup>Exodus</sup> 3:18, 19: "And thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the lying of Egypt, and you shall say unto him; The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us; and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that He may sacrifice unto the Lord our God." And, "I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go." So our blessed Savior, the evening wherein he was betrayed, knew that Peter would shamefully deny

him before the morning; for he declares it to him with asseverations, to show the certainty of it; and tells the disciples, that all of them should be offended because of him that night; <sup><1631></sup>Matthew 26:31-35; <sup><1633></sup>John 13:38; <sup><1621></sup>Luke 22:31-34; <sup><1632></sup>John 16:32. And yet it was their duty to avoid these things; they were very sinful things, which God had forbidden, and which it was their duty to watch and pray against; and they were obliged to do so from the counsels and persuasions Christ used with them, at that very time, so to do; <sup><1634></sup>Matthew 26:41 “ Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.” So that whatever difficulty there can be in this matter, it can be no objection against any principles which have been maintained in opposition to the principles of Arminians; nor does it any more concern me to remove the difficulty, than it does them, or indeed all that call themselves Christians, and acknowledge the Divine authority of the Scriptures. Nevertheless, this matter may possibly (God allowing) be more particularly and largely considered, in some future discourse on the doctrine of predestination.

But I would here observe, that however the defenders of that notion of liberty of will which I have opposed, exclaim against the doctrine of Calvinists, as tending to bring men into doubts concerning the moral perfections of God; it is their scheme, and not the scheme of Calvinists, that indeed is justly chargeable with this. For it is one of the most fundamental points of their scheme of things, that a freedom of will, consisting in self-determination, without all necessity, is essential to moral agency. This is the same thing as to say, that such a determination of the will, without all necessity, must be in all intelligent beings, in those things wherein they are moral agents, or in their moral acts: and from this it will follow, that God’s will is not necessarily determined in any thing he does, as a moral agent, in any of his acts that are of a moral nature: so that in all things. wherein he acts holily, justly, and truly, he does not act necessarily; or his will is not necessarily determined to act holily and justly; because, if it were necessarily determined, he would not be a moral agent in thus acting; his will would be attended with necessity, which, they say, is inconsistent with moral agency: — “He can act no otherwise; he is at no liberty in the affair; he is determined by unavoidable, invincible necessity; therefore such agency is no moral agency, yea, no agency at all, properly speaking: a necessary agent is no agent: he being passive, and

subject to necessity, what he does is no act of his, but an effect of a necessity prior to any act of his.” This is agreeable to their manner of arguing. Now then, what is become of all our proof of the moral perfections of God? How can we prove that God certainly will, in any one instance, do that which is just and holy, seeing his will is determined in the matter by no necessity? We have no other way of proving that any thing certainly will be, but only by the necessity of the event. Where we can see no necessity, but that the thing may be, or may not be, there we are unavoidably left at a loss. We have no other way properly and truly to demonstrate the moral perfections of God, but the way that Mr. Chubb proves them in pp. 252, 261, 262, 263, of his Tracts, viz. that God must necessarily perfectly know what is most worthy and valuable in itself, which, in the nature of things, is best and fittest to be done. And as this is most eligible in itself, the being omniscient, must see it to be so; and being both omniscient and self-sufficient, cannot have any temptation to reject it; and so must necessarily will that which is best. And thus, by this necessity of the determination of God’s will to what is good and best, we demonstrably establish God’s moral character.

Corol. From things which have been observed, it appears, that most of the arguments from Scripture, which Arminians make use of to support their scheme, are no other than begging the question. For in these their arguments, they determine in the first place, that without such a freedom of will as they hold, men cannot be proper moral agents, nor the subjects of command, counsel, persuasion, invitation, promises, threatenings, expostulations, rewards, and punishments; and that without such freedom, it is to no purpose for men to take any care, or use any diligence, endeavors, or means, in order to their avoiding sin, or becoming holy, escaping punishment, or obtaining happiness: and having supposed these things, which are grand things in question in the debate, then they heap up Scriptures, containing commands, counsels, calls, warnings, persuasions, expostulations, promises, and threatenings, (as doubtless, they may find enough such: the Bible is confessedly full of them, from the beginning to the end ;) and then they glory how full the Scripture is on their side, how many more texts there are that evidently favor their scheme, than such as seem to favor the contrary. But let them first make manifest the things in question, which they suppose and take for granted, and show them to be

consistent with themselves, and produce clear evidence of their truth; and they have gained their point, as all will confess, without bringing one Scripture. For none denies, that there are commands, counsels, promises, threatenings, etc. in the Bible. But unless they do these things, their multiplying such texts of Scripture is insignificant and vain.


It may further be observed, that such Scriptures as they bring are really against them, and not for them. As it has been demonstrated, that it is their scheme, and not ours, that is inconsistent with the use of motives and persuasives, or any moral means whatsoever, to induce men to the practice of virtue, or abstaining from wickedness: their principles, and not ours, are repugnant to moral agency, and inconsistent with moral government, with law or precept, with the nature of virtue or vice, reward or punishment, and with every thing whatsoever of a moral nature, either on the part of a moral governor, or in the state, actions, or conduct of the subject.

## SECTION 12

### **OF A SUPPOSED TENDENCY OF THESE PRINCIPLES TO ATHEISM AND LICENTIOUSNESS.**

IF any object against what has been maintained, that it tends to atheism, I know not on what grounds such an objection can be raised, unless it be, that some atheists have held a doctrine of necessity, which they suppose to be like this. But if it be so, I am persuaded the Arminians would not look upon it just, that their notion of freedom and contingency should be charged with a tendency to all the errors that ever any embraced who have held such opinions. The Stoic philosophers, whom the Calvinists are charged with agreeing with, were no atheists, but the greatest theists, and nearest akin to Christians in their opinions concerning the unity and the perfections of the Godhead, of all the heathen philosophers. And Epicurus, that chief father of atheism, maintained no such doctrine of necessity, but was the greatest maintainer of contingency.

The doctrine of necessity, which supposes a necessary connection of all events, on some antecedent ground and reason of their existence, is the only medium we have to prove the being of God. And the contrary

doctrine of contingency, even as maintained by Arminians (which certainly implies or infers that events may come into existence, or begin to be, without dependence on any thing foregoing, as their cause, ground, or reason,) takes away all proof of the being of God; which proof is summarily expressed by the apostle in  Romans 1:20. And this is a tendency to atheism with a witness. So that, indeed, it is the doctrine of Arminians, and not of the Calvinists, that is justly charged with a tendency to atheism; it being built on a foundation that is the utter subversion of every demonstrative argument for the proof of a Deity as has been shown, Part 2 section 3.

And whereas it has often been said, that the Calvinistic doctrine of necessity saps the foundations of all religion and virtue, and tends to the greatest licentiousness of practice; this objection is built on the presence, that our doctrine renders vain all means and endeavors in order to be virtuous and religious. Which presence has been already particularly considered in the fifth section of this Part; where it has been demonstrated, that this doctrine has no such tendency: but that such a tendency is truly to be charged on the contrary doctrine; inasmuch as the notion of contingency, which their doctrine implies, in its certain consequences, overthrows all connection, in every degree, between endeavor and event, means and end.

And besides, if many other things, which have been observed to belong to the Arminian doctrine, or to be plain consequences of it, be considered, there will appear just reason to suppose that it is that which must rather tend to licentiousness. Their doctrine excuses all evil inclinations, which men find to be natural; because in such inclinations they are not self-determined, as such inclinations are not owing to any choice or determination of their own wills: — which leads men wholly to justify themselves in all their wicked actions, so far as natural inclination has had a hand in determining their wills to the commission of them. Yea, these notions, which suppose moral necessity and inability to be inconsistent with blame or moral obligation, will directly lead men to justify the vilest acts and practices, from the strength of their wicked inclinations of all sorts; strong inclinations inducing a moral necessity; yea, to excuse every degree of evil inclination, so far as this has evidently prevailed, and been the thing which has determined their wills: because, so far as antecedent

inclination determined the will, so far the will was without liberty of indifference and self-determination. Which, at last, will come to this, that men will justify themselves in all the wickedness they commit. It has been observed already, that this scheme of things does exceedingly diminish the guilt of sin, and the difference between the greatest and smallest offenses; and if it be pursued in its real consequences, it leaves room for no such thing as either virtue or vice, blame or praise, in the world. And then, again, how naturally does this notion of the sovereign self-determining power of the will, in all things, virtuous or vicious, and whatsoever deserves either reward or punishment, tend to encourage men to put off the work of religion and virtue, and turning from sin to God; it being that which they have a sovereign power to determine themselves to, just when they please; or if not, they are wholly excusable in going on in sin because of their inability to do any other.

If it should be said, that the tendency of this doctrine of necessity to licentiousness appears by the improvement many at this day actually make of it, to justify themselves in their dissolute courses; I will not deny that some men do unreasonably abuse this doctrine, as they do many other things which are true and excellent in their own nature: but I deny that this proves the doctrine itself has any tendency to licentiousness. I think, the tendency of doctrines, by what now appears in the world, and in our nation in particular, may much more justly be argued from the general effect which has been seen to attend the prevailing of the principles of Arminians, and the contrary principles; as both have had their turn of general prevalence in our nation. If it be indeed as is pretended, that Calvinistic doctrines undermine the very foundation of all religion and morality, and enervate and disannul all rational motives to holy and virtuous practice; and that the contrary doctrines give the inducements to virtue and goodness their proper force, and exhibit religion in a rational light, tending to recommend it to the reason of mankind, and enforce it in a manner that is agreeable to their natural notions of things: I say, if it be thus, it is remarkable that virtue and religious practice should prevail most, when the former doctrines, so inconsistent with it, prevailed almost universally: and that ever since the latter doctrines, so happily agreeing with it, and of so proper and excellent a tendency to promote it, have been gradually prevailing, vice, profaneness, luxury, and wickedness of all sorts,



and contempt of all religion, and of every kind of seriousness and strictness of conversation, should proportionably prevail; and that these things should thus accompany one another, and rise and prevail one with another, now for a whole age together. It is remarkable, that this happily remedy (discovered by the free inquiries, and superior sense and wisdom of this age) against the pernicious effects of Calvinism, so inconsistent with religion, and tending so much to banish all virtue from the earth, should, on so long a trial, be attended with no good effect; but that the consequence should be the rever. of amendment; that in proportion as the remedy takes place, and is thoroughly applied, so the disease should prevail; and the very same dismal effect take place, to the highest degree, which Calvinistic doctrines are supposed to have so great a tendency to; even the banishing of religion and virtue, and the prevailing of unbounded licentiousness of manners. If these things are truly so, they are very remarkable, and matter of very curious speculation.

## SECTION 13

### **CONCERNING THAT OBJECTION AGAINST THE REASONING BY WHICH THE CALVINISTIC DOCTRINE IS SUPPORTED, THAT IT IS METAPHYSICAL AND ABSTRUSE.**

It has often been objected against the defenders of Calvinistic principles, that in their reasonings they run into nice scholastic distinctions, and abstruse metaphysical subtleties, and set these in opposition to common sense. And it is possible, that, after the former manner, it may be alleged against the reasoning by which I have endeavored to confute the Arminian scheme of liberty and moral agency, that it is very abstracted and metaphysical. Concerning this, I would observe the following things.

**I.** If that be made an objection against the foregoing reasoning, that it is metaphysical, or may properly be reduced to the science of metaphysics, it is a very impertinent objection; whether it be so or no, is not worthy of any dispute or controversy. If the reasoning be good, it is as frivolous to inquire what science it is properly reduced to, as what language it is delivered in: and for a man to go about to confute the arguments of his opponent, lay telling him his arguments are metaphysical, would be as

weak as to tell him, his arguments could not be substantial, because they were written in French or Latin. The question is not, whether what is said be metaphysics, physics, logic, or mathematics, Latin, French, English, or Mohawk? But, whether the reasoning be good, and the arguments truly conclusive? The foregoing arguments are no more metaphysical, than those which we use against the Papists, to disprove their doctrine of transubstantiation; alleging, it is inconsistent with the notion of corporeal identity, that it should be in ten thousand places at the same time. It is by metaphysical arguments only we are able to prove, that the rational soul is not corporeal; that lead or sand cannot think; that thoughts are not square or round, or do not weigh a pound. The arguments by which we prove the being of God, if handled closely and distinctly, so as to show their clear and demonstrative evidence, must be metaphysically treated. It is by metaphysics only, that we can demonstrate that God is not limited to a place, or is not mutable; that he is not ignorant or forgetful; that it is impossible for him to lie, or he unjust; and that there is one God only, and not hundreds or thousands. And, indeed, we have no strict demonstration of any thing, excepting mathematical truths, but by metaphysics. We can leave no proof; that is properly demonstrative, of any one proposition, relating to the being and nature of God, his creation of the world, the dependence of all things on him, the nature of bodies or spirits, the nature of our own souls, or any of the great truths of morality and natural religion, but what is metaphysical. I am willing my arguments should be brought to the test of the strictest and justest reason, and that a clear, distinct, and determinate meaning of the terms I use, should be insisted on; but let not the whole be rejected, as if all were confuted, by fixing on it the epithet metaphysical.

**II.** If the reasoning which has been made use of, be in some sense metaphysical, it will not follow, that therefore it must needs be abstruse, unintelligible, and akin to the jargon of the schools. I humbly conceive the foregoing reasoning, at least as to those things which are most material belonging to it, depends on no abstruse definitions or distinctions, or terms without a meaning, or of very ambiguous and undetermined signification, or any points of such abstraction and subtlety, as tends to involve the attentive understanding, in clouds and darkness. There is no high degree of refinement and abstruse speculation, in determining that a thing, is not

before it is, and so cannot be the cause of itself; or that the first act of free choice has not another act of free choice going before that, to excite or direct it; or in determining, that no choice is made, while the mind remains in a state of absolute indifference; that preference and equilibrium never co-exist; and that therefore no choice is made in a state of liberty consisting in indifference: and that so far as the will is determined by motives, exhibited and operating previous to the act of the will, so far it is not determined by the act of the will itself; that nothing can begin to be, which before was not, without a cause, or some antecedent ground or reason, why it then begins to be; that effects depend on their causes, and are connected with them; that virtue is not the worse, nor sin the better, for the strength of inclination with which it is practiced, and the difficulty which thence arises of doing otherwise; that when it is already infallibly known that the thing will be, it is not a thing contingent whether it will ever be or no; or that it can be truly said, notwithstanding, that it is not necessary it should be, but it either may be, or may not be. And the like might be observed of many other things which belong to the foregoing, reasoning.

If any shall still stand to it, that the foregoing reasoning is nothing but metaphysical sophistry, and that it must be so, that the seeming force of the arguments all depends on some fallacy and wile that is hid in the obscurity which always attends a great degree of metaphysical abstraction and refinement; and shall be ready to say, “Here is indeed something that tends to confound the mind, but not to satisfy it: for who can ever be truly satisfied in it, that men are fitly blamed or commended, punished or rewarded, for those volitions which are not from themselves, and of whose existence they are not the causes. Men may refine as much as they please, and advance their abstract notions, and make out a thousand seeming contradictions, to puzzle our understandings; yet there can be no satisfaction in such doctrine as this: the natural sense of the mind of man will always resist it.” I humbly conceive that such an objector, if he has capacity, and humility, and calmness of spirit, sufficient impartially and thoroughly to examine himself, will find that he knows not really what he would be at; and, indeed, his difficulty is nothing but a mere prejudice, from an inadvertent customary use of words, in a meaning that is not clearly understood, nor carefully reflected upon. Let the objector reflect

again, if he has candour and patience enough, and does not scorn to be at the trouble of close attention in the affair. He would have a man's volition be from himself. Let it be from himself, most primarily and originally of any way conceivable, that is, from his own choice: how will that help the matter, as to his being justly blamed or praised, unless that choice itself be blame or praise-worthy? And how is the choice itself (an ill choice, for instance,) blame-worthy, according to these principles, unless that be from himself too, in the same manner, that is, from his own choice? But the original and first-determining choice is not the affair is not from his choice: his choice is not the cause of it. And if it be from himself some other way, and not from his choice, surely that will not help the matter. If it be not from himself of choice, then it is not from himself voluntarily; and if so, he is surely no more to blame, than if it were not from himself at all. It is a vanity to pretend it is a sufficient answer to this to say, that it is nothing but metaphysical refinement and subtlety, and so attended with obscurity and uncertainty.

If it be the natural sense of our minds, that what is blameworthy in a man must be from himself, then it doubtless is also, that it must be from something bad in himself, a bad choice, or bad disposition. But then our natural sense is, that this bad choice or disposition is evil in itself, and the man blameworthy for it, on its own account, without taking into our notion of its blameworthiness another bad choice, or disposition going before this, from whence this arises: for that is a ridiculous absurdity, running us into an immediate contradiction, which our natural sense of blameworthiness has nothing to do with, and never comes into the mind, nor is supposed in the judgment we naturally make of the affair. As was demonstrated before, natural sense does not place the moral evil of volitions and dispositions in the cause of them, but the nature of them. An evil thing's being from a man, or from something antecedent in him, is not essential to the original notion we have of blame-worthiness: but it is its being the choice of the heart: as appears by this, that if a thing be from us, and not from our choice, it has not the nature of blameworthiness or ill-desert, according to our natural sense. When a thing is from a man, in that sense, that it is from his will or choice, he is to blame for it, because his will is in it: so far as the will is in it, blame is in it, and no further. Neither do we go any further in our notion of blame, to inquire whether the bad

will be from a bad will: there is no consideration of the original of that had will: because, according to our natural apprehension, blame originally consists in it. Therefore a thing's being from a man is a secondary consideration in the notion of blame or ill-desert. Because those things, in our external actions, are most properly said to be from us, which are from our choice; and no other external actions, but those that are from us in this sense, have the nature of blame; and they, indeed, not so properly because they are from us, as because we are in them, i.e. our wills are in them; not so much because they are from some property of ours, as because they are our properties.

However, all these external actions being truly from us, as their cause, and we being, so used, in ordinary speech, and in the common affairs of life, to speak; of men's actions and conduct that we see, and that affect human society, as deserving ill or well, as worthy of blame or praise; hence it is come to pass, that philosophers have incautiously taken all their measures of good and evil, praise and blame, from the dictates of common sense, about these overt acts of men; to the running of every thing into the most lamentable and dreadful confusion.

And therefore I observe

**III.** It is so far from being true (whatever may be pretended) that the proof of the doctrine which has been maintained depends on certain abstruse, unintelligible, metaphysical terms and notions, that the Arminian scheme, without needing such clouds and darkness for its defense, is supported by the plain dictates of common sense, that the very rever. is most certainly true? and that to a great degree. It is fact that they, and not we have confounded things with metaphysical, unintelligible notions and phrases, and have drawn them from the light of plain, truth into the gross darkness of abstruse metaphysical propositions, and words without a meaning. Their pretended demonstrations depend very much on such unintelligible metaphysical phrases, as self-determination and sovereignty of the will; and the metaphysical sense they put on such terms as necessity, contingency, action, agency, etc, quite diverse from their meaning as used in common speech; and which as they use them, are without any consistent meaning, or any manner of distinct consistent ideas; as far from it as any of the abstruse terms and perplexed phrases of

the peripatetic philosophers, or the most unintelligible jargon of the schools, or the cant of the wildest fanatics. Yea, we may be bold to say, these metaphysical terms, on which they build so much, are what they use without knowing what they mean themselves; they are pure metaphysical sounds, without any ideas whatsoever in their minds to answer them; inasmuch as it has been demonstrated, that there cannot be any notion in the mind consistent with these express as, as they pretend to explain them, because their explanations destroy themselves. No such notions as imply self-contradiction and self-abolition, and this a great many ways, can subsist in the mind; as there can be no idea of a whole which is less than any of its parts, or of solid extension without dimensions, or of an effect which is before its cause. Arminians improve these terms as terms of art, and in their metaphysical meaning, to advance and establish those things which are contrary to common sense, in a high degree. Thus, instead of the plain, vulgar notion of liberty, which all mankind, in every part of the face of the earth, and in all ages, have, consisting in opportunity to do as one pleases, they have introduced a new, strange liberty, consisting in indifference, contingency, and self-determination, by which they involve themselves and others in great obscurity and manifold gross inconsistency. So, instead of placing virtue and vice, as common sense places them very much, in fixed bias and inclination, and greater virtue and vice in stronger and more established inclination; these, through their refinings and abstruse notions, suppose a liberty consisting in indifference, to be essential to all virtue and vice. So they have reasoned themselves, not by metaphysical distinctions, but metaphysical confusion, into many principles about moral agency, blame, praise, reward and punishment, which are, as has been shown, exceeding contrary to the common sense of mankind, and perhaps to their own sense, which governs them in common life.

## SECTION 14

### CONCLUSION.

WHETHER the things which have been alleged are liable to any tolerable answer, in the ways of calm, intelligible, and strict reasoning, I must leave others to judge; but I am sensible they are liable to one sort of answer. It is

not unlikely, that some, who value themselves on the supposed rational and generous principles of the modern fashionable divinity, will have their indignation and disdain raised at the sight of this discourse, and on perceiving what things are pretended to be proved in it. And if they think it worthy of being read, or of so much notice as to say much about it, they may probably renew the usual exclamations, with additional vehemence and contempt, about the fate of the heathen, Hobbes's necessity, and making men mere machines; accumulating the terrible epithets of fatal, unfrustrable, inevitable, irresistible, etc., and it may be, with the addition of horrid and blasphemous; and perhaps much skill may be used to set forth things, which have been said, in colors which shall be shocking to the imaginations, and moving to the passions, of those who have either too little capacity, or too much confidence of the opinions they have imbibed, and contempt of the contrary, to try the matter by any serious and circumspect examination. Or, difficulties may be started and insisted on, which do not belong to the controversy; because let them be more or less real, and hard to be resolved, they are not what are owing to any thing distinguishing of this scheme from that of the Arminians, and would not be removed nor diminished by renouncing the former, and adhering to the latter. Or, some particular things may be picked out, which they may think will sound harshest in the ears of the generality; and these may be glossed and descanted on, with tart and contemptuous words; and from thence, the whole treated with triumph and insult.

It is easy to see how the decision of most of the points in controversy between Calvinists and Arminians depends on the determination of this grand article concerning the freedom of the will requisite to moral agency; and that by clearing and establishing the Calvinistic doctrine in this point, the chief arguments are obviated by which Arminian doctrines in general are supported, and the contrary doctrines demonstratively confirmed. Hereby it becomes manifest, that God's moral government over mankind, his treating them as moral agents, making them the objects of his commands, counsels calls, warnings, expostulations, promises, threatenings, rewards, and punishments, is not inconsistent with a determining disposal of all events, of every kind throughout the universe, in his providence, either by positive efficiency or permission. Indeed, such a universal determining providence infers some kind of necessity of all

events, such a necessity as implies an infallible previous fixedness of the futurity of the event; but no other necessity of moral events, or volitions of intelligent agents, is needful in order to this, than moral necessity; which does as much ascertain the futurity of the event as any other necessity. But, as has been demonstrated, such a necessity is not at all repugnant to moral agency, and a reasonable use of commands, calls, rewards, punishments, etc. Yea, not only are objections of this kind against the doctrine of a universal determining Providence removed by what has been said, but the truth of such a doctrine is demonstrated. As it has been demonstrated, that the futurity of all future events is established by previous necessity, either natural or moral, so it is manifest, that the sovereign Creator and Disposer of the world has ordered this necessity, by ordering his own conduct, either in designedly acting, or forbearing to act. For, as the being of the world is from God, so the circumstances in which it had its being at first, both negative and positive, must be ordered by him, in one of these ways; and all the necessary consequences of these circumstances must be ordered by him. And God's active and positive interpositions, after the world was created, and the consequences of these interpositions, also every instance of his forbearing to interpose, and the sure consequences of this forbearance, must all be determined according to his pleasure. And therefore every event, which is the consequence of any thing whatsoever, or that is connected with any foregoing thing, or circumstance, either positive or negative, as the ground or reason of its existence, must be ordered of God, either by a designing efficiency and interposition, or a designed forbearing to operate or interpose. But, as has been proved, an events whatsoever are necessarily connected with something foregoing, either positive or negative, which is the ground of its existence. It follows, therefore, that the whole series of events is thus connected with something in the state of things, either positive or negative, which is original in the series, i.e. something which is connected with nothing preceding that, but God's own immediate conduct, either his acting or forbearing to act. From whence it follows, that as God designedly orders his own conduct, and its connected consequences, it must necessarily be, that he designedly orders all things.

The things which have been said, obviate some of the chief objections of Arminians against the Calvinistic doctrine of the total depravity and



corruption of man's nature, whereby his heart is wholly under the power of sin, and he is utterly unable, without the interposition of sovereign grace, savingly to love God, believe in Christ, or do any thing that is truly good and acceptable in God's sight. For the main objection against this doctrine is, that it is inconsistent with the freedom of man's will, consisting in indifference and self-determining power; because it supposes man to be under a necessity of sinning, and that God requires things of him, in order to his avoiding eternal damnation, which he is unable to do; and that this doctrine is wholly inconsistent with the sincerity of counsels, invitations, etc. Now, this doctrine supposes no other necessity of sinning, than a moral necessity, which, as has been shown, does not at all excuse sin, and supposes no other inability to obey any command, or perform any duty, even the most spiritual and exalted, but a moral inability, which, as has been proved, does not excuse persons in the nonperformance of any good thing, or make them not to be the proper objects of commands, counsels, and invitations. And, moreover, it has been shown, that there is not, and never can be, either in existence, or so much as in idea, any such freedom of will, consisting in indifference and self-determination, for the sake of which, this doctrine of original sin is cast out; and that no such freedom is necessary, in order to the nature of sin, and a just desert of punishment.

The things which have been observed do also take off the main objections of Arminians against the doctrine of efficacious grace, and, at the same time, prove the grace of God in a sinner's conversion (if there be any grace or Divine influence in the affair, to be efficacious, yea, and irresistible too; if by irresistible is meant, that which is attended with a moral necessity, which it is impossible should ever be violated by any resistance. The main objection of Arminians against this doctrine is, that it is inconsistent with their self-determining freedom of will, and that it is repugnant to the nature of virtue, that it should be wrought in the heart by the determining efficacy and power of another, instead of its being owing to a self-moving power; that, in that case, the good which is wrought, would not be our virtue, but rather God's virtue; because it is not the person in whom it is wrought, that is the determining author of it, but God that wrought it in him. But the things which are the foundation of these objections have been considered; and it has been demonstrated, that the liberty of moral agents

does not consist in self-determining power, and that there is no need of any such liberty, in order to the nature of virtue; nor does it at all hinder, but that the state or act of the will may be the virtue of the subject, though it be not from self-determination, but the determination of an intrinsic cause, even so as to cause the event to be morally necessary to the subject of it. And as it has been proved, that nothing in the state or acts of the will of man is contingent, but that, on the contrary, every event of this kind is necessary by a moral necessity, and has also been now demonstrated, that the doctrine of a universal determining Providence follows from that doctrine of necessity which was proved before; and so, that God does decisively, in his providence, order all the volitions of moral agents, either by positive influence or permission; and it being, allowed, on all hands, that what God does in the affair of man's virtuous volitions, whether it be more or less, is by some positive influence, and not by mere permission, as in the affair of a sinful volition: if we put these things together, it will follow, that God's assistance or influence must be determining and decisive, or must be attended with a moral necessity of the event; and so that God gives virtue, holiness, and conversion to sinners, by an influence which determines the effect, in such a manner, that the effect will infallibly follow by a moral necessity, which is what Calvinists mean by efficacious and irresistible grace.

The things which have been said do likewise answer the chief objections against the doctrine of God's universal and absolute decree, and afford infallible proof of this doctrine, and of the doctrine of absolute, eternal, personal election, in particular. The main objections against these doctrines are, that they infer a necessity of the volitions of moral agents, and of the future moral state and acts of men, and so are not consistent with those eternal rewards and punishments, which are connected with conversion and impenitence, nor can be made to agree with the reasonableness and sincerity of the precepts, calls, counsels, warnings, and exhortations of the word of God, or with the various methods and means of grace which God uses with sinners to bring them to repentance, and the whole of that moral government which God exercises towards mankind: and that they infer an inconsistency between the secret and revealed will of God, and make God the author of sin. But all these things have been obviated in the preceding discourse. And the certain truth of these doctrines concerning

God's eternal purposes, will follow from what was just now observed concerning God's universal providence; how it infallibly follows from what has been proved, that God orders all events, and the volitions of moral agents amongst others, by such a decisive disposal, that the events are infallibly connected with his disposal. For if God disposes all events, so that the infallible existence of the events is decided by his providence, then he, doubtless, thus orders and decides things knowingly, and on design. God does not do what he does, nor order what he orders, accidentally and unawares, either without or beside his intention. And if there be a foregoing design of doing and ordering as he does, this is the same with a purpose or decree. And as it has been shown that nothing is new to God, in any respect, but all things are perfectly and equally in his view from eternity, hence it will follow, that his designs or purposes are not things formed anew, founded on any new views or appearances, but are all eternal purposes. And as it has been now shown how the doctrine of determining efficacious grace certainly follows from things proved in the foregoing discourse, hence will necessarily follow the doctrine of particular, eternal, absolute election. For if men are made true saints no otherwise than as God makes them so, and distinguishes them from others, by an efficacious power and influence of his, that decides and fixes the event; and God thus makes some saints, and not others, on design and purpose, and (as has been now observed) no designs of God are new; it follows, that God thus distinguished from others, all that ever become true saints, by his eternal design or decree. I might also show how God's certain foreknowledge must suppose an absolute decree, and how such a decree can be proved to be a demonstration from it; but that this discourse may not be lengthened out too much, that must be omitted for the present.

From these things it will inevitably follow, that however Christ in some sense may be said to die for all, and to redeem all visible Christians, yea, the whole world, by his death; yet there must be something particular in the design of his death, with respect to such as he intended should actually be saved thereby. As appears by what has been now shown, God has the actual salvation or redemption of a certain number in his proper absolute design, and of a certain number only, and therefore such a design only can be prosecuted in anything God does, in order to the salvation of men. God pursues a proper design of the salvation of the elect in giving Christ to die,

and prosecutes such a design with respect to no other, most strictly speaking; for it is impossible that God should prosecute any other design than only such as he has; he certainly does not, in the highest propriety and strictness of speech, pursue a design that he has not. And, indeed, such a particularity and limitation of redemption will as infallibly follow, from the doctrine of God's foreknowledge, as from that of the decree. For it is as impossible, in strictness of speech, that God should prosecute a design, or aim at a thing, which he at the same time most perfectly knows will not be accomplished, as that he should use endeavors for that which is beside his decree.

By the things which have been proved, are obviated some of the main objections against the doctrine of the infallible and necessary perseverance of saints, and some of the main foundations of this doctrine are established. The main prejudices of Arminians against this doctrine seem to be these: they suppose such a necessary, infallible perseverance, to be repugnant to the freedom of the will; that it must be owing, to man's own self-determining power, that he first becomes virtuous and holy; and so in like manner, it must be left a thing contingent, to be determined by the same freedom of will, whether he will persevere in virtue and holiness; and that otherwise his continuing steadfast in faith and obedience would not be his virtue, or at all praiseworthy and rewardable; nor could his perseverance be properly the matter of Divine commands, counsels, and promises, nor his apostacy be properly threatened, and men warned against it. Whereas, we find all these things in Scripture: there we kind steadfastness and perseverance in true Christianity represented as the virtue of the saints, spoken of as praiseworthy in them, and glorious rewards promised to it; and also find, that God makes it the subject of his commands, counsels, and promises; and the contrary, of threatenings and warnings. But the foundation of these objections has been removed, in its being shown that moral necessity and infallible certainty of events is not inconsistent with these things; and that as to freedom of will lying in the power of the will to determine itself, there neither is any such thing, nor any need of it, in order to virtue, reward, commands, counsels, etc.

And as the doctrines of efficacious grace and absolute election do certainly follow from things which have been proved in the preceding discourse; so some of the main foundations of the doctrine of perseverance are thereby

established. If the beginning of true faith and holiness, and a man's becoming a true saint at first, does not depend on the self-determining power of will, but on the determining efficacious grace of God; it may well be argued, that it is also with respect to men's being continued saints, or persevering in faith and holiness. The conversion of a sinner being not owing to a man's self-determination, but to God's determination, and eternal election, which is absolute, and depending on the sovereign will of God, and not on the free will of man, as is evident from what has been said, and it being very evident, from the Scriptures, that the eternal election which there is of saints to faith and holiness, is also an election of them to eternal salvation: hence their appointment to salvation must also be absolute, and not depending on their contingent, self-determining will. From all which it follows, that it is absolutely fixed in God's decree, that all true saints shall persevere to actual eternal salvation.

But I must leave all these things to the consideration of the fair and impartial reader; and when he has maturely weighed them, I would propose it to his consideration, whether many of the first reformers, and others that succeeded them, whom God in their day made the chief pillars of his church, and greatest instruments of their deliverance from error and darkness, and of the support of the cause of piety among them, have not been injured, in the contempt with which they have been treated by many late writers, for their teaching and maintaining such doctrines as are commonly called Calvinistic. Indeed, some of these new writers, at the same time that they have represented the doctrines of these ancient and eminent divines as in the highest degree ridiculous, and contrary to common sense, in an ostentation of a very generous charity, have allowed that they were honest, well-meaning men: yea, it may be, some of them, as though it were in great condescension and compassion to them, have allowed, that they did well for the day which they lives in, and considering the great disadvantages they labored under: when, at the same time, their manner of speaking has naturally and plainly suggested to the minds of their readers, that they were persons, who through the lowness of their genius, and greatness of the bigotry with which their minds were shackled and thoughts confined, living in the gloomy caves of superstition, fondly embraced, and demurely and zealously taught, the most absurd, silly, and monstrous opinions, worthy of the greatest contempt of gentlemen

possessed of that noble and generous freedom of thought which happily prevails in this age of light and inquiry, — when, indeed, such is the case, that we might, if so disposed, speak as big words as they, and on far better grounds. And really, all the Arminians on earth might be challenged, without arrogance or vanity, to make these principles of theirs, wherein they mainly differ from their fathers, whom they so much despise, consistent with common sense: yea, and perhaps to produce any doctrine ever embraced by the blindest bigot of the Church of Rome, or the most ignorant Mussulman, or extravagant enthusiast, that might be reduced to more demonstrable inconsistencies, and repugnances to common sense and to themselves; though their inconsistencies indeed may not lie so deep, or be so artfully veiled by a deceitful ambiguity of words, and an indeterminate signification of phrases. I will not deny, that these gentlemen, many of them, are men of great abilities, and have been helped to higher attainments in philosophy than those ancient divines, and have done great service to the church of God in some respects: but I humbly conceive, that their differing from their fathers, with such magisterial assurance, in these points in divinity, must be owing to some other cause than superior wisdom.

It may also be worthy of consideration, whether the great alteration which has been made in the state of things in our nation, and some other parts of the Protestant world, in this and the past age, by the exploding so generally Calvinistic doctrines, that is so often spoken of as worthy to be greatly rejoiced in by the friends of truth, learning, and virtue, as an instance of the great increase of light in the Christian church; I say, it may be worthy to be considered, whether this be indeed a happy change, owing to any such cause as an increase of true knowledge and understanding in things of religion; or whether there is not reason to fear, that it may be owing to some worse cause.

And I desire it may be considered, whether the boldness of some writers may not be worthy to be reflected on, who have not scrupled to say, that if these and those things are true (which yet appear to be the demonstrable dictates of reason, as well as the certain dictates of the mouth of the Most High), then God is unjust and cruel, and guilty of manifest deceit and double dealing, and the like. Yea, some have gone so far, as confidently to assert, that it any book which pretends to be Scripture, teaches such

doctrines, that alone is sufficient warrant for mankind to reject it, as what cannot be the word of God. Some, who have not gone so far, have said, that if the Scripture seems to teach any such doctrines, so contrary to reason, we are obliged to find out some other interpretation of those texts where such doctrines seem to be exhibited. Others express themselves yet more modestly: they express a tenderness and religious fear, lest they should receive and teach any thing that should seem to reflect on God's moral character, or be a disparagement to his methods of administration, in his moral government; and therefore express themselves as not daring to embrace some doctrines, though they seem to be delivered in Scripture, according to the more obvious and natural construction of the words. But indeed it would show a truer modesty and humility, if they would more entirely rely on God's wisdom and discerning, who knows infinitely better than we what is agreeable to his own perfections, and never intended to leave these matters to the decision of the wisdom and discerning of men: but by his own unerring instruction, to determine for us what the truth is, knowing how little our judgment is to be depended on, and how extremely prone vain and blind men are to err in such matters.

The truth of the case is, that if the Scripture plainly taught the opposite doctrines to those that are so much stumbled at, viz. the Arminian doctrine of free-will, and others depending thereon, it would be the greatest of all difficulties that attend the Scriptures, incomparably greater than its containing any, even the most mysterious of those doctrines of the first reformers, which our late free-thinkers have so superciliously exploded. — Indeed, it is a glorious argument of the divinity of the holy Scriptures, that they teach such doctrines, which in one age and another, through the blindness of men's minds, and strong prejudices of their hearts, are rejected as most absurd and unreasonable by the wise and great men of the world; which yet, when they are most carefully and strictly examined, appear to be exactly agreeable to the most demonstrable, certain, and natural dictates of reason. By such things it appears, that the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and God does, as is said in ~~419~~ 1 Corinthians 1:19, 20: “For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? And as it is used to be in time

past, so it is probable it will be in time to come, as it is there written, in verse 27-29. “But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the week things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence.” Amen.



## SECTION 15

### APPENDIX

*Remarks On Lord Kames' Essays On the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion: In a Letter to a Minister of the Church of Scotland.*

REV. SIR,

The intimations you have given me of the use which has, by some, been made of what I have written on the "Freedom of the Will," etc. to vindicate what is said on the subject of liberty and necessity by the author of the Essays on the principles of Morality and Natural Religion, has occasioned my reading this author's essay on that subject with particular care and attention. And I think it must be evident to every one that has read both his Essay and my Inquiry, that our schemes are exceeding rever. from each other. The wide difference appears particularly in the following things.

This author supposes, that such a necessity takes place with respect to all men's actions, as is inconsistent with liberty, and plainly denies that men have any liberty in acting. Thus, in p. 168, after he had been speaking of the necessity of our determinations, as connected with motives, he concludes with saying, "In short, if motives are not under our power or direction, which is confessedly the fact, we can at bottom have NO LIBERTY." Whereas I have abundantly expressed it as my mind, that man, in his moral actions, has true liberty; and that the moral necessity, which universally takes place, is not in the least inconsistent with anything that is properly called liberty, and with the utmost liberty that can be desired, or that can possibly exist or be conceived of.

I find that some are apt to think, that in that kind of moral necessity of men's volitions, which I suppose to be universal, at least some degree of liberty is denied; that though it be true I allow a sort of liberty, yet those who maintain a self-determining power in the will, and a liberty of contingency and indifference, hold a higher sort of freedom than I do: but I think this is certainly a great mistake.

Liberty, as I have explained it, in various places, is the power, opportunity, or advantage, that any one has to do as he pleases, or conducting in any respect, according to his pleasure; without considering how his pleasure comes to be as it is. It is demonstrable, and I think has been demonstrated, that no necessity of men's volitions that I maintain is inconsistent with this liberty: and I think it is impossible for any one to rise higher in his conceptions of liberty than this. If any imagine they desire higher, and that they conceive of a higher and greater liberty than this, they are deceived, and delude themselves with confused and ambiguous words instead of ideas. If any one should here say, "Yes, I conceive of freedom above and beyond the liberty a man has of conducting in any respect as he pleases, viz. a liberty of choosing as he pleases:" Such a one, if he reflected, would either blush or laugh at his own instance. For, is not choosing as he pleases, conducting, IN SOME RESPECT, according to his pleasure, and still without determining how he came by that pleasure? If he says, "Yes, I came by that pleasure by my own choice." If he be a man of common sense, by this time he will see his own absurdity: for he must needs see that his notion or conception, even of this liberty, does not contain any judgment or conception how he comes by that choice which first determines his pleasure, or which originally fixed his own will respecting the affair. Or if any shall say, "That a man exercises liberty in this, even in determining his own choice, but not as he pleases, or not in consequence of any choice, preference, or inclination of his own but by a determination arising contingently out of a state of absolute indifference;" this is not rising higher in his conception of liberty; as such a determination of the will would not be a voluntary determination of it. Surely, he that places liberty in a power of doing something not according to his own choice or from his choice, has not a higher notion of it, than he that places it in doing as he pleases, or acting from his own election. If there were a power in the mind to determine itself, but not by its choice or according to its pleasure, what advantage would it give; and what liberty worth contending for would be exercised in it? Therefore, no Arminian, Pelagian, or Epicurean, can rise higher in his conceptions of liberty than the notion of it which I have explained: which notion is, apparently, perfectly consistent with the whole of that necessity of men's actions which I suppose takes place. And I scruple not to say, it is beyond all their wits to invent a higher notion, or form a higher imagination of liberty:

let them talk of sovereignty of the will, self-determining power, self-motion, self-direction, arbitrary decision, ‘liberty ad utrumvis’, power of choosing, differently in givers cases, etc. as long as they will. It is apparent that these men, in their strenuous affirmation, and dispute about these things, aim at they know not what, fighting for something they have no conception of, substituting a number of confused, unmeaning words instead of things and instead of thoughts. They may be challenged clearly to explain what they would have: they never can answer the challenge.

The author of the Essays, through his whole essay on liberty and necessity, goes on that supposition, that in order to the being of real liberty, a man must have a freedom that is opposed to moral necessity: and yet he supposes p. 175, that “such a liberty must signify a power in the mind of acting without and against motives, a power of acting without any view, purpose, or design, and even of acting in contradiction to our own desires and aversions, and to all our principles of action, and is all absurdity altogether inconsistent with a rational nature.” Now, who ever imagined such a liberty as this, a higher sort or degree of freedom, than a liberty of following one’s own views and purposes, and acting agreeable to his own inclinations and passions? Who will ever reasonably suppose that liberty, which is an absurdity altogether inconsistent with a rational nature, to be a kind of liberty above that which is consistent them the nature of a rational, intelligent, designing agent?

The author of the Essays seems to suppose such a necessity to take place as is inconsistent with some supposable POWER OF ARBITRARY CHOICE; or that there is some liberty conceivable, whereby men’s own actions might be more PROPERLY IN THEIR POWER, and by which events might be more DEPENDENT ON OURSELVES; contrary to what I suppose to be evident, in my Inquiry. What way can be imagined, of our actions being more in our power, from ourselves, or dependent on ourselves, than their being, from our power to fulfill our own choice to act from our own inclination, pursue our own views, and execute our own designs? Certainly, to be able to act thus, is as properly having our actions in our power, and dependent on ourselves, as a being liable to be the subjects of acts and events, contingently and fortuitously, without desire, view, purpose, or design, or any principle of action, within ourselves; as we must be according to this

author's own declared sense, if our actions are performed with that liberty that is opposed to moral necessity.

This author seems everywhere to suppose, that necessity, most properly so called, attends all men's actions; and that the terms necessary, unavoidable, impossible, etc. are equally applicable to the case of moral and natural necessity. In p. 173, he says, "The idea of necessary and unavoidable equally agrees, both to moral and physical necessity." And in p. 184, "All things that fall out in the natural and moral world are alike necessary." P. 174, "This inclination and choice is unavoidably caused or occasioned by the prevailing motive. In this lies the necessity of our actions, that, in such circumstances, it was impossible we could act otherwise." He often expresses himself in like manner elsewhere, speaking in strong terms of men's actions as unavoidable, what they cannot forbear, having no power over their own actions, the order of them being unalterably fixed, and inseparably linked together, etc.

On the contrary, I have largely declared, that the connection between antecedent things and consequent ones, which takes place with regard to the acts of men's wills, which is called moral necessity, is called by the name of necessity improperly; and that all such terms as must, cannot, impossible, unable, irresistible, unavoidable, invincible, etc., when applied here, are not applied in their proper signification, and are either used nonsensically, and with perfect insignificance, or in a sense quite diverse from their original and proper meaning, and their use in common speech: and that such a necessity as attends the acts of men's wills, is more properly called certainty than necessity; it being no other than the certain connection between the subject and predicate of the proposition which affirms their existence.

Agreeable to what is observed in my Inquiry, I think it is evidently owing to a strong prejudice in persons, minds, arising from an insensible habitual perversion and misapplication of such-like terms as necessary, impossible, unable, unavoidable, invincible, etc., that they are ready to think, that to suppose a certain connection of men's volitions, without any foregoing motives or inclinations, or any preceding moral influence whatsoever, is truly and properly to suppose such a strong irrefragable chain of causes and effects, as stands in the way of, and makes utterly vain, opposite

desires and endeavors, like immovable and impenetrable mountains of brass; and impedes our liberty like walls of adamant, gates of brass, and bars of iron: whereas, all such representations suggest ideas as far from the truth as the east is from the west. Nothing that I maintain, supposes that men are at all hindered by any fatal necessity, from doing, and even willing and choosing, as they please, with full freedom, yea, with the highest degree of liberty that ever was thought of, or that ever could possibly enter into the heart of any man to conceive. I know it is in vain to endeavor to make some persons believe this, or at least fully and steadily to believe it; for if it be demonstrated to them, still the old prejudice remains which has been fixed by the use of the terms necessary, must, cannot, impossible, etc.; the association with these terms of certain ideas inconsistent with liberty, is not broken, and the judgment is powerfully warped by it, as a thing that has been long bent and grown stiff, if it be straightened, will return to its former curvity again and again.

The author of the *Essays* most manifestly supposes, that if men had the truth concerning the real necessity of all their actions clearly in view, they would not appear to themselves, or one another, as at all praiseworthy or culpable, or under any moral obligation, or accountable for their actions: which supposes that men are not to be blamed or praised for any of their actions, and are not under any obligations, nor are truly accountable for anything they do, by reason of this necessity; which is very contrary to what I have endeavored to prove throughout the third part of my *Inquiry*. I humbly conceive it is there shown, that this is so far from the truth, that the moral necessity of men's actions, which truly take place, is requisite to the being of virtue and vice, or any thing, praiseworthy or culpable, — that the liberty of indifference and contingency, which is advanced in opposition to that necessity, is inconsistent with the being of these; as it would suppose that men are not determined in what they do by any virtuous or vicious principles, nor act from any motives, intentions, or aims whatsoever; or have any end, either good or bad, in acting. And is it not remarkable, that this author should suppose, that, in order to men's actions truly having any desert, they must be performed without any view, purpose, design, or desire, or any principle of action, or any thing agreeable to a rational nature? As it will appear that he does, if we compare pp. 206 and 207 with p. 175.

The author of the Essays supposes, that God has deeply implanted in man's nature a strong and invincible apprehension, or feeling, as he calls it, of a liberty, and contingency of his own actions, opposite to that necessity which truly attends them; and which in truth does not agree with real fact, is not agreeable to strict philosophic truth, is contradictory to the truth of things, and which truth contradicts, not tallying with the real plan; and that, therefore, such feelings are deceitful, are in reality of the delusive kind. He speaks of them as a wise delusion, as nice artificial feelings, merely that conscience may have a commanding power meaning plainly, that these feelings are a cunning artifice of the Author of nature, to make men believe they are free, when they are not. He supposes that, by these feelings, the moral world has a disguised appearance. And other things of this kind he says. He supposes, that all self-approbation, and all remorse of conscience, all commendation or condemnation of ourselves or others, all sense of desert, and all that is connected with this way of thinking, all the ideas which at present are suggested by the words ought, should, arise from this delusion, and would entirely vanish without it.

All which is very contrary to what I have abundantly insisted on and endeavored to demonstrate in my Inquiry; where I have largely shown, that it is agreeable to the natural sense of mankind, that the moral necessity or certainty that attends men's actions is consistent with praise and blame, reward and punishment; and that it is agreeable to our natural notions, that moral evil, with its desert of dislike and abhorrence, and all its other ill deservings, consists in a certain deformity in the nature of the dispositions and acts of the heart, and not in the evil of something else, diverse from these, supposed to be their cause or occasion.

I might well ask here, whether any one is to be found in the world of mankind, who is conscious to a sense or feeling, naturally and deeply rooted in his mind, that in order to a man's performing any action that is praise or blame-worthy, he must exercise a liberty that implies and signifies a power of acting without any motive, view, design, desire, or principle of action? For such a liberty, this author supposes, that must be which is opposed to moral necessity, as I have already observed once and again. Supposing a man should actually do good, independent of desire, aim, inducement, principle, or end; is it a dictate of invincible natural sense, that his act is more meritorious or praiseworthy, than if he had

performed it for some good end, and had been governed in it by good principles and motives? and so I might ask, on the contrary, with respect to evil actions.

The author of the *Essays* supposes that the liberty without necessity, which we have a natural feeling of, implies contingency: and, speaking of this contingency, he sometimes calls it by the name of chance. And it is evident, that his notion of it, or rather what he says about it, implies things happening loosely, fortuitously, by accident, and without a cause. Now, I conceive the slightest reflection may be sufficient to satisfy any one, that such a contingency of men's actions, according to our natural sense, is so far from being essential to the morality or merit of those actions, that it would destroy it; and that, on the contrary, the dependence of our actions on such causes, as inward inclinations, incitements, and ends, is essential to the being of it. Natural sense teaches men, when they see anything done by others of a good or evil tendency, to inquire what their intention was; what principles and views they were moved by, in order to judge how far they are to be justified or condemned; and not to determine, that, in order to their being approved or blamed at all, the action must be performed altogether fortuitously, proceeding from nothing, arising from no cause. Concerning this matter, I have fully expressed my mind in the *Inquiry*.

If the liberty, which we have a natural sense of as necessary to desert, consists in the mind's self-determination, without being determined by previous inclination or motive, then indifference is essential to it, yea, absolute indifference; as is observed in my *Inquiry*. But men naturally have no notion of any such liberty as this, as essential to the morality or demerit of their actions; but, on the contrary, such a liberty, if it were possible, would be inconsistent with our natural notions of desert, as is largely shown in the *Inquiry*. If it be agreeable to natural sense, that men must be indifferent in determining their own actions; then, according to the same, the more they are determined by inclination, either good or bad, the less they have of desert: the more good actions are performed from good disposition, the less praiseworthy; and the more evil deeds are from evil dispositions, the less culpable; and in general, the more men's actions are from their hearts, the less they are to be commended or condemned: which all must know is very contrary to natural sense.

Moral necessity is owing to the power and government of the inclination of the heart, either habitual or occasional, excited by motive; but, according, to natural and common sense, the more a man does anything with full inclination of heart, the more is it to be charged to his account for his condemnation, if it be an ill action, and the more to be ascribed to him for his praise, if it be good.

If the mind were determined to evil actions by contingency, from a state of indifference, then, either there would be no fault in them, or else the fault would be in being so perfectly indifferent, that the mind was equally to a bad or good determination. And if this indifference be liberty, then the very essence of the blame or fault would lie in the liberty itself, or the wickedness would, primarily and summarily, lie in being a free agent. If there were no fault in being indifferent, then there would be no fault in the determination's being agreeable to such a state of indifference: that is, there could no fault be reasonably found with this, viz. that opposite determinations actually happen to take place indifferently, sometimes good and sometimes bad, as contingency governs and decides. And if it be a fault to be indifferent to good and evil, then such indifference is no indifference to good and evil, but is a determination to evil, or to a fault; and such an indifferent disposition would be an evil, faulty disposition, tendency, or determination of mind. So inconsistent are these notions of liberty, as essential to praise or blame.

The author of the *Essays* supposes men's natural delusive sense of a liberty of contingency, to be in truth the foundation of all the labor, care, and industry of mankind; and that if men's practical ideas had been formed on the plan of universal necessity, the significant ratio, the inactive doctrine of the Stoics, would have followed; and that there would have been no room for forethought about futurity, or any sort of industry and care; plainly implying that in this case men would see and know that all their industry and care signified nothing, was in vain, and to no purpose, or of no benefit; events being fixed in an irrefragable chain, and not at all DEPENDING on their care and endeavor, as he explains himself particularly, in the instance of men's use of means to prolong life: not only very contrary to what I largely maintain in my *Inquiry*, but also very inconsistently with his own scheme, in what he supposes of the ends for which God has so deeply implanted this deceitful feeling in man's nature:



in which he manifestly supposes men's care and industry not to be vain and of no benefit, but of great use, yea, of absolute necessity, in order to the obtaining the most important ends and necessary purposes of human life, and to fulfill the ends of action to the BEST ADVANTAGE: as he largely declares. Now, how shall these things be reconciled? That, if men had a clear view of real truth, they would see that there was no ROOM for their care and industry, because they would see it to be in vain, and of no benefit; and yet that God, by having a clear view of real truth, sees that their being excited to care and industry, will be of excellent use to mankind, and greatly for the benefit of the world, yea, absolutely necessary in order to it: and that therefore the great wisdom and goodness of God to men appears, in artfully contriving to put them on care and industry for their good, which good could not be obtained without them; and yet both these things are maintained at once, and in the same sentences and words by this author. The very reason he gives, why God has put this deceitful feeling into men, contradicts and destroys itself; that God in his great goodness to men gave them such a deceitful feeling, because it was very useful and necessary for them, and greatly for their benefit, or excites them to care and industry for their own good, which care and industry is useful and necessary to that end; and yet the very thing that this great benefit of care and industry is given as a reason for, is God's deceiving men in this very point, in making them think their care and industry to be of great benefit to them, when indeed it is of none at all; and if they saw the real truth, they would see all their endeavors to be wholly useless, that there was no ROOM for them, and that the event does not at all DEPEND upon them.

And besides, what this author says, plainly implies (as appears by what has been already observed), that it is necessary men should be deceived, by being made to believe that future events are contingent, and their own future actions free, with such a freedom as signifies that their actions are not the fruit of their own desires, or designs; but altogether contingent, fortuitous, and without a cause. But how should a notion of liberty, consisting, in accident or loose chance, encourage care and industry? I should think it would rather entirely discourage every thing of this nature. For surely, if our actions do not depend on our desires and designs, then they do not depend on our endeavors, flowing from our desires and designs. This author himself seems to suppose, that if men had indeed

such a liberty of contingency, it would render all endeavors to determine or move men's future volitions in vain: he says, that, in this case, to exhort, to instruct, to promise, or to threaten, would be to no purpose. Why? Because (as he himself gives the reason) "then our will would be capricious and arbitrary, and we should be thrown loose altogether, and our arbitrary power could do us good or ill only by accident." But if such a loose fortuitous state would render vain others' endeavors upon us, for the same reason would it make useless our endeavors on ourselves; for events that are truly contingent and accidental, and altogether loose from and independent of all foregoing causes, are independent on every foregoing cause within ourselves, as well as in others.

I suppose that it is so far from being true, that our minds are naturally possessed with a notion of such liberty as this, so strongly that it is impossible to root it out, that indeed men have no such notion of liberty at all, and that it is utterly impossible, by any means whatsoever, to implant or introduce such a notion into the mind. As no such notions as imply self-contradiction and self-abolition can subsist in the mind, as I have shown in my Inquiry, I think a mature, sensible consideration of the matter, sufficient to satisfy any one, that even the greatest and most learned advocates themselves for liberty of indifference and self-determination, have no such notion; and that indeed they mean something wholly inconsistent with, and directly subversive of; what they strenuously affirm, and earnestly contend for.

By a man's having power of determining his own will, they plainly mean a power of determining his will as he pleases, or as he chooses; which supposes that the mind has a choice, prior to its going about to confirm any action or determination to it. And if they mean that they determine even the original or prime choice by their own pleasure or choice, as the thing that causes and directs it, I scruple not most boldly to affirm, that they speak they know not what, and that of which they have no manner of idea; because no such contradictory notion can come into, or have a moment's subsistence in, the mind of any man living, as an original or first choice being caused, or brought into being, by choice. After all they say, they have no higher or other conception of liberty than that vulgar notion of it which I contend for, viz., a man's having, power or opportunity to do as he chooses; or if they had a notion that every act of choice was

determined by choice, yet it would destroy their notion of the contingency of choice; for then no one act of choice would arise contingently, or from a state of indifference, but every individual act, in all the series, would arise from foregoing bias or preference, and from a cause pre-determining and fixing its existence; which introduces at once such a chain of causes and effects, each preceding link decisively fixing the following, as they would by all means avoid.

And such kind of delusion and self-contradiction as this, does not arise in men's minds by nature; it is not owing to any natural feeling which God has strongly fixed in the mind and nature of man, but to false philosophy, and strong prejudice, from a deceitful abuse of words. It is artificial; not in the sense of the author of the Essays, supposing it to be a deceitful artifice of God; but artificial as opposed to natural, and as owing to an artificial, deceitful management of terms, to darken and confound the mind. Men have no such thing when they first begin to exercise reason but must have a great deal of time to blind themselves with metaphysical confusion, before they can embrace and rest in such definitions of liberty as are given, and imagine they understand them.

On the whole, I humbly conceive, that whosoever will give himself the trouble of weighing what I have offered to consideration in my Inquiry, must be sensible, that such a moral necessity of men's actions as I maintain, is not at all inconsistent with any liberty that any creature has, or can have, as a free, accountable, moral agent, and subject of moral government; and that this moral necessity is so far from being inconsistent with praise and blame, and the benefit and use of men's own care and labor, that, on the contrary, it implies the very ground and reason why men's actions are to be ascribed to them as their own, in that manner as to infer desert, praise and blame, approbation and remorse of conscience, reward and punishment; and that it establishes the moral system of the universe, and God's moral government, in every respect, with the proper use of motives, exhortations, commands, counsels, promises, and threatenings; and the use and benefit of endeavor, care, and industry: and that therefore there is no need that the strict philosophic truth should be at all concealed from men; no danger in contemplation and profound discovery in these things. So far from this, that the truth in this matter is of vast importance, and extremely needful to be known, and that the more

clearly and perfectly the real fact is known, and the more constantly it is in view, the better; and, particularly, that the clear and full knowledge of that which is the true system of the universe in these respects, would greatly establish the doctrines which teach the true Christian scheme of Divine administration in the city of God, and the gospel of Jesus Christ, in its most important articles and that these things never can be well established, and the opposite errors, so subversive of the whole gospel, which at this day so greatly and generally prevail, be well confuted, or the arguments by which they are maintained answered, till these points are settled: while this is not done, it is, to me, beyond doubt, that the friends of those great gospel truths will but poorly maintain their controversy with the adversaries of those truths: they will be obliged often to dodge, shuffle, hide, and turn their backs; and that the latter will have a strong fort, from whence they never can be driven, and weapons to use, which those whom they oppose will find no shield to screen themselves from; and they will always puzzle, confound, and keep under the friends of sound doctrine, and glory and vaunt themselves in their advantage over them; and carry their affairs with a high hand, as they have done already for a long time past.

I conclude, Sir, with asking your pardon for troubling you with so much said in vindication of myself from the imputation of advancing a scheme of necessity, of a like nature with that of the author of the “Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion.” Considering that what I have said is not only in vindication of myself; but, as I think, of the most important articles of moral philosophy and religion; I trust in what I know of your candour, that you will excuse

Your obliged friend and brother,

*J. EDWARDS.*

*Stockbridge July 25, 1757.*

# DISSERTATION

## CONCERNING

# THE END FOR WHICH GOD CREATED THE WORLD.

## PREFACE BY THE FIRST EDITOR.

THE Author had designed these Dissertations for the public view; and wrote them out as they now appear: though it is probable, that if his life had been spared, he would have revised them, and rendered them in some respects more complete. Some new sentiments, here and there, might probably have been added; and some passages brightened with farther illustrations. This may be conjectured from some brief hints or sentiments minuted down on loose papers, found in the manuscripts.

But those sentiments concisely sketched out, which, it is thought, the author intended to enlarge and digest into the body of the work, cannot be so amplified by any other hand, as to do justice to the author: it is therefore probably best that nothing of this kind should be attempted.

As these Dissertations were more especially designed for the learned and inquisitive, it is expected that the judicious and candid will not be disposed to object, that the manner in which these subjects are treated is something above the level of common readers. For though a superficial way of discourse and loose harangues may well enough suit some subjects, and answer some valuable purposes, yet other subjects demand more closeness and accuracy. And if an author should neglect to do justice to a subject, for fear that the simpler sort should not fully understand him, he might expect to be deemed a trifler by the more intelligent.

Our author had a rare talent to penetrate deep in search of truth; to take an extensive survey of a subject, and look through it into remote

consequences. Hence many theorems, that appeared hard and barren to others, were to him pleasant and fruitful fields, where his mind would expatiate with peculiar ease, profit, and entertainment. Those studies, which to some are too fatiguing to the mind, and wearying to the constitution, were to him but a natural play of genius, and which his mind without labor would freely and spontaneously perform. A close and conclusive way of reasoning upon a controversial point was easy and natural to him.

This may serve, it is conceived, to account for his usual manner of treating abstruse and controverted subjects, which some have thought has been too metaphysical. But the truth is, that his critical method of looking through the nature of his subject, — his accuracy and precision in canvassing truth, comparing ideas, drawing consequences, panting out and exposing absurdities, — naturally led him to reduce the evidence in devour of truth into the form of demonstration, which, doubtless, where it can be obtained, is the most eligible, and by far the most satisfying to great and noble minds. And though some readers may find the labor hard to keep pace with the writer, in the advances he makes, where the ascent is arduous, yet in general all was easy to him: such was his peculiar love and discernment of truth, and natural propensity to search after it. His own ideas were clear to him, where some readers have thought them obscure. Thus many things in the works of Newton and Locke, which appear either quite unintelligible, or very obscure, to the illiterate, were clear and bright to those illustrious authors, and their reamed readers.

The subjects here handled are sublime and important. The end which God had in view in creating the world, was doubtless worthy of him, and consequently the most excellent and glorious possible. This therefore must be worthy to be known by all the intelligent creation, as excellent in itself, and worthy of their pursuit. And as true virtue distinguishes the inhabitants of heaven, and all the happy candidates for that world of glory, from all others; there cannot surely be a more interesting subject.

The notions which some men entertain concerning God's end in creating the world, and concerning true virtue, in our late author's opinion, have a natural tendency to corrupt Christianity, and to destroy the gospel of our divine Redeemer. It was therefore, no doubt, in the exercise of a pious

concern for the honor and glory of God, and a tender respect to the best interests of his fellow-men, that this devout and learned writer undertook the following work.-May the Father of fights smile upon the pious and benevolent aims and labors of his servant, and crown them with his blessing!

## INTRODUCTION.

### CONTAINING EXPLANATIONS OF TERMS AND GENERAL POSITIONS.

To avoid all confusion in our inquiries concerning the end for which God created the world, a distinction should be observed between the chief end for which an agent performs any work, and the ultimate end. These two phrases are not always precisely of the same signification: and though the chief end be always an ultimate end, yet every ultimate end is not always a chief end. A chief end is opposite to an inferior end: an ultimate end is opposite to a subordinate end.

A subordinate end is what an agent aims at, not at all upon its own account, but wholly on the account of a farther end, of which it is considered as a means. Thus when a man goes a journey to obtain a medicine to restore his health, the obtaining of that medicine is his subordinate end, because it is not an end that he values at all upon its own account, but wholly as a means of a further end, viz. his health. Separate the medicine from that further end and it is not at all desired.

An ultimate end is that which the agent seeks, in what he does, for its own sake; what he loves, values, and takes pleasure in on its own account, and not merely as a means of a further end. As when a man loves the taste of some particular sort of fruit, and is at pains and cost to obtain it, for the sake of the pleasure of that taste which he values upon its own account, as he loves his own pleasure; and not merely for the sake of any other good, which he supposes his enjoying, that pleasure will be the means of.

Some ends are subordinate, not only as they are subordinated to an ultimate end; but also to another end that is itself but subordinate. Yea, there may be a succession or chain of many subordinate ends, one

dependent on another, one sought for another; before you come to any thing that the agent aims at, and seeks for its own sake. As when a man sells a garment to get money to buy tools-to till his land-to obtain a crop-to supply him with food-to gratify the appetite. And he seeks to gratify his appetite, on its own account, as what is grateful in itself. Here the end of his selling his garment to get money, is only a subordinate end; and it is not only subordinate to the ultimate end-gratifying his appetite- but to a nearer end-buying husbandry tools; and his obtaining these is only a subordinate end, being only for the sake of tilling land. And the tillage of land is an end not sought on its own account, but for the sake of the crop to be produced, and the crop produced is an end sought only for the sake of making bread, and bread is sought for the sake of gratifying the appetite.

Here gratifying the appetite is called the ultimate end because it is the lost in the chain where a man's aim rests obtaining in that the thing finally aimed at. So whenever a man comes to that in which his desire terminates and rests, it being something valued on its own account, then he comes to an ultimate end, let the chain be longer or shorter; yea, if there be but one link or one step that he takes before he comes to this end. As when a man that loves honey puts it into his mouth, for the sake of the pleasure of the taste, without aiming at any thing further. So that an end which an agent has in view, may be both his immediate and his ultimate end; his next and his last end. That end which is sought for the sake of itself, and not for the sake of a further end, is an ultimate end; there the aim of the agent stops and rests.

A thing might have the nature of an ultimate, and also of a subordinate end, as it may be sought partly on its own account, and partly for the sake of a further end. Thus a man, in what he does, may seek the love and respect of a particular person, partly on its own account because it is in itself agreeable to men to its the objects of others, esteem and love; told partly, because he hopes through the friendship of that person, to have his assistance in other affairs; and so to be put under advantage for obtaining further ends.

A chief end, which is opposite to an inferior end, is something diverse from an ultimate end, it is most valued, and therefore most sought after by the agent in what he does. It is evident, that to be an end more valued than



another end, is not exactly the same thing as to be an end valued ultimately, or for its own sake. This will appear, if it be considered,

**1.** That two different ends may be both ultimate, and yet not be chief ends. They may be both valued for their own sake, and both sought in the same work or acts; and yet one valued more highly, and sought more than another. Thus a man may go a journey to obtain two different benefits or enjoyments, both which may be agreeable to him in themselves considered; and yet one may be much more agreeable than the other; and so be what he sets his heart chiefly upon. Thus a man may go a journey, partly to obtain the possession and enjoyment of a bride that is very dear to him; and partly to gratify his curiosity in looking in a telescope, or some new-invented and extraordinary optic glass; and the one not properly subordinate to the other; and therefore both may be ultimate ends. But yet obtaining his beloved bride may be his chief end; and the benefit of the optic glass his inferior end.

**2.** An ultimate end is not always the chief end, because some subordinate ends may be more valued and sought after than some ultimate ends. Thus, for instance, a man may aim at two things in his journey, one, to visit his friends, and another, to receive a large sum of money. The latter may be but a subordinate end, he may not value the silver and gold on their own account, but only for pleasure, gratification, and honor, the money is valued only as a means of the other. But yet, obtaining the money may be more valued, and so is a higher end of his journey than the pleasure of seeing his friends; though the latter is valued on its own account, and so is an ultimate end.

But here several things may be noted:

**First,** When it is said, that some subordinate ends may be more valued than some ultimate ends, it is not supposed that ever a subordinate end is more valued than that to which it is subordinate. For that reason it is called a subordinate end, because it is valued and sought not for its own sake, but only in subordination to a farther end. But yet a subordinate end may be valued more than some other ultimate end that it is not subordinate to. Thus, for instance, a man goes a journey to receive a sum of money, only for the value of the pleasure and honor that the money may be a means of. In this case it is impossible that the subordinate end, viz. his having the

money, should be more valued by him than the pleasure and honor for which he values it. It would be absurd to suppose that he values the means more than the end, when he has no value for the means, but for the sake of the end of which it is the means. But yet he may value the money, though but a subordinate end, more than some other ultimate end to which it is not subordinate, and with which it has no connection. For instance, more than the comfort of a friendly visit, which was one ultimate end of his journey.

**Secondly**, The ultimate end is always superior to its subordinate end, and more valued by the agent, unless it be when the ultimate end entirely depends on the subordinate. If he has no other means by which to obtain his last end, then the subordinate may be as much valued as the last end; because the last end, in such a case, altogether depends upon, and is wholly and certainly conveyed by it. As for instance, if a pregnant woman has a peculiar appetite to a certain rare fruit that is to be found only in the garden of a particular friend of hers, at a distance-and she goes a journey to her friend's house or garden, to obtain that fruit-the ultimate end of her journey is to gratify that strong appetite; the obtaining that fruit, is the subordinate end of it. If she looks upon it, that the appetite can be gratified by no other means than the obtaining of that fruit, and that it will certainly be gratified if she obtain it, then she will value the fruit as much as she values the gratification of her appetite. But otherwise, it will not be so. If she be doubtful whether that fruit will satisfy her craving, then she will not value it equally with the gratification of her appetite itself. Or if there be some other fruit that she knows of, that will gratify her desire, at least in part, which she can obtain without such trouble as shall countervail the gratification — or if her appetite cannot be gratified without this fruit, nor yet with it alone, without something else to be compounded with it-then her value for her last end will be divided between these several ingredients, as so many subordinate ends, and no one alone will be equally valued with the last end. Hence it rarely happens, that a subordinate end is equally valued with its last end; because the obtaining of a last end rarely depends on one single, uncompounded means, and infallibly connected with it. Therefore, men's last ends are commonly their highest ends.

**Thirdly**, If any being has but one ultimate end, in all that he does, and there be a great variety of operations, his last end may justly be looked upon as his supreme end. For in such a case, every other end but that one, is in order to that end; and therefore no other can be superior to it. Because, as was observed before, a subordinate end is never more valued than the end to which it is subordinate. Moreover, the subordinate effects, or event, brought to pass, as means of this end, all uniting to contribute their share towards obtaining the one last end, are very various; and therefore, by what has been now observed, the ultimate end of all must be valued more than any one of the particular means. This seems to be the case with the works of God, as may more fully appear in the sequel.

**Fourthly**, Whatsoever any agent has in view in any thing he does, which is agreeable to him in itself, and not merely for the sake of something else, is regarded by that agent as his last end. The same may be said of avoiding that which is in itself painful or disagreeable; for the avoiding of what is disagreeable is agreeable. This will be evident to any bearing in mind the meaning of the terms. By last end being meant, that which is regarded and sought by an agent, as agreeable or desirable for its own sake; a subordinate, that which is sought only for the sake of something else.

**Fifthly**, From hence it will follow, that, if an agent has in view know things than one that will be brought to pass by what he does, which he loves and delights in on their own account, then he must have more things than one that he regards as his last ends in what he does. But if there be but one thing that an agent seeks on its own account, then there can be but one last end which he has in all his actions and operations.

But only here a distinction must be observed of things which may be said to be agreeable to an agent, in themselves considered: (1.) What is in itself grateful to an agent, and valued on its own account, simply and absolutely considered, antecedent to, and independent of all conditions, or any supposition of particular cases and circumstances. And, (2.) What may be said to be in itself agreeable to an agent, hypothetically and consequentially; or, on supposition of such and such circumstances, or on the happening of such a particular case.

Thus, for instance, a man may originally love society. An inclination to society may be implanted in his very nature; and society may be agreeable

to him antecedent to all pre-supposed cases and circumstances; and this may cause him to seek a family. And the comfort of society may be originally his last end, in seeking a family. But after he has a family, peace, good order, and mutual justice and friendship in his family, may be agreeable to him, and what he delights in for their own sake; and therefore these things may be his last end in many things he does in the government and regulation of his family. But they were not his original end with respect to his family. The justice and the peace of a family was not properly his last end before he had a family, that induced him to seek a family, but consequentially. And the case being put of his having a family, then these things wherein the good order and beauty of a family consist, become his last end in many things he does in such circumstances.

In like manner we must suppose that God, before he created the world, had some good in view, as a consequence of the world's existence, that was originally agreeable to him in itself considered, that inclined him to bring the universe into existence, in such a manner as he created it. But after the world was created, and such and such intelligent creatures actually had existence, in such and such circumstances, then a wise, just regulation of them was agreeable to God, in itself considered. And God's love of justice and hatred of injustice, would be sufficient in such a case to induce God to deal justly with his creatures, and to prevent all injustice in him towards them. But yet there is no necessity of supposing, that God's love of doing justly to intelligent beings, and hatred of the contrary, was what originally induced God to create the world, and make intelligent beings, and so to order the occasion of doing either justly or unjustly. The justice of God's nature makes a just regulation agreeable, and the contrary disagreeable, as there is occasion; the subject being supposed, and the occasion given. But we must suppose something else that should incline him to create the subjects, or order the occasion.

So that perfection of God which we call his faithfulness or his inclination to fulfill his promises to his creatures, could not properly be what moved him to create the world; nor could such a fulfillment of his promises to his creatures be his last end in giving the creatures being. But yet after the world is created, after intelligent creatures are made, and God has bound himself by promise to them, then that disposition, which is called his faithfulness, may move him in his providential disposals towards them;

and this may be the end of many of God's works of providence, even the exercise of his faithfulness in fulfilling his promises, and may be in the lower sense his last end; because faithfulness and truth must be supposed to be what is in itself amiable to God, and what he delights in for its own sake. Thus God may have ends of particular works of providence, which are ultimate ends in a lower sense, which were not ultimate ends of the creation.

So that here we have two sorts of ultimate ends; one of which may be called, original and independent, the other, consequential and dependent; for it is evident, the latter sort are truly of the nature of ultimate ends; because though their being agreeable to the agent, be consequential on the existence, Yet the subject and occasion being supposed, they are agreeable and amiable in themselves. We may suppose, that, to a righteous Being, doing justice between two parties, with whom he is concerned, is agreeable in itself, and not merely for the sake of some other end: And yet we may suppose, that a desire of doing justice between two parties, may be consequential on the being of those parties, and the occasion given. — It may be observed, that when I speak to God's ultimate end in the creation of the world, in the following discourse, I commonly mean in that highest sense, viz. the original ultimate end.

**Sixthly**, It may be further observed, that the original ultimate end or ends of the creation of the world is alone that which induces God to give the occasion for consequential ends, by the first creation of the world, and the original disposal of it. And the more original the end is, the more extensive and universal it is. That which God I had primarily in view in creating, and the ordinal ordination of the world, must be constantly kept in view, and have a governing influence in all God's works, or with respect to every thing he does towards his creatures. And therefore,

**Seventhly**, If we use the phrase ultimate end in this highest sense, then the same that is God's ultimate end in creating the world, if we suppose but one such end, must I be what he makes his ultimate aim in all his works, in every thing he does either in creation or providence. But we must suppose, that, in the use to which God puts his creatures, he must evermore have a regard to the end for which he has made them. But if we take ultimate end in the other lower sense, God may sometimes have

regard to those things as ultimate ends, in particular works of providence, which could not in any proper sense be his last end in creating the world.

**Eighthly**, On the other hand, whatever appears to be Gods ultimate end, in any sense, of his works of providence in general, that must be the ultimate end of the, work of creation itself. For though God may act for an end that is ultimate in a lower sense, in some of his works of providence, which is not the ultimate end of the creation of the world, yet this cloth not take place with regard to the works of providence in general, for God's works; of providence in general, are the same with the general the to which he puts the world he has made. And we may well argue from what we see of the general we which God makes of the world, to the general end for which he designed the world. Though there may be some ends of particular Forks of providence, that were not the last end. Of the creation, which are in themselves grateful to God in such particular emergent circumstances, and so are last ends in an inferior sense, yet this is only in certain cases, or particular occasions. But if they are fact ends of God's proceedings in the use of the world in general, this shows that his making them last ends does not depend on particular cases and circumstances, but the nature of thinks in general, and his general desist in the being and constitution of the Universe.

**Ninthly**, If there be but one thing that is originally, and independent on any future supposed cases, agreeable to God, to be obtained by the creation of the world, then there can be but one last end of God's work, in this highest sense. But if there are various things, properly diverse one from another, that are absolutely and independently agreeable to the Divine Being, which are actually obtained by the creation of the world, then there were several ultimate ends of the creation in that highest sense.

# CHAPTER 1.

## WHEREIN IS CONSIDERED, WHAT REASON TEACHES CONCERNING THIS AFFAIR.

### SECTION 1.

*Same things observed in general, which readers dictate.*

HAVING observed these things, to prevent confusion, I now proceed to consider what may, and what may not, be supposed to be God's ultimate end in the creation of the world.

Indeed this affair seems properly to be an affair of divine revelation. In order to be determined what was designed, in the creating of the astonishing fabric of the universe we behold, it becomes us to attend to, and rely on, what HE has told us, who was the architect. He best knows his own heart, and what his own ends and designs were, in the wonderful works which he has wrought. Nor is it to be supposed that mankind — who, while destitute of revelation, by the utmost improvements of their own reason, and advances in science and philosophy, could come to no clear and established determination who the author of the world was — would ever have obtained any tolerable settled judgment of the end which the author of it proposed to himself in so vast, complicated, and wonderful a work of his hands. And though it be true, that the revelation which God has given to men, as a light shining in a dark place, has been the occasion of great improvement of their faculties, and has taught men how to use their reason, and though mankind now, through the long-continued assistance they have had by this divine light, have come to great attainments in the habitual exercise of reason; yet I confess it would be relying too much on reason, to determine the affair of God's last end in the creation of the world, without being herein principally guided by divine revelation, since God has given a revelation containing instructions concerning this very matter. Nevertheless, as objections have chiefly been made, against what I think the Scriptures have truly revealed, from the

pretended dictates of reason, I would, in the first place, soberly consider in a few things, what seems rational to be supposed concerning this affair, — and then proceed to consider what light divine revelation gives us in it.

As to the first of these, I think the following things appear to be the dictates of reason:

- 1.** That no notion of God's last end in the creation of the world, is agreeable to reason, which would truly imply any indigence, insufficiency, and mutability in God; or any dependence of the Creator on the creature, for any part of his perfection or happiness. Because it is evident, by both Scripture and reason, that God is infinitely, eternally, unchangeably, and independently glorious and happy: that he cannot be profited by, or receive any thing from, the creature; or be the subject of any sufferings, or diminution of his glory and felicity, from any other being. The notion of God creating the world, in order to receive any thing properly from the creature, is not only contrary to the nature of God but inconsistent with the notion of creation; which implies a being receiving its existence, and all that belongs to it, out of nothing. And this implies the most perfect, absolute, and universal derivation and dependence. Now, if the creature receives its ALL from God, entirely and perfectly, how is it possible that it should have any thing to add to God, to make him in any respect more than he was before, and so the Creator become dependent on the creature?
- 2.** Whatsoever is good and valuable in itself, is worthy that God should value it with an ultimate respect. It is therefore worthy to be made the last end of his operation; if it be properly capable of being attained. For it may be supposed that some things, valuable and excellent in themselves, are not properly capable of being attained in any divine operation, because their existence, in all possible respects, must be conceived of as prior to any divine operation. Thus God's existence and infinite perfection, though infinitely valuable in themselves, cannot be supposed to be the end of any divine operation; for we cannot conceive of them as, in any respect, consequent on any works of God. But whatever is in itself valuable, absolutely so, and is capable of being sought and attained, is worthy to be made a last end of the divine operation. — Therefore,
- 3.** Whatever that be which is in itself most valuable, and was so originally, prior to the creation of the world, and which is attainable by the creation,



if there be any thing which was superior in value to all others, that must be worthy to be God's last end in the creation; and also worthy to be his highest end. — In consequence of this it will follow

**4.** That if God himself be, in any respect, properly capable of being his own end in the creation of the world, then it is reasonable to suppose that he had respect to herself, as his last and highest end, in this work, because he is unworthy in himself to be so, being infinitely the greatest and best of beings. All things else, with regard to worthiness, importance, and excellence, are perfectly as nothing in comparison of him. And therefore, if God has respect to things according to their nature and proportions, he must necessarily have the greatest respect to himself. It would be against the perfection of his nature his wisdom, holiness, and perfect rectitude, whereby he is disposed to do every thing that is fit to be done, to suppose otherwise. At least, a great part of the moral rectitude of God, whereby he is disposed to every thing that is fit, suitable, and amiable in itself, consists in his having the highest regard to that which is in itself highest and best. The moral rectitude of God must consist in a due respect to things that are objects of moral respect, that is, to intelligent beings capable of moral actions and relations. And therefore it must chiefly consist in giving due respect to that Being to whom most is due, for God is infinitely the most worthy of regard. The worthiness of others is as nothing to his; so that to him belongs all possible respect. To him belongs the whole of the respect that any intelligent being is capable of. To him belongs ALL the heart. Therefore, if moral rectitude of heart consists in paying the respect of the heart which is due, or which fitness and suitableness requires, fitness requires infinitely the greatest regard to be paid to God; and the denying of supreme regard here would be a conduct infinitely the most unfit. Hence it will follow, that the moral rectitude of the disposition, inclination, or affection of God CHIEFLY consists in a regard to HIMSELF, infinitely above his regard to all other beings; or, in other words, his holiness consists in this.

And if it be thus fit that God should have a supreme regard to himself, then it is fit that this supreme regard should appear in those things by which he makes himself known, or by his word and works, i e. in what he says, and in what he does. If it be an infinitely amiable think in God, that he should have a supreme regard to himself, then it is an amiable thing that

he should act as having a chief regard to himself, or act in such a manner, as to show that he has such a regard: that what is highest in God's heart, may be highest in his actions and conduct. And if it was God's intention as there is great reason to think it was, that his work should exhibit an image of himself their author, that it might brightly appear by his works what manner of being he is, and afford a proper representation of his divine excellencies, and especially his moral excellence, consisting in the disposition of his Heart; then it is reasonable to suppose that his works are so wrought as to show this supreme respect to himself, wherein his moral excellence primarily consists.

When we are considering what would be most fit for God chiefly to respect, with regard to the universality of things, it may help us to judge with greater ease and satisfaction, to consider, what we can suppose would be determined by some third being of perfect wisdom and rectitude, that should be perfectly indifferent and disinterested. Or if we make the supposition, that infinitely wise justice and rectitude were a distinct disinterested person, whose office it was to determine how things shall be most properly ordered in the whole kingdom of existence, including king and subjects, God and his creatures, and, upon a view of the whole, to decide what regard should prevail in all proceedings. Now such a judge, in adjusting the proper measures and kinds of regard, would weigh things in an even balance; taking care, that a greater part of the whole should be more respected, than the lesser, ill proportion (other things being equal) to the measure of existence. So that the degree of regard should always be in a proportion compounded, of the proportion of existence, and proportion of excellence, or according to the degree of greatness and goodness, considered conjunctly. Such an arbiter, in considering the system of created intelligent beings by itself, would determine, that the system in general, consisting of many millions, was of greater importance, and worthy of a greater share of regard, than only one individual. For, however considerable some of the individuals might be, no one exceeds others so much as to countervail all the system. And if this judge consider not only the system of created beings, but the system of being general, comprehending the sum total of universal existence, both Creator and creature; still every part must be considered according to its importance, or the measure it has of existence and excellence. To determine then, what proportion of regard is to be

allotted to the Creator, and all his creatures taken together, both must be as it were put in the balance; the Supreme Being, with all in him that is great and excellent, is to be compared with all that is to be found in the whole creation: and according as the former is found to outweigh, in such proportion is he to have a greater share of regard. And in this case, as the whole system of created beings, in comparison of the Creator, would be found as the light dust of the balance, or even as nothing and vanity; so the arbiter must determine accordingly with respect to the degree in which God should be regarded, by all intelligent existence, in all actions and proceedings, determinations and effects whatever, whether creating, preserving, using, disposing, changing, or destroying. And as the Creator is infinite, and has all possible existence, perfection, and excellence, so he must have all possible regard. As he is every way the first and supreme, and as his excellency is in all respects the supreme beauty and glory, the original good, and fountain of all good; so he must have in all respects the supreme regard. And as he is God over all, to whom all are properly subordinate, And on whom all depend, worthy to reign as supreme Head, with absolute and Traversal dominion, so it is fit that he should be so regarded by all, and in all proceedings and effects through the whole system: The universality of things, in their whole compass and series, should look to him, in such a manner, as that respect to him should reign over all respect to other things, and regard to creatures should, universally, be subordinate and subject.

When I speak of regard to be thus adjusted in the universal system, I mean the regard of the sum total; all intelligent existence, created and uncreated. For it is fit, that the regard of the Creator should be proportioned to the worthiness of objects, as well as the regard of creatures. Thus, we must conclude, that such an arbiter as I have supposed, would determine, that the whole universe, in all its actings, proceedings, revolutions, and entire series of events, should proceed with a view to God, as the supreme and last end; that every wheel, in all its rotations should move with a constant invariable regard to him as the ultimate end of all, as perfectly and uniformly, as if the whole system were animated and directed by one common soul. Or, as if such an arbiter as I have before supposed, possessed of perfect wisdom and rectitude, be came the common soul of the universe, and actuated and governed it in all its motions.

Thus I have gone upon the supposition of a third disinterested person. The thing supposed is impossible; but the case is, nevertheless, just the same, as to what is most fit and suitable in itself. For it is most certainly proper for God to act, according to the greatest fitness, and he knows what the greatest fitness is, as much as if perfect rectitude were a distinct person to direct him. God himself is possessed of that perfect discernment and rectitude which have been supposed. It belongs to him as supreme arbiter, and to his infinite wisdom and rectitude, to state all rules and measures of proceedings. And seeing these attributes of God are infinite and most absolutely perfect, they are not the less fit to order end dispose, because they are in him, who is being concerned, and not a third person that is disinterested. For being interested unfits a person to be an arbiter or judge, no otherwise, than as interest tends to mislead his judgment, or incline him to act contrary to it. But that God should be in danger of either, is contrary to the supposition of his being absolutely perfect. And as there must be some supreme judge of fitness and propriety in the universality of things, or otherwise there could be no order, it therefore belongs to God, whose are all things, who is perfectly fit for this office, and who alone is so to state all things according to the most perfect fitness and rectitude, as much as if perfect rectitude were a distinct person. We may therefore be sure it is and will be done.

I should think that these things might incline us to suppose, that God has not forgot himself, in the ends which he proposed in the creation of the world; but that he has so stated these ends, (however self-sufficient, immutable, and independent,) as therein plainly to show a supreme regard to himself. Whether this can be, or whether God has done thus, must be considered afterwards, as also what may be objected against this view of things.

**5.** Whatsoever is good, amiable, and valuable in itself, absolutely and originally, (which facts and events show that God aimed at in the creation of the world,) must be supposed to be regarded or aimed at by God ultimately, or as an ultimate end of creation. For we must suppose, from the perfection of God's nature, that whatsoever is valuable and amiable in itself, simply and absolutely considered, God values simply for itself; because God's judgment and esteem are according to truth. But if God values a thing simply and absolutely on its own account, then it is the

ultimate object of his value. For to suppose that he values it only for some farther end, is in direct contradiction to the present supposition, which is, that he values it absolutely and for itself. Hence it most clearly follows, that if that which God values for itself, appears, in fact and experience, to be what he seeks by any thing he does, he must regard it as an ultimate end. And, therefore, if he seeks it in creating the world, or any part of the world, it is an ultimate end of the work of creation. Having got thus far, we may now proceed a step farther, and assert,

**6.** Whatsoever thing is actually the effect of the creation of the world, which is simply and absolutely valuable in itself, that thing is an ultimate end of God's creating the world. We see that it is a good which God aimed at by the creation of the world; because he has actually attained it by that means. For we may justly infer what God intends, by what he actually does; because he does nothing inadvertently, or without design. But whatever God intends to attain, from a value for it, in his actions and works, that he seeks in those acts and works. Because, for an agent to intend to attain something he values by the means he uses, is the same thing as to seek it by those means. And this is the same as to make that thing his end in those means. Now, it being, by the supposition, what God values ultimately, it must therefore, by the preceding position, be aimed at by God, as an ultimate end of creating the world.

## SECTION 2

*Some further observations concerning those things which reason leads us to suppose God aimed at in the creation of the world.*

FROM what was last observed, it seems to be the most proper way of proceeding — as we would see what light reason will give us, respecting the particular end or ends God had ultimately in view in the creation of the world — to consider, what thing or things are actually the effect or consequence of the creation of the world, — that are simply and originally valuable in themselves. And this is what I would directly proceed to, without entering on any tedious metaphysical inquiries, wherein fitness, or amiableness, consists, referring what I say to the dictates of the reader's mind, on sedate and calm reflection.

**1.** It seems a thing in itself proper and desirable, that the glorious attributes of God, which consist in a sufficiency to certain acts and effects, should be exerted in the production of such effects as might manifest his infinite power wisdom, righteousness, goodness, etc. If the world had not been created, these attributes never would have had any exercise. The power of God, which is a sufficiency in him to produce great effects, must forever have been dormant and useless as to any effect. The divine wisdom and prudence would have had no exercise in any wise contrivance, any prudent proceeding, or disposal of things, for there would have been no objects of contrivance or disposal.

The same might be observed of God's justice, goodness, and truth. Indeed God might have known as perfectly that he possessed these attributes, if they never had been exerted or expressed in any effect. But then, if the attributes which consist in a sufficiency for correspondent effects, are in themselves excellent, the exercises of them must like wise be excellent. If it be an excellent thing, that there should be a sufficiency for a certain kind of action or operation, the excellency of such a sufficiency must consist in its relation to this kind of operation or effect, but that could not be, unless the operation itself were excellent. A sufficiency for any work is no further valuable, than the work itself is valuable. As God therefore esteems these attributes themselves valuable, and delights in them; so it is natural to suppose that he delights in their proper exercise and expression. For the same reason that he esteems his own sufficiency wisely to contrive and dispose effects, he also will esteem the wise contrivance and disposition itself. And for the same reason, as he delights in his own disposition to do justly, and to dispose of things according to truth and just proportion; so he must delight in such a righteous disposal itself.

**2.** It seems to be a thing in itself fit and desirable, that the glorious perfections of God should be known, and the operations and expressions of them seen, by other beings besides himself. If it be fit that God's power and wisdom, etc. should be exercised and expressed in some effects, and not lie eternally dormant, then it seems proper that these exercises should appear, and not be totally hidden and unknown. For if they are, it will be just the same, as to the above purpose, as if they were not. God as perfectly knew himself and his perfections, had as perfect an idea of the exercises and effects they were sufficient for, antecedently to any such

actual operations of them, and since. If, therefore, it be nevertheless a shine in itself valuable, and worthy to be desired, that these glorious perfections be actually exhibited in their correspondent effects, then it seems also, that the knowledge of these perfections and discoveries is valuable in itself absolutely considered, and that it is desirable that this knowledge should exist. It is a thing infinitely good in itself, that God's glory should be known by a glorious society of created beings. And that there should be in them an increasing knowledge of God to all eternity, is worthy to be regarded by him, to whom it belongs to order what is fittest and best. If existence is more worthy than defect and non-entity, and if any created existence in itself worthy to be, then knowledge is; and if any knowledge, then the most excellent sort of knowledge, viz. that of God and his glory. His knowledge is one of the highest, most real, and substantial parts of all created existence, most remote from non-entity and defect.

**3.** As it is desirable in itself that God's glory should be known, so when known it seems equally reasonable it should be esteemed and delighted in, answerable to its dignity. There is no more reason to esteem it a suitable thing, that there should be an idea in the understanding corresponding unto the glorious object, than that there should be a corresponding affection in the will. If the perfection itself be excellent, the knowledge of it is excellent, and so is the esteem and love of it excellent. And as it is fit that God should love and esteem his own excellence, hence, it is also fit that he should value and esteem the love of his excellence. And if it becomes a being highly to value himself, it is fit that he should love to have himself valued and esteemed. If the idea of God's perfection in the understanding be valuable, then the love of the heart seems to be more especially valuable, as moral beauty especially consists in the disposition and affection of the heart.

**4.** As there is an infinite fullness of all possible good in God — a fullness of every perfection, of all excellency and beauty, and of infinite happiness — and as this fullness is capable of communication, or emanation *ad extra*; so it seems a thing amiable and valuable in itself that this infinite fountain of good should send forth abundant streams. And as this is in itself excellent, so a disposition to this in the Divine Being, must be looked upon as an excellent disposition. Such an emanation of good is, in some sense, a multiplication of it. So far as the stream may be looked upon as any thing

besides the fountain, so far it may be looked on as an increase of good. And if the fullness of good that is in the fountain, is in itself excellent, then the emanation, which is as it were an increase, repetition, or multiplication of it, is excellent. Thus it is fit, since there is an infinite fountain of light and knowledge, that this light should shine forth in beams of communicated knowledge and understanding; and, as there is an infinite fountain of holiness, moral excellence, and beauty, that so it should flow out in communicated holiness. And that, as there is an infinite fullness of joy and happiness, so these should have an emanation, and become a fountain flowing out in abundant streams, as beams from the sun.

Thus it appears reasonable to suppose, that it was God's last end, that there might be a glorious and abundant emanation of his infinite fullness of good ad extra, or without himself, and that the disposition to communicate himself, or diffuse his own fullness, was what moved him to create the world. But here I observe, that these would be some impropriety in saying that a dispositions in God to communicate himself to the creature, moved him to create the world. For an inclination in God to communicate himself to an object, seems to presuppose the existence of the object, at least in idea. But the diffusive disposition that excited God to give creatures existence was rather a communicative disposition in general, or a disposition in the fullness of the divinity to flow out and diffuse itself. Thus the disposition there is in the root and stock of a tree to diffuse sap and life, is doubtless the reason of their communication to its buds, leaves, and fruits, after these exist. But a disposition to communicate of its life and sap to its fruits, is not so properly the cause of its producing those fruits, as its disposition to diffuse its sap and life in general. Therefore, to speak strictly according to truth, we may suppose, that a disposition in God, as an original property of his nature, to an emanation of his own infinite fullness, was what excited him to create the world; and so, that the emanation itself was aimed at by him as a last end of the creation.

## SECTION 3

*Wherein it is considered how, on the supposition of God's making the forementioned things his last end he manifests a supreme and ultimate regard to himself in all his works.*



In the last section I observed some things which are actually the consequence of the creation of the world which seem absolutely valuable in themselves, and so worthy to be made God's last end in his work. I now proceed to inquire, how God's making such things as these his last end, is consistent with his making himself his last end, or his manifesting an ultimate respect to himself in his acts and works. Because it is agreeable to the dictates of reason, that in all his proceedings he should set himself highest therefore, I would endeavor to show, how his infinite love to and delight in himself, will naturally cause him to value and delight in these things: or rather, how a value to these things is implied in his value of that infinite fullness of good that is in himself.

Now, with regard to the first of the particulars mentioned above God's regard to the exercise of those attributes of his nature, in their proper operations and effects, which consist in a sufficiency for these operations — it is not hard to conceive that God's regard to himself, and value for his own perfections, should cause him to value these exercises and expressions of his perfections, inasmuch as their excellency consists in their relation to use, exercise, and operation. God's love to himself, and his own attributes, will therefore make him delight in that which is the use, end, and operation of these attributes. If one highly esteem and delight in the virtues of a friend, as wisdom, justice, etc. that have relation to action, this will make him delight in the exercise and genuine effects of these virtues. So if God both esteem and delight in his own perfections and virtues, he cannot but value and delight in the expressions and genuine effects of them. So that in delighting in the expressions of his perfections, he manifests a delight in himself; and in making these expressions of his own perfections his end, he makes himself his end.

And with respect to the second and third particulars, the matter is no less plain. For he that loves any being, and has a disposition highly to prize and greatly to delight in his virtues and perfections, must from the same disposition be well pleased to have his excellencies known, acknowledged, esteemed, and prized by others. He that loves any shine, naturally loves the approbation of that thing, and is opposite to the disapprobation of it. Thus it is when one loves the virtues of a friend. And thus it will necessarily be, if a being loves himself and highly prizes his own excellencies; and thus it is fit it should be if it be fit he should thus love

himself, and prize his own valuable qualities; that is, it is fit that he should take delight in his own excellencies being seen, acknowledged, esteemed, and delighted in. This is implied in a love to himself and his own perfections; and in making this his end, he makes himself his end.

And with respect to the fourth and last particular, viz. God's being disposed to an abundant communication, and glorious emanation, of that infinite fullness of good which he possesses, as of his own knowledge, excellency, and happiness, in the manner he does; if we thoroughly consider the matter, it will appear, that herein also God makes himself his end, in such a sense, as plainly to manifest and testify a supreme and ultimate regard to himself.

Merely in this disposition to cause an emanation of his glory and fullness—which is prior to the existence of any other being, and is to be considered as the inciting cause of giving existence to other beings — God cannot so properly be said to make the creature his end, as himself. For the creature is not as yet considered as existing. This disposition or desire in God, must be prior to the existence of the creature, even in foresight. For it is a disposition that is the original around even of the future, intended, and foreseen existence of the Creature. God's benevolence, as it respects the creature, may be taken either in a larger or stricter sense. In a larger sense, it may signify nothing diverse from that good disposition in his nature to communicate of his own fullness in general, as his knowledge his holiness, and happiness, and to give creatures existence in order to it. This may be called benevolence, or love, because it is the same good disposition that is exercised in love. It is the very fountain from whence love originally proceeds, when taken in the most proper sense: and it has the same general tendency and effect in the creature's well-being. But yet this cannot have any particular present or future created existence for its object; because it is prior to any such object, and the very source of the futuration of its existence. Nor is it really diverse from God's love to himself; as will more clearly appear after wards.

But God's love may be taken more strictly, for this general disposition to communicate good, as directed to particular objects. Love, in the most strict and proper sense, presupposes the existence of the object beloved, at least in idea and expectation, and represented to the mind as future. God

did not love angels in the strictest sense but in consequence of his intending to create them, and so having an idea of future existing angels. Therefore his love to them was not properly what recited him to intend to create them. Love or benevolence, strictly taken, presupposes an consisting object, as much as pity a miserable suffering object.

This propensity in God to diffuse himself, may be considered as a propensity to himself diffused; or to his own glory existing in its emanation. A respect to himself, or an infinite propensity to and delight in his own glory, is that which causes him to incline to its being abundantly diffused, and to delight in the emanation of it. Thus, that nature in a tree, by which it puts forth buds, shoots out branches, and brings forth leaves and fruit, is a disposition that terminates in its own complete self. And so the disposition in the sun to shine, or abundantly to diffuse its fullness, warmth, and brightness, is only a tendency to its own most glorious and complete state. So God looks on the communication of himself, and the emanation of his infinite glory, to belong to the fullness and completeness of himself, as though he were not in his most glorious state without it. Thus the church of Christ, (toward whom and in whom are the emanations of his glory, and the communication of his fullness,) is called the fullness of Christ, as though he were not in his complete state without her; like Adam without Eve. And the church is called the glory of Christ, as the woman is the glory of the man, ~~4017~~ 1 Corinthians 11:7. ~~2863~~ Isaiah 46:13. I will place salvation in Zion, for Israel MY GLORY. — Indeed, after the creatures are intended to be created, God may be conceived of as being moved by benevolence to them, in the strictest sense, in his dealings with them. His exercising his goodness, and gratifying his benevolence to them in particular may be the spring of all God's proceedings through the universe; as being now the determined way of gratifying his general inclination to diffuse himself. Here God acting for himself; or making himself his last end, and his acting for their sake, are not to be set in opposition; they are rather to be considered as coinciding one with the other, and implied one in the other. But yet God is to be considered as first and original in his regard; and the creature is the object of God's regard, consequently, and by implication, as being as it were comprehended in God as it shall be more particularly observed presently.

But how God's value for, and delight in, the emanations of his fullness in the work of creation, argues his delight in the infinite fullness of good in himself, and the supreme regard he has for himself, and that in making these emanations, he ultimately makes himself his end in creation, will more clearly appear by considering more particularly the nature and circumstances of these communications of God's fullness.

One part of that divine fullness which is communicated, its the divine knowledge. That communicated knowledge which must be supposed to pertain to God's last end in, creating the world, is the creature's knowledge of HIM. For this is the end of all other knowledge, and even the faculty of understanding would be vain without it. And this knowledge is most properly a communication of God's infinite knowledge, which primarily consists in the knowledge of himself. God, in making this his end, makes himself his end. This knowledge in the creature, is but a conformity to God. It is the image of God's own knowledge of himself. It is a participation of the same; though infinitely less in degree: as particular beams of the sun communicated are the light and glory of the sun itself, in part.

Besides, God's glory is the object of this knowledge, or the thing known; so that God is glorified in it, as hereby his excellency is seen. As therefore God values himself, as he delights in his own knowledge, he must delight in every thing of that nature: as he delights in his own light he must delight in every beam of that light, and as he highly values his own excellency, he must be well pleased in having it manifested, and so glorified.

Another emanation of divine fullness, is the communication of virtue and holiness to the creature: this is a communication of God's holiness, so that hereby the creature partakes of God's own moral excellency; which is properly the beauty of the divine nature. And as God delights in his own beauty, he must necessarily delight in the creature's holiness; which is a conformity to and participation of it, as truly as a brightness of a jewel, held in the sun's beams, is a participation or derivation of the sun's brightness, though immensely less in degree. And then it must be considered wherein this holiness creature consists viz. in love which is the comprehension of all true virtue and primarily in love to God, which is exercised in a high esteem of God, admiration of his perfections,

complacency in them, and praise of them. All which things are nothing else but the heart exalting, magnifying, or glorifying God, which, as I showed before, God necessarily approves of, and is pleased with, as he loves himself, and values the glory of his own nature.

Another part of God's fullness which he communicates, is his happiness. This happiness consists in enjoying and rejoicing in himself, and so does also the creature's happiness. It is a participation of what is in God, and God and his glory are the objective ground of it. The happiness of the creature consists in rejoicing in God, by which also God is magnified and exalted. Joy, or the exulting of the heart in God's glory, is one thing that belongs to praise. So that God is all in all, with respect to each part of that communication of the divine fullness which is made to the creature. What is communicated is divine or something of God, and each communication is of that nature, that the creature to whom it is made, is thereby conformed to God, and united to him: and that in proportion as the communication is greater or less. And the communication itself is no other, in the very nature of it, than that wherein the very honor, exaltation, and praise of God consists.

And it is farther to be considered that what God aimed at in the creation of the world, as the end which he had ultimately in view, was that communication of himself which he intended through all eternity. And if we attend to the nature and circumstances of this eternal emanation of divine good, it will more clearly show now, in making this his end, God testifies a supreme respect to himself, and makes himself his end. There are many reasons to think that what God has in view, in an increasing communication of himself through eternity is an increasing knowledge of God, love to him, and joy in him. And it is to be considered, that the more those divine communications increase in the creature, the more it becomes one with God: for so much the more is it united to God in love, the heart is drawn nearer and nearer to God, and the union with him becomes more firm and close: and, at the same time, the creature becomes more and more conformed to God. The image is more and more perfect, and so the good that is in the creature comes forever nearer and nearer to an identity with that which is in God. In the view therefore of God, who has a comprehensive prospect of the increasing union and conformity through eternity, it must be an infinitely strict and perfect nearness, conformity,

and oneness. For it will for ever come nearer and nearer to that strictness and perfection of union which there is between the Father and the Son. So that in the eyes of God, who perfectly sees the whole of it, in its infinite progress and increase, it must come to an eminent fulfillment of Christ's request, in ~~John~~ John 17:21, 23. That they all may be ONE as thou Father art in one, and I in thee, that they also may be ONE in us; all in them and thou in me, that they maybe made perfect in ONE. In this view, those elect creatures which must be looked upon as the end of all the rest of the creation, considered with respect to the whole of their eternal duration, and as such made God's end, must be viewed as height, as it were, one with God. They were respected as brought home to him, united with him, centering most perfectly, as it were swallowed up in him: so that his respect to them finally coincides, and becomes one and the same, with respect to himself. The interest of the creature is, as it were, God's own interest, in proportion to the degree of their relation and union to God. Thus the interest of a man's family is looked upon as the same with his own interest; because of the relation they stand in to him, his propriety in them, and their strict union with him. But God's elect creatures, with respect to their eternal duration, are infinitely dearer to God, than a man's family is to him. What has been said shows, that as all things are from God, as their first cause and fountain; so all things tend to him, and in their progress come nearer and nearer to him through all eternity: which argues, that he who is their first cause is their last end.

## SECTION 4

*Some objections considered, which may be made against the reasonableness of what has been said of God making himself his last end.*

**Object I.** Some may object against what has been said as being inconsistent with God's absolute independence and immutability: particularly, as though God were inclined to a communication of his fullness, and emanations of his own glory, as being, his own most glorious and complete state. It may be thought that this does not well consist with God, being self-existent from all eternity; absolutely perfect in himself, in the possession of infinite and independent good. And that, in general, to

suppose that God makes himself his end, in the creation of the world, seems to suppose that he aims at some interest or happiness of his own, not easily reconcilable with his being perfectly and infinitely happy in himself. If it could be supposed that God needed any thing; or that the goodness of his creatures could extend to him or that they could be profitable to him; it might be fit, that God should make himself, and his own interest, his highest and last end in creating the world. But seeing that God is above all need, and all capacity of being made better or happier in any respect; to what purpose should God make himself his end, or seek to advance himself in any respect by any of his works? How absurd is it to suppose that God should do such great things, with a view to obtain what he is already most perfectly possessed of, and was so from all eternity, and therefore cannot now possibly need, nor with any color of reason be supposed to seek!

**Ans. 1.** Many have wrong notions of God's happiness as resulting from his absolute self-sufficiency, independence, and immutability. Though it be true, that God's glory and happiness are in and of himself, are infinite and cannot be added to, and unchangeable, for the whole and every part of which he is perfectly independent of the creature; yet it does not hence follow, nor is it true, that God has no real and proper delight, pleasure, or happiness, in any of his acts or communications relative to the creature, or effects he produces in them; or in any thing he sees in the creature's qualifications, dispositions, actions and state.

God may have a real and proper pleasure or happiness in seeing the happy state of the creature, yet this may not be different from his delight in himself, being a delight in his own infinite goodness, or the exercise of that glorious propensity of his nature to diffuse and communicate himself, and so gratifying this inclination of his own heart. This delight which God has in his creature's happiness cannot properly be said to be what God receives from the creature. For it is only the effect of his own work in and communications to the creature, in making it, and admitting it to a participation of his fullness. As the sun receives nothing from the Jewel that receives its light, and shines only by a participation of its brightness.

With respect also to the creature's holiness; God may have a proper delight and joy in imparting this to the creature, as gratifying hereby his

inclination to communicate of his own excellent fullness. God may delight, with true and great pleasure, in beholding that beauty which is an image and communication of his own beauty, an expression and manifestation of his own loveliness. And this is so far from being an instance of his happiness not being in and from himself, that it is an evidence that he is happy in himself, or delights and has pleasure in his own beauty. If he did not take pleasure in the expression of his own beauty it would rather be an evidence that he does not delight in his own beauty; that he hath not his happiness and enjoyment his own beauty and perfection. So that if we suppose God has real pleasure and happiness in the holy love and praise of his saints, as the image and communication of his own holiness, it is not properly any pleasure distinct from the pleasure he has in himself; but it is truly an instance of it.

And with respect to God's being glorified in those perfections wherein his glory consists, expressed in their corresponding effects, — as his wisdom, in wise designs and well-contrived works, his power, in great effects, his justice, in acts of righteousness, his goodness, in communicating happiness, — this does not argue that his pleasure is not in himself, and his own glory; but the contrary. It is the necessary consequence of his delighting in the glory of his nature, that he delights in the emanation and effulgence of it.

Nor do these things argue any dependence in God on the creature for happiness. Though he has real pleasure in the creature's holiness and happiness, yet this is not properly any pleasure which he receives from the creature. For these things are what he gives the creature. They are wholly and entirely from him. His rejoicing therein is rather a rejoicing in his own acts, and his own glory expressed in those acts, than a joy derived from the creature. God's joy is dependent on nothing besides his own act, which he exerts with an absolute and independent power. And yet, in some sense, it can be truly said, that God has the more delight and pleasure for the holiness and happiness of his creatures. Because God should be less happy if he were less good: or if he had not that perfection of nature which consists in a propensity of nature to diffuse his own fullness. And would be less happy, if it were possible for him to be hindered in the exercise of his goodness, and his other perfections, in their proper effects. But he has complete happiness, because he has these



perfections, and cannot be hindered in exercising and displaying them in their proper effects. And this surely is not, because he is dependent; but because he is independent on any other that should hinder him.

From this view, it appears, that nothing which has been said is in the least inconsistent with those expressions in Scripture, that signify, “man cannot be profitable to God,” etc. For these expressions plainly mean no more, than that God is absolutely independent of us; that we have nothing of our own, no stock from whence we can give to God; and that no part of his happiness originates from man.

From what has been said, it appears, that the pleasure God hath in those things which have been mentioned, is rather a pleasure in diffusing and communicating to, than in receiving from, the creature. Surely, it is no argument of indigence in God that he is inclined to communicate of his infinite fullness. It is no argument of the emptiness or deficiency of a fountain, that it is inclined to overflow. Nothing from the creature alters God’s happiness, as though it were changeable either by increase or diminution. For though these communications of God — these exercises, operations, and expressions of his glorious perfections which God rejoices in — are in time; yet history in them is without beginning or change. They were always equally present in the divine mind. He beheld them with equal clearness, certainty, and fullness, in every respect, as he doth now. They were always equally present; as with him there is no variableness or succession. He ever beheld and enjoyed them perfectly in his own independent and immutable power and will.

**Ans. 2.** If any are not satisfied with the preceding answer, but still insist on the objection, let them consider whether they can devise any other scheme of God’s last end in creating the world, but what will be equally obnoxious to this objection in its full force, if there be any force in it. For if God had any last end in creating the world, then there was something in some respect future, that he aimed at, and designed to brim to pass by creating the world something that was agreeable to his inclination or will; let that be his own glory, or the happiness of his creatures, or what it Will. Now, if there be something that God seeks as agreeable’ or grateful to him, then, in the accomplishment of it, he is gratified. If the last end which he seeks in the creation of the world be truly a thing grateful to him (as

certainly it is, if it be truly his end, and truly the object of his will,) then it is what he takes a real delight and pleasure in. But then, according to the argument of the objection how can he have any thing future to desire or seek, who is already perfectly; eternally, and immutably satisfied in himself! What can remain for him to take any delight in, or to be further gratified by, whose eternal and unchangeable delight is in himself, as his own complete object of enjoyment. Thus the objector will be pressed with his own objection, let him embrace what notion he will of God's end in the creation. And I think he has no way left to answer but that which has been taken above.

It may therefore be proper here to observe, that let what will be God's last end, that he must have a real and proper pleasure in. Whatever be the proper object of his will, he is gratified in. And the thing is either grateful to him in itself, or for something else for which he wills it; and so is his further end. But whatever is God's last end that he wills for its own sake; as grateful to him in itself, or in which he has some degree of true and proper pleasure. Otherwise we must deny any such thing as will in God with respect to any thing brought to pass in time, and so must deny his work of creation, or any work of his providence, to be truly voluntary. But we have as much reason to suppose, that God's works in creating and governing the world, are properly the fruits of his will, as of his understanding. And if there be any such thing at all, as what we mean by acts at will in God, then he is not indifferent whether his will be fulfilled or not. And if he is not indifferent, then he is truly gratified and pleased in the fulfillment of his will. And if he has a real pleasure in attaining his end, then the attainment of it belongs to his happiness; that in which God's delight or pleasure in any measure consists. To suppose that God has pleasure in things that are brought to pass in time, only figuratively and metaphorically, is to suppose that he exercises will about these things, and makes them his end only metaphorically.

**Ans. 3.** The doctrine that makes God's creatures and not hinged to be his last end, is a doctrine the furthest from having a favorable aspect on God's absolute self-sufficiency and independence. It far less agrees therewith than the doctrine against which this is objected. For we must conceive of the efficient as depending on his ultimate end. He depends on this end, in his desires, aims, actions and pursuits, so that he fails in all his desires,

actions, and pursuits, if he fails of his end. Now if God himself be his last end, then in his dependence on his end, he depends on nothing but himself. If all things be of him, and to him, and he the first and the last, this shows him to be all in all. He is all to himself. He goes not out of himself in what he seeks; but his desires and pursuits as they originate from, so they terminate in, himself; and he is dependent on none but himself in the beginning or end of any of his exercises or operations. But if not himself, but the creature, were his last end, then as he depends on his last end, he would be in some sort dependent on the creature.

**Object. 2.** Some may object, that to suppose God makes himself his highest and last end, is dishonorable to him; as it in effect supposes, that God does every thing from a selfish spirit. Selfishness is looked upon as mean and sordid in the creature unbecoming and even hateful in such a worm of the dust as man. We should look upon a man as of a base and contemptible character, who should in every thing he did, be governed by selfish principles; should make his private interest his governing aim in all his conduct in life. How far then should we be from attributing any such thing to the Supreme Being, the blessed and only Potentate! Does it not become us to ascribe to him the most noble and generous dispositions, and qualities the most remote from every thing private, narrow, and sordid?

**Ans. 1.** Such an objection must arise from a very ignorant or inconsiderate notion of the vice of selfishness and the virtue of generosity. If by selfishness be meant a disposition in any being to regard himself; this is no otherwise vicious or unbecoming, than as one is less than a multitude, and so the public weal is of greater value than his particular interest. Among created beings one single person is inconsiderable in comparison of the generality; and so his interest is of little importance compared with the interest of the whole system. Therefore in them, a disposition to prefer self, as if it were more than all, is exceeding vicious. But it is vicious on no other account, than as it is a disposition that does not agree with the nature of things; and that which is indeed the greatest good. And a disposition in any one to forego his own interest for the sake of others, is no further excellent, no further worthy the name of generosity, than it is treating things according to their true value; prosecuting something most worthy to be prosecuted; an expression of a disposition to prefer something to self-interest, that is indeed preferable in itself. But if God be

indeed so great, and so excellent, that all other beings are as nothing to him, and all other excellency be as nothing, and less than nothing and vanity, in comparison of his, and God be omniscient and infallible, and perfectly knows that he is infinitely the most valuable being, then it is fit that his heart should be agreeable to this — which is indeed the true nature and proportion of things, and agreeable to this infallible and all-comprehending understanding which he has of them, and that perfectly clear light in which he views them — and that he should value himself infinitely more than his creatures.

**Ans. 2.** In created beings, a regard to self-interest may properly be set in opposition to the public welfare; because the private interest of one person may be inconsistent with the public good, at least it may be so in the apprehension of that person. That, which this person looks upon as his interest, may interfere with or oppose the general good. Hence his private interest may be regarded and pursued in opposition to the public. But this cannot be with respect to the Supreme Being, the author and head of the whole system; on whom all absolutely depend; who is the fountain of being and good to the whole. It is more absurd to suppose that his interest should be opposite to the interest of the universal system, than that the welfare of the head, heart, and vitals of the natural body, should be opposite to the welfare of the body. And it is impossible that God, who is omniscient, should apprehend his interest, as being inconsistent with the good and interest of the whole.

**Ans. 3.** God seeking himself in the creation of the world in the manner which has been supposed, is so far from; being inconsistent with the good of his creatures, that it is a kind of regard to himself that inclines him to seek the good of his creature. It is a regard to himself that disposes him to diffuse and communicate himself. It is such a delight in his own internal fullness and glory, that disposes him to an abundant effusion and emanation of that glory. The same disposition, that inclines him to delight in his glory, causes him to delight in the exhibitions, expressions, and communications of it. If there were any person of such a taste and disposition of mind, that the brightness and light of the sun seemed unlovely to him, he would be willing that the sun's brightness and light should be retained within itself. But they that delight in it, to whom it

appears lovely and glorious, will esteem it an amiable and glorious thing to have it diffused and communicated through the world.

Here, by the way, it may be properly considered, whether some writers are not chargeable with inconsistency in this respect. They speak against the doctrine of GOD making himself his own highest and last end, as though this were an ignoble selfishness — when indeed he only is fit to be made the highest end, by himself and all other beings. inasmuch as he is infinitely greater and more worthy than all others — yet with regard, to creatures, who are infinitely less worthy of supreme and ultimate regard, they suppose, that they necessarily, at all times, seek their own happiness, and make it their ultimate end in all, even their most virtuous actions; and that this principle, regulated by wisdom and prudence, as leading to that which is their true and highest happiness, is the foundation of all virtue, and every thing that is morally good and excellent in them.

**Object. 3.** To what has been supposed, that God makes himself his end — in seeking that his glory and excellent perfections should be known, esteemed, loved, and delighted in by his creatures — it may be objected, that this seems unworthy of God. It is considered as below a truly great man, to be much influenced in his conduct by a desire of popular applause. The notice and admiration of a gazing multitude, would be esteemed but a low end, to be aimed at by a prince or philosopher, in any great and noble enterprise. How much more is it unworthy the great God, to perform his magnificent works, e. g. the creation of the vast universe, out of regard to the notice and admiration of worms of the dust, that the displays of his magnificence may be gazed at, and applauded by those who are infinitely more beneath him, than the meanest rabble are beneath the greatest prince or philosopher.

This objection is specious. It hath a show of argument; but it will appear to be nothing but a show, if we consider,

1. Whether it be not worthy of God, to regard and value what is excellent and valuable in itself; and so to take pleasure in its existence.

It seems not liable to any doubt, that there could be no future existence worthy to be desired or sought by God, and so worthy to be made his end, if no future existence was valuable and worthy to be brought to effect. If,

when the world was not, there was any possible future thing fit and valuable in itself, I think the knowledge of God's glory, and the esteem and love of it, must be so. Understanding and will are the highest kind of created existence. And if they be valuable, it must be in their exercise. But the highest and most excellent kind of their exercise is in some actual knowledge, and exercise of will. And, certainly, the most excellent actual knowledge and will that can be in the creature, is the knowledge and the love of God. And the most time excellent knowledge of God, is the knowledge of his glory or moral excellence, and the most excellent exercise of the will consists in esteem and love, and a delight in his glory. — If any created existence is in itself worthy to be, or any thing that ever was future is worthy of existence, such a communication of divine fullness, such an emaciation and expression of the divine glory, is worthy of existence. But if nothing that ever was future was worthy to exist, then no future thing was, worthy to be aimed at by God in creating the world. And if nothing was worthy to be aimed at in creation, then nothing was worthy to be God's end in creation.

If God's own excellency and glory is worthy to be highly valued and delighted in by him, then the value and esteem hereof by others, is worthy to be regarded by him: for this is a necessary consequence. To make this plain let it be considered, how it is with regard to the excellent qualities of another. If we highly value the virtues and excellencies of a friend, in proportion, we shall approve of others, esteem of them; and shall disapprove the contempt of them. If these virtues are truly valuable, they are worthy that we should thus approve others' esteem, and disapprove their contempt of them. And the case is the same with respect to any being's own qualities or attributes. If he highly esteems them, and greatly delights in them, he will naturally and necessarily love to we esteem of them in others, and dislike their disesteem. And if the attributes are worthy to be highly esteemed by the being who hath them, so is the esteem of them in others worthy to be proportionately approved and regarded. I desire it may be considered, whether it be unfit that God should be displeased with contempt of himself? If not, but on the contrary it be fit and suitable that he should be displeased with this, there is the same reason that he should be pleased with the proper love, esteem, and honor of himself.

The matter may be also cleared, by considering what it would become us to approve of and value with respect to any public society we belong to, e. g. our nation or country. It becomes us to love our country; and therefore it becomes us to value the just honor of our country. But the same that it becomes us to value and desire for a friend, and the same that it becomes us to desire and seek for the community, the same does it become God to value and seek for himself; that is, on supposition, that it becomes God to love himself as it does men to love a friend or the public; which I think has been before proved.

Here are two things that ought particularly to be adverted to.

**(1.)** That in God, the love of himself and the love of the public are not to be distinguished, as in man: because God's being, as it were, comprehends all. His existence, being infinite, must be equivalent to universal existence. And for the same reason that public affection in the creature is fit and beautiful, God's regard to himself must be so likewise.

**(2.)** In God, the love of what is fit and decent, cannot be a distinct thing from the love of himself; because the love of God is that wherein all holiness primarily and chiefly consists, and God's own holiness must primarily consist in the love of himself.

And if God's holiness consists in love to himself, then it will imply an approbation of the esteem and love of him in others. For a being that loves himself, necessarily loves love to himself. If holiness in God consist chiefly in love to himself, holiness in the creature must chiefly consist in love to him. And if God loves holiness in himself, he must love it in the creature.

Virtue, by such of the late philosophers as seem to be in chief repute, is placed in public affection, or general benevolence. And if the essence of virtue lies primarily in this, then the love of virtue itself is virtuous no otherwise, than as it is implied in, or arises from, this public affection, or extensive benevolence of mind. Because if a man truly loves the public, he necessarily loves love to the public.

Now therefore, for the same reason, if universal benevolence in the highest sense, be the same thing with benevolence to the Divine Being, who is in

effect universal Being it will follow, that love to virtue itself is no otherwise virtuous, than as it is implied in, or arises from, love to the Divine Being. Consequently, God's own love to virtue is implied in love to himself: and is virtuous no otherwise than as it arises from love to himself. So that God's virtuous disposition, appearing in love to holiness in the creature, is to be resolved into the same thing with love to himself. And consequently, whereinsoever he makes virtue his end, he makes himself his end. In fine, God being as it were an all-comprehending Being, all his moral perfections — his holiness, justice, grace, and benevolence — are some way or other to be resolved into a supreme and infinite regard to himself; and if so, it will be easy to suppose that it becomes him to make himself his supreme and last end in his works.

I would here observe, by the way, that if any insist that it becomes God to love and take delight in the virtue of his creatures for its own sake, in such a manner as not to love it from regard to himself; this will contradict a former objection against God taking pleasure in communications of himself; viz. that inasmuch as God is perfectly independent and self-sufficient, therefore all his happiness and pleasure consists in the enjoyment of himself. So that if the same persons make both objections, they must be inconsistent with themselves.

**2.** I would observe, that it is not unworthy of God to take pleasure in that which is in itself fit and amiable, even in those that are infinitely below him. If there be infinite grace and condescension in it, yet these are not unworthy of God, but infinitely to his honor and glory.

They who insist, that God's own glory was not an ultimate end of his creation of the world; but the happiness of his creatures: do it under a color of exalting God's benevolence to his creatures. But if his love to them be so great, and he so highly values them as to look upon them worthy to be his end in all his great works, as they suppose; they are not consistent with themselves, am supposing that God has so little value for their lose and esteem. For as the nature of love, especially great love, causes him that loves to value the esteem of the person beloved, so, that God should take pleasure in the creature's just love and esteem, will follow from God's love both to himself and to his creatures. If he esteem and love himself, he must approve of esteem and love to himself, and



disapprove the contrary. And if he loves and values the creature, he must value and take delight in their neutral love and esteem.

**3.** As to what is alleged, that it is unworthy of great men to be governed in their conduct and achievements by a regard to the applause of the populace; I would observe, What makes their applause worthy of so little regard, is their ignorance, giddiness, and injustice. The applause of the multitude very frequently is not founded on any just view of things, but on humor, mistake, folly, and unreasonable affections. Such applause deserves to be regarded.-But it is not beneath a man of great dignity and wisdom, to value the wise and just esteem of others, however inferior to him. The contrary, instead of being an expression of greatness of mind, would show a haughty and mean spirit. It is such an esteem in his creatures, that God regards; for, such an esteem only is fit and amiable in itself.

**Object. 4.** To suppose that God makes himself his ultimate end in the creation of the world, derogates from the freeness of his goodness, in his beneficence to his creatures; and from their obligations to gratitude for the good communicated. For if God, in communicating his fullness, makes himself, and not the creatures, his end; then what good he does, he does for himself, and not for them; for his sake, and not theirs.

**Answer.** God and the creature, in the emanation of the divine fullness, are not properly set in opposition; or made the opposite parts of a disjunction. Nor ought God's glory and the creature's good, to be viewed as if they were properly and entirely distinct, in the objection. This supposeth, that God having respect to his glory, in the communication of good to his creatures, are things altogether different: that God communicating his fullness for himself, and his doing it for them, are things standing in a proper disjunction and opposition. Whereas, if we were capable of more perfect views of God and divine things, which are so much above us, it probably would appear very clear, that the matter is quite otherwise: and that these things, instead of appearing entirely distinct, are implied one in the other. God is seeking his glory, seeking the good of his creatures; because the emanation of his glory (which he seeks and delights in, as he delights in himself and his own eternal glory) implies the communicated excellence and happiness of his creatures. And in

communicating his fullness for them, he does it for himself; because their good, which he seeks, is so much in union and communion with himself. God is their good. Their excellency and happiness is nothing, but the emanation and expression of God's glory: God in seeking their glory and happiness, seeks himself: and in seeking himself, i.e. himself diffused and expressed, (which he delights in, as he delights in his own beauty and fullness,) he seeks their glory and happiness.

This will better appear, if we consider the degree and manner in which he aimed at the creature's excellency and happiness in creating the world; viz. during the whole of its designed eternal duration; in greater and greater nearness, and strictness of union with himself, in his own glory and happiness, in constant progression, through all eternity. As the creature's good was viewed, when God made the world, with respect to its whole duration, and eternally progressive union to, and communion with him: so the creature must be viewed as in infinitely strict union of himself. In this view it appears, that God's respect to the creature, in the whole, unites with his respect to himself. Both regards are like two lines, which at the beginning appear separate, but finally meet in one, both being directed to the same center. And as to the good of the creature itself, in its whole duration and infinite progression, it must be viewed as infinite; and as coming nearer and nearer to the same thing in its infinite fullness. The nearer anything comes to infinite, the nearer it comes to identity with God. And if any good, as viewed by God, is beheld as infinite, it cannot be viewed as a distinct thing from God's own infinite glory.

The apostle's discourse of the great love of Christ to men, (<sup>415</sup>Ephesians 5:25, etc.) leads us thus to think of the love of Christ to his church; as considering with his love to himself, by virtue of the strict union of the church with him. "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it-that he might present it to himself a glorious church. So ought men to love their wives, as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself-even as the lord loved the church; for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Now I apprehend, that there is nothing in Gods disposition to communicate of his own fullness to the creatures, that at all derogates from the excellence of it, or the creature's obligation.

God's disposition to cause his own infinite fullness to flow forth, is not the less properly called his goodness, because the good he communicates is what he delights in, as he delights in his own glory. The creature has no less benefit by it; neither has such disposition less of a direct tendency to the creature's benefit. Nor is this disposition in God, to diffuse his own good, the less excellent, because it is implied in his love to himself. For his love to himself does not imply it any otherwise, but is as it implies a love to whatever is worthy and excellent. The emanation of God's glory is in itself worthy and excellent, and so God delights in it; and this delight is implied in his love to his own fullness; because that is the fountain, the sum and comprehension of everything that is excellent. Nor does God's inclination to communicate good from regard to himself, or delight in his own glory, at all diminish the freeness in his beneficence. This will appear, if he consider particularly, in what ways doing good to others from self-love, may be consistent with the freeness of beneficence. And I conceive there are only these two ways,

1. When any does good to another from confined self-love, which is opposite to a general benevolence. This kind of self-love is properly called selfishness. In some sense, the most benevolent, generous person in the world, seeks his own happiness in doing good to others; because he places his happiness in their good. His mind is so enlarged as to take them, as it were, unto himself. Thus when they are happy, he feels it; he partakes with them, and is happy in their happiness. This is as far from being inconsistent with the freeness of benevolence, that, on the contrary, free benevolence and kindness consists in it. The most free benevolence that can be in men, is doing good, not from a confined selfishness, but from a disposition of free benevolence, or love to begin in general.

But now, with respect to Divine Being, there is no such thing as confined selfishness in him, or a love to himself opposite to general benevolence. It is impossible, because he comprehends all entity, and all excellence, in his own essence. The eternal and infinite being, is in effect, being in general; and comprehends universal existence. God, in his benevolence to his creatures, cannot have his heart enlarged, in such a manner as to take in beings who are originally out of himself, distinct and independent. This cannot be in an infinite Being, who exists alone from eternity. But he, from

his goodness, as it were enlarges himself in an more excellent and divine manner. This is by communicating and diffusing himself; and so, instead of finding, he makes objects of his benevolence-not by taking what he finds distinct from himself, and so partaking of their good, and being happy in them, and making them partake of him, and then rejoicing in himself expressed in them, and communicated in them.

2. Another thing, in doing good to others from self-love that derogates from the freeness of the goodness, is acting from dependence of them for the good we need or desire, so that, in our beneficence, we are not self-moved, but as it were constrained by something without ourselves. But it has been particularly shown already, that God making himself his end, argues no dependence; but is consistent with absolute independence and self- sufficiency.

And I would here observe, that there is something in that this position to communicate goodness, that shows God to be independent and self-moved in it, in a manner that is peculiar, and above the beneficence of the creatures. Creatures even the most excellent, are not independent and self-moved in their goodness; but in all its exercises they are excited by some object they find; something appearing good, or in some respect worthy of regard, presents itself, and moves their kindness. But God, being all, and alone is absolutely self-moved. The exercises of his communicative disposition are absolutely from within him-self; all that is good and worthy in the object, and its very being, proceeding from the over flowing of this fullness.

These things show that the supposition of God making himself his ultimate end, does not all diminish the creature's obligation to gratitude for communications of good received. For if it lessen its obligation, it must be on one of the following accounts. Either, that the creature has not so much benefit by it; or, that the disposition it flows from, is not proper goodness, not having so direct a tendency to the creature's benefit, or, that the disposition is not so virtuous and excellent in its kind, or, that the beneficence is not so free. But it has been observed, that none of these things take place, with regard to that disposition, which has been supposed to have excited God to create the world.

I confess there is a degree of indistinctness and obscurity in the close consideration of such subjects, and a great imperfection in the expressions we use concerning them arising unavoidably from the infinite sublimity of the subject, and the incomprehensibleness of those things that are divine. Hence revelation is the surest guide in these matters: and what that teaches shall in the next place be considered. Nevertheless, the endeavors used to discover what the voice of reason is, so far as it can go, may serve to prepare the way, by obviating cavils insisted on by many; and to satisfy us; that what the word of God says of the matter is not unreasonable.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEREIN IT IS INQUIRED, WHAT IS TO BE LEARNED FROM HOLY SCRIPTURES, CONCERNING GOD'S LAST END IN THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.

#### SECTION 1

*The Scriptures represent God as making himself his,  
own last end in the creation of the world.*

IT is manifest, that the Scriptures speak, on all occasions as though God made himself his end in all his works and as though the same being, who is the first cause of all things, were the supreme and last end of all things. Thus in <sup><340></sup>Isaiah 44:6. "Thus saith the Lord, the king of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts, I am the first, I also am the last, and besides me there is no God." Chap <sup><382></sup>48:12. "I am the first and I am the last." <sup><608></sup>Revelation 1:8. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Verse 11. "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." Verse 17. "I am the first and the last." Chapter <sup><620></sup>21:6. "And he said unto me, it is done; I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." Chapter <sup><623></sup>22:13. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

When God is so often spoken of as the last as well as first the end as well as the beginning, it is implied, that as he is the first, efficient cause and fountain, from whence all things originate; so, he is the last, final cause for which they are made; the final term to which they all tend in their ultimate issue. This seems to be the most natural import of these expressions; and is confirmed by other parallel passages; as <sup><613></sup>Romans 11:36. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things." <sup><506></sup>Colossians 1:16. "For by him were all shines created, that are in heaven, and that are m earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him." <sup><801></sup>Hebrews 2:10

“For it became him, by whom are all things, and for whom are all things.”  
And in Proverbs 16 4. it is said expressly,

**“The Lord hath made all things for himself”**

And the manner is observable, in which God is said to be the last, to whom, and for whom, are all things. It is evidently spoken of as a meet and suitable thing, a branch of his glory; a meet prerogative of the great, infinite, and eternal Being; a thing becoming the dignity of him who is infinitely above all other beings; from whom all things are, and by whom they consist; and in comparison with whom all other things are as nothing.

Wherein same positions are advanced concerning a just method of arguing in this affair, from what we find in the Holy Scriptures.

We have seen, that the Scriptures speak of the creation of the world as being for God, as its end. What remains therefore to be inquired into, is, which way do the Scripture represent God as making himself his end? It is evident, that God does not make his existence or being the end of the creation; which cannot be supposed without great absurdity. His existence cannot be conceived of but as prior to any of God’s designs. Therefore he cannot create the world to the end that he may have existence or may have certain attributes and perfections. Nor do the Scriptures give the least intimation of any such thing. Therefore, what divine effect, or what in relation to God, is that which the Scripture teacheth us to be the end he aimed at, in his works of creation, and in designing which he makes himself his end?

In order to a right understanding of the Scripture doctrine, and drawing just inferences from what we find said in the word of God, relative to this matter, and so to open the way to a true and definite answer to the above inquiry, I could lay down the following positions.

**Pos. 1.** That which appears to be God’s ultimate end in his works of providence in general, we may justly suppose to be his last end in the work of creation. This appears from what was observed before, under the fifth particular of the introduction, which I need not now repeat.

**Pos. 2.** When any thing appears, by the Scripture, to be the last end of some of the works of God, that thing appears to be the result of God’s

works in general And although it be not mentioned as the end of those works, but only of some of them; yet as nothing appears peculiar in the nature of the case, that renders it a fit, beautiful and valuable result of those particular works, more than of the rest; we may justly infer that thing to be the last end of those other works also. For we must suppose it to be on account of the value of the effect, that it is made the end of those works of which it is expressly spoken as the end; and this effect, by the supposition, being equally, and in like manner, the result of the work, and of the same value, it is but reasonable to suppose, that it is the end of the work, of which it is naturally the consequence in one case as well as in another.

**Pos. 3.** The ultimate end of God in creating the world being also the last end of all his works of providence, we may well presume that, if there be any particular thing more frequently mentioned in Scripture, as God's ultimate end of his works of providence, than any thing else, this is the ultimate end of God's works in general; and so the end of the work of creation.

**Pos. 4.** That which appears, from the word of God, to be his ultimate end with respect to the moral world, or the intelligent part of the system, that is God's last end in the work of creation in general. Because it is evident from the constitution of the world itself, as well as from the word of God, that the moral part is the end of all the rest of the creation. The inanimate, unintelligent part, is made for the rational, as much as a house is prepared for the inhabitant. And it is evident also from reason and the word of God, that it is for the sake of some moral good in them, that moral agents are made, and the world made for them. But it is further evident, that whatsoever is the last end of that part of creation, which is the end of all the rest, and for which all the rest of the world was made midst be the last end of the whole. If all the other parts of a watch are made for the hand of the watch, in order to move that alright, then it will follow, that the last end of the hand is the last end of the whole machine.

**Pos. 5.** That which appears from the Scripture to be God's ultimate end in the chief works of his providence we may well determine is God's last end in creating the world. For, as observed, we may justly



infer the end of a thing from the use of it. We must justly infer the end of a clock, a charms, a ship, or water-engine, from the main use to which it is applied. But God's providence is his use of the world he has made. And if there be any works of providence which are evidently God's main works, herein appears and consists the main use that God makes of the creation. — From these two last positions we may infer the next, viz.

**Pos. 6.** Whatever appears, by the Scriptures, to be God's ultimate end in his main works of Providence towards the moral world, that we may justly infer to be the last end of the creation of the world. Because, as was just now observed, the moral world is the chief part of the creation, and the end of the rest; and God's last end in creating that part of the world, must be his last end in the creation of the whole. And it appears, by the last position, that the end of God's main works of Providence towards moral beings, or the main use to which he puts them, shows the last end for which he has made them; and consequential the main end for which he has made the whole world.

**Pos. 7.** That which divine revelation shows to be God's ultimate end with respect to that part of the moral world which are good, in their being, and in their being good, this we must suppose to be the last end of God's creating the world. For It has been already shown, that God's last end in the moral part of creation must be the end of the whole. But his end in that part of the moral world that are good, must be the last end for which he has made the moral world in general. For therein consists the goodness of a thing, its fitness to answer its end, at least this must be goodness in the eyes of its author. For goodness in his eyes, is its agreeableness to his mind. But an agreeableness to his mind, in what he makes for some entail or use, must be an agreeableness or fitness to that end. For his end in this case is his mind. That which he chiefly aims at in that thing, is chiefly his mind with respect to that thing. And therefore, they are good moral agents who are fitted for the end for which God has made moral agents. And consequently, that which is the chief end to which good created moral agents, in being good, are fitted, this is the chief, end of the moral part of the creation, and consequently of the creation in general.

**Pos. 8.** That which the word of God requires the intelligent and moral part of the world to seek, as their ultimate and highest end, that we have reason to suppose is the last end for which God has made them, and consequently, by position fourth, the last end for which he has made the whole world. A main difference between the intelligent and moral parts, and the rest of the world, lies in this, that the former are capable of knowing their Creator, and the end for which he made them, and capable of article complying with his design in their creation, and promoting it while other creatures cannot promote the design of their creation, only passively and eventually. And seeing they are capable of knowing the end for which their author has made them, it is doubtless their duty to fall in with it. Their wills ought to comply with the will of the Creator in this respect, in mainly see king the same, as their last end which God mainly seeks as their last end. This must be the law of nature and reason with respect to them. And we must suppose that God's revealed law, and the law of nature, agree; and that his will, as a lawgiver, must agree with his will as a Creator. Therefore we justly infer, that the same thing which God's revealed law requires intelligent creatures to seek, as their last and greatest end, that God their Creator had made their last end, and so the end of the creation of the world.

**Pos. 9.** We may well suppose, that what is in Holy Scripture, stated as the main end of the grandness of the moral world-so that the respect and relation their goodness has to that end, is what chiefly makes it valuable and desirable-is God's ultimate end in the creation of the moral world; and so, by position the fourth, of the whole world. For the end of the goodness of a thing, is the end of the thing.

**Pos. 10.** That which persons who are described in Scripture as approved saints, and set forth as examples of piety, sought as their last and highest end, in the instances of their good and approved behavior, that we must suppose, was what they ought to seek as their; last end: and consequential by the preceding position, was the same with God, last end in the creation of the world.

**Pos. 11.** What appears by the word of God to be that end, in the desires of which the souls of the best, and in their best frames, most naturally and directly exercise their goodness, and in expressing their

desire of this end, they do most properly and directly express their respect to God we may well suppose that end to be the chief and ultimate end of a spirit of piety and goodness, and God's chief end in making the moral world, and so the whole world. For, doubtless, the most direct tendency of a spirit of true goodness, in the best part of the moral world, is to the chief end of goodness, and so the chief end of the creation of the moral world. And in what else can the spirit of the true respect and friendship to God be expressed by way of desire, than in desires of the same. But, which God himself chiefly and ultimately desires in making them and all other things.

**Pos. 12.** Since the Holy Scriptures teach us that Jesus Christ is the Head of the moral world, and especially of all the good part of it; the chief of God's servants, appointed to be the Head of his saints and angels, and set forth as the chief and most perfect pattern and example of goodness; we may well suppose, by the foregoing positions that what he sought as his last end, was God's last end in the creation of the world.

## SECTION 3

*Particular texts of Scripture, that show that Gods glory is an ultimate end of the creation.*

**1.** WHAT God says in his word, naturally leads us to suppose, that the way in which he makes himself his end in his work or works, which he does for his own sake, is in making history his end.

Thus ~~381~~ Isaiah 48:11.

“For my own sake, even for my own sake, will I do it. For how should my name be polluted; and I will not give my glory to another.”

Which is as much as to say, I will obtain my end; I will not forego my glory; another shall not take this prize from me. It is pretty evident here, that God's name and his glory which seem to intend the same thing, as shall be observed more particularly afterwards, are spoken of as his last

end in the great work mentioned; not as an inferior, subordinate end, subservient to the interest of others. The words are emphatical. The emphasis and repetition constrain us to understand, that what God does is ultimately for his own sake: “For my own sake, even for my own sake will I do it.”

So the words of the apostle, in <sup>401</sup>Romans 11:36. naturally lead us to suppose, that the way in which all things are to God, is in being for his glory. “For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” In the preceding context, the apostle observes the marvellous disposals of divine wisdom, for causing all things to be to him, in their final issue and result, as they are from him at first, and governed by him. His discourse shows how God contrived this and brought it to pass, by setting up the kingdom of Christ in the world; leaving the Jews, and calling the Gentiles; including what he would hereafter do in bringing in the Jews, with the fullness of the Gentiles; with the circumstances of these wonderful works, so as greatly to show his justice and his goodness, to magnify his grace, and manifest the sovereignty and freeness of it, and the absolute dependence of all on him. And then, in the four last verses, he breaks out into a most pathetic exclamation, expressing his great admiration of the depth of divine wisdom, in the steps he takes for attaining his end, and causing all things to be to him: and finally, he expresses a joyful consent to God’s excellent design in all to glorify himself, in saying, “to him be glory for ever;” as much as to say, as all things are so wonderfully ordered for his glory, so let him have the glory of all, for evermore.

**2.** The glory of God is spoken of in Holy Scripture as the last end for which those parts of the moral world that are good were made.

Thus in <sup>280</sup>Isaiah 43:6, 7. “I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back, bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea I have made him.” Again, <sup>280</sup>Isaiah 60:21

“Thy people also shall be all righteous. They shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hand, that I may be glorified.”

Also chapter <sup>2018</sup>61:3. “That they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that be must be glorified.”

In these place we see, that the glory of God is spoken of as the end of God’s saints, the end for which he makes them, i. e. either gives them being, or gives them a being as saints, or both. It is said, that God has made and formed them to be his sons and daughters, for his own glory: That they are trees of his planting, the work of his hands, as trees of righteousness, that he might be glorified. And we consider the words, especially as taken with the context in each of the places, it will appear quite natural to suppose, that God’s glory is here spoken of only as an end interior and subordinate to the happiness of God’s people. On the contrary, they will appear rather as promises of glorified God’s people happy, that God therein might be.

So is that in Isaiah 43 as we shall see plainly, if we take the whole that is said from the beginning of the chapter, verse <sup>2018</sup>1-7. It is wholly a promise of a future, great, and wonderful work of God’s power and grace, delivering his people from all misery, and making them exceeding happy; and then the end of all, or the sum of God’s design in all, is declared to be Gods own glory. “I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine. — I will be with thee. — When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. — Thou art precious and honorable in my sight. I will give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not, I am with thee — I will bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory.”

So <sup>2018</sup>Isaiah 60:21. The whole chapter is made up of no thing but promises of future, exceeding happiness to God’s church; but, for brevity’s sake, let us take only the two preceding verses 19, 20. “The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no snore go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself, for the Lord shall be shine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands;” and then the end of all is added, “that I might be guided.” All the preceding

promises are plainly mentioned as so many parts, of constituents, of the great and exceeding happiness of God's people; and God's glory is mentioned, as the sum of his design in this happiness.

In like manner is the promise in chapter <sup>2308</sup>61:3. "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them Beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." The work of God promised to be effected, is plainly an accomplishment of the joy, gladness and happiness of God's people, instead of their mourning and sorrow; and the end in which God's design in this work is obtained and summed up, is his glow. This proves, by the seventh position, that God's glory is the end of the creation.

The same thing may be argued from <sup>2431</sup>Jeremiah 13:11.

"For as a girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel, and the whole house of Judah, saith the Lord: that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear."

That is, God sought to make them to be his own holy people; or, as the apostle expresses it, his peculiar people, zealous of good works that so they might be a glory to him; as girdles were used in those days for ornament and beauty, and as badges of dignity and honor.

Now when God speaks of himself, as seeking a peculiar and holy people for himself, to be for his glory and honor as a man that seeks an ornament and badge of honor for his glory, it is not natural to understand it merely of a subordinate end, as though God had no respect to himself in it; but only the good of others. If so, the comparison would not be pastoral; for men are commonly wont to seek their own glory and honor in adorning themselves, and dignifying themselves with badges of honor.

The same doctrine seems to be taught, <sup>4005</sup>Ephesians 1:5. "Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace." — And the same may be argued from <sup>2342</sup>Isaiah 44:23. "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, he hath glorified himself in Israel." And chapter

49:3. “Thou art my servant Jacob, in whom I will on glorified.” <sup><397></sup>John 17:10. “And all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them.” <sup><398></sup>2 Thessalonians 1:10. “When he shall come to be glorified in his saints.” Verse 11, 12. “Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of his calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of God and our Lord Jesus Christ.”

**3.** The Scripture speaks of God’s glory, as his ultimate end of the goodness to the moral part of the creation, and that end, in relation to which chiefly the value of their virtue consists.

As in <sup><399></sup>Philippians 1:10, 11. “That ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere, and without offense, till the day of Christ: being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.” Here the apostle shows how the fruits of righteousness in them are valuable, and how they answer their end, viz. in being “by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God.” <sup><400></sup>John 15:8. “Herein in my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit. “Signifying, that by this means it is that the great end of religion is to be answered. And in <sup><401></sup>1 Peter 4:11. the apostle directs the Christians to regulate all their religious performances with reference to that one end. “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God: if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified; to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

And, from time to time, embracing and practicing true religion, and repenting of sin, and turning to holiness, is expressed by glorifying God, as though that were the sum and end of the whole matter.

“And in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand; and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.”  
(<sup><402></sup>Revelation 11:13)

So <sup><403></sup>Revelation 14:6, 7. “And I say, another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him.” As

though this were the sum and end of that virtue and religion which was the grand design of preaching the gospel, every where through the world.

“And repented not to give him glory.” (~~661~~ Revelation 16:9)

Which is as much as to say, they did not forsake their sins and turn to true religion, that God might receive that which is the great end he seeks, in the religion he requires of men. (See to the same purpose, ~~4122~~ Psalm 22:21-23.

~~2369~~ Isaiah 66:19. ~~2315~~ 24:15. ~~2318~~ 25:3. ~~2425~~ Jeremiah 12:15,16. ~~2163~~ Daniel 5:23. ~~6156~~ Romans 15:5, 6.)

And as the exercise of true religion and virtue in Christians is summarily expressed by their glorifying God, so, when the good influence of tints on others is spoken of, it is expressed in the same manner.

“Let your light so shine before men, that others seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

(~~4156~~ Matthew 5:16)

“Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak evil against you as evil-doers, they may, by your good works which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.” (~~4102~~ 1 Peter 2:12)

That the ultimate end of moral goodness, or righteousness, is answered in God’s glory being attained, is supposed in the objection which the apostle makes, or supposes some will make,

“For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why am I judged as a sinner?” (~~881~~ Romans 3:7)

he seeing the great end of righteousness is answered by my sin, in God being glorified, why is my sin condemned and punished? and why is not my vice equivalent to virtue?

And the glory of God is spoken of as that wherein consists the value and end of particular graces. As of faith. Romans in 20. “He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief: but was strong in faith, giving glory to God.” ~~5100~~ Philippians 2:2. “That every tongue should confess that Jesus is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Of repentance. Joshua 6 19. “Give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession



unto him.” Of charity. <sup><418></sup>2 Corinthians 8:19. “With this grace, which is administered by us, to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind. Thanksgiving and praise. <sup><417></sup>Luke 7:18. “There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.” <sup><412></sup>Psalms 1:23. “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God. “Concerning which last place may be observed, that God seems to say this to such as supposed, in their religious performances, that the end of all religion was to glorify God. They supposed they did this in the best manner, in offering a multitude of sacrifices; but God corrects their mistake, and informs them, that this grand end of religion is not attained this way, but in offering the more spiritual sacrifices of praise and a holy conversation.

In fine, the words of the apostle in <sup><410></sup>1 Corinthians 6:20. are worthy of particular notice. “Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are his. “Here, not only is glorifying God spoken of, as what summarily comprehends the end of religion, and of Christ redeeming us; but the apostle urges, that inasmuch as we are not our own, we ought not to act as if we were our own, but as God’s; and should not use the members of our bodies, or faculties of our souls, for ourselves, but for God, as making him our end. And he expresses the way in which we are to make God our end, viz. in making his glory our end. “Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are his. “Here it cannot be pretended that though Christians are indeed required to make God’s glory their end; yet it is but as a subordinate end, as subservient to their own happiness; for then, in acting chiefly and ultimately for their own selves, they would use themselves more as their own than as God’s, which is directly contrary to the design of the apostle’s exhortation, and the argument he is upon; which is, that we should give ourselves as it were away from ourselves to, God, and use ourselves as his, and not our own acting for his sake, and not our own sakes. Thus it is evident, by position the ninth, that the glory of God is the last end for which he created the war.

**4.** There are some things in the word of God which lead us to suppose, that it require of men that they should desire and seek God’s glory, as their highest and last end in what they do.

As particularly, from <sup><400></sup>1 Corinthians 10:30. “Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, do all to the glory of God” And <sup><400></sup>1 Peter 4:11. — “That God in all things may be glorified.” And this may be argued, that Christ requires his followers should desire and seek God’s glory in the first place, and above ad things else, from that prayer which he gave his disciples, as the pattern and rule for the direction of his followers in their prayers. The first petition of which is, Hallowed be thy name. Which in scripture language is the same with glorified be thy name; as is manifest from <sup><400></sup>Leviticus 10:3. <sup><400></sup>Ezekiel 28:22. and many other places. Now our last and highest end is doubtless what should be first in our desires, and consequently first in our prayers; and therefore, we may argue, that since Christ directs that God’s glory should be first in our prayers, that therefore this is our last end. This is further confirmed by the conclusion of the Lord’s prayer, For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory. Which, as it stands in connection with the rest of the prayer, implies, that we desire and ask all the things mentioned in each petition with a subordination, and in subservience, to the dominion and glory of God; in which all our desires ultimately terminate, as their last end. God’s glory and dominion are the two first things mentioned in the prayer, and are the subject of the first half of the prayer; and they are the two last things mentioned in the same prayer, in its conclusion. God’s glory is the Alpha and Omega in the prayer. From these things we may argue according to position the eighth. that God’s glory is the last end of the creation.

**5.** The glory of God appears, by the account given in Scripture, to be that event, in the earnest desires of which, and in their delight in which, the best part of the moral world, and when in their best frames, most naturally express the direct tendency of the spirit of true goodness, the virtuous and pious affections of their heart.

This is the way in which the holy apostles, from time to time, gave vent to the ardent exercises of their piety, and breathed forth their regard to the Supreme Being. <sup><400></sup>Romans 11:36. “To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” Chapter <sup><400></sup>16:27. “To God only wise, be glory, through Jesus Christ, for ever. Amen.” <sup><400></sup>Galatians 1:4, 5. “Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world according to the will of God and our Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

2 Timothy 4:18. “And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me to his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” Ephesians 3:21. “Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end.” Hebrews 13:21. — “Through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” Philippians 4:20. “Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” 2 Peter 3:18. “To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.” Jude 25. “To the only wise God our Savior be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.” Revelation 1:5, 6. “Unto him that loved us, etc. — to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

It was in this way that holy David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, vented the ardent tendencies and desires of his pious heart. 1 Chronicles 16:28, 29. “Give unto the Lord ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength: give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name. “We have much the same expressions again, Psalm 29:1, 2 and 69:7, 8. See also, Psalm 57:5. 72:18, 19. 115:1. So the whole church of God through all parts of the earth, Isaiah 13:10-12. In like manner the saints and angels in heaven express the piety of their hearts, Revelation 4:9, 11-14. and 7:12. This is the event that the hearts of the seraphim especially exult in, as appears by Isaiah 6:2, 3. “Above it stood the seraphim — And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts the whole earth is full of his glory.” So at the birth of Christ, Luke 2:14. “Glory to God in the highest,” etc.

It is manifest that these holy persons in earth and heaven, in thus expressing their desires of the glory of God, have respect to it, not merely as a subordinate end, but as that which is in itself valuable in the highest degree. It would be absurd to say, that in these ardent exclamations, they are only giving vent to their vehement benevolence to their fellow-creatures, and expressing their earnest desire that God might be glorified, that so his subjects may be made happy by that means. It is evident, it is not so much their love, either to themselves, or their fellow-creatures, which they express, as their exalted and supreme regard to the most high and infinitely glorious Being. Where the church says, Not unto us. not unto us, O Jehovah, but to thy name give glory, it would be absurd to say, that she only desires that God may have glory, as a necessary or

convenient means of their own advancement and felicity. From these things it appears by the eleventh position, that God's glory is the end of the creation.

**6.** The Scripture leads us to suppose, that Christ sought God's glory, as his highest and last end.

“He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory, but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.” (~~John~~ John 7:18)

When Christ says, he did not seek his own glory, we cannot reasonably understand him, that he had no regard to his own glory, even the glory of the human nature, for the glory of that nature was part of the reward promised him, and of the joy set before him. But we must understand him, that this was not his ultimate aim, it was not the end that chiefly governed his conduct: and therefore, when in opposition to this, in the latter part of the sentence, he says, “But he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true,” etc. It is natural from the antithesis to understand him, that this was his ultimate aim his supreme governing end.

~~John~~ John 12:27, 28. “Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour, Father, glorify thy name.” Christ was now going to Jerusalem, and expected in a few days there to be crucified: and the prospect of his last sufferings, in this near approach, was very terrible to him. Under this distress of mind, he supports himself with a prospect of what would be the consequence of his sufferings, viz. God's glory. Now, it is the end that supports the agent in any difficult work that he undertakes, and above all others, his ultimate and supreme end; for this is above all others valuable in his eyes; and so, sufficient to countervail the difficulty of the means. That end, which is in itself agreeable and sweet to him, and which ultimately terminates his desires, is the center of rest and support; and so must be the fountain and sum of all the delight and comfort he has in his prospects, with respect to his work. Now Christ has his soul straitened and distressed with a view of that which was infinitely the most difficult part of his work, and which was just at hand. Now certainly, if his mind seeks support in the conflict from a view of his end, it must most naturally repair to the highest end, which is the proper fountain of all support in this case. We may well

suppose, that when his soul conflicts with the most extreme difficulties, it would resort to the idea of his supreme and ultimate end, the fountain of all the support and comfort he has in the work.

The same thing, Christ seeking the glory of God as his ultimate end, is manifest by what he says, when he comes yet nearer to the hour of his last sufferings, in that remarkable prayer, the last he ever made with his disciples, on the evening before his crucifixion; wherein he expresses the sum of his aims and desires. His first words are, “Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.” As this is his first request, we may suppose it to be his supreme request and desire, and what he ultimately aimed at in all. If we consider what follows to the end, all the rest that is said in the prayer, seems to be but an amplification of this great request. — On the whole, I think it is pretty manifest, that Jesus Christ sought the glory of God as his highest and last end, and that therefore, by position twelfth, this was God’s last end in the creation of the world.

**7.** It is manifest from Scripture, that God’s glory is the last end of that great work of providence, the work of redemption by Jesus Christ.

This is manifest from what is just now observed, of its being the end ultimately sought by Jesus Christ the Redeemer. And if we further consider the texts mentioned in the proof of that, and take notice of the context, it will be very evident, that it was what Christ sought as his last end, in that great work which he came into the world upon viz. to procure redemption for his people. It is manifest that Christ professes to <sup><R178></sup>John 7:18 that he did not seek his own glory in what he did, but the glory of him that sent him. He means, in the work of his ministry the work he performed, and which he came into the world to perform, which is the work of redemption. And with respect to that text, <sup><R127></sup>John 12:27, 28. it has been already observed, that Christ comforted himself in the view of the extreme difficulty of his work, in the prospect of the highest, ultimate, and most excellent end of that work, which he set his heart most upon, and delighted most in.

And in the answer that the Father made him from heaven at that time, in the latter part of the same verse,

“I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” (John 12:28)

The meaning plainly is, that God had glorified his name in what Christ had done, in the work he sent him upon; and would glorify it again, and to a greater degree, in what he should further do, and in the success thereof. Christ shows that he understood it thus, in what he says upon it, when the people took notice of it, wondering at the voice, some saying, that it thundered, others, that an angel spake to him. Christ says, “This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.” And then he says, (exulting in the prospect of this glorious end and success,) “Now is the judgment of this world; now is the prince of this world cast out; and I, if I be lift up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” In the success of the same work of redemption, he places his own glory, as was observed before.

John 12:23, 24. “The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, it abideth alone but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”

So it is manifest, that when he seeks his own and his Father’s glory, in that prayer, he seeks it as the end of that great work he came into the world upon, and which he is about to finish in his death. What follows through the whole prayer, plainly shows this; particularly the 4th and 5th verses. “I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with shine own self.” Here it is pretty plain, that declaring to his Father he had glorified him on earth, and finished the work given him to do, meant that he had finished the work which God gave him to do for this end, that he might be glorified. He had now finished that foundation that he came into the world to lay for his glory. He had laid a foundation for his Father’s obtaining his will, and the utmost that he designed. By which it is manifest, that God’s glory was the utmost of his design, or his ultimate end in this great work.

And it is manifest, by John 13:31, 32. that the glory of the Father, and his own glory, are what Christ exulted in, in the prospect of his approaching sufferings, when Judas was gone out to betray him, as the end his heart has mainly set upon, and supremely delighted in. “Therefore when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.”

That the glory of God is the highest and last end of the work of redemption, is confirmed by the song of the angels at Christ's birth.

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will toward men.” (☞ Luke 2:14)

It must be supposed that they knew what was God's last end in sending Christ into the world: and that in their rejoicing on the occasion, their minds would most rejoice in that which was most valuable and glorious in it, which must consist in its relation to that which was its chief and ultimate end. And we may further suppose, that the thing which chiefly engaged their minds was most glorious and joyful in the affair; and would be first in that song which was to express the sentiments of their minds, and exultation of their hearts.

The glory of the Father and the Son is spoken of as the end of the work of redemption, in ☞ Philippians 2:6-11. (very much in the same manner as m ☞ John 12:23, 23. and ☞ 13:31, 32, and ☞ 17:1, 4, 5.) “Who being in the forth of God, — made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, etc. that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow — and every tongue confess, that Jesus is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” So God's glory, or the praise of his glory, is spoken of as the end of the work of redemption, in ☞ Ephesians 1:3, etc. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him. Having predestinated us to the adoption of children, to the praise of the pilot of his grace.” And in the continuance of the same discourse, concerning the redemption of Christ God's glory is once and again mentioned as the great end of all.

Several things belonging to that great redemption, are mentioned in the following verses: Such as God's great wisdom in it, verse 8 The clearness of light granted through Christ, verse 9. God's gathering together in one, all things in heaven and earth in Christ, verse 10. God's giving the Christians that were first converted to the Christian faith from among the Jews, an

interest in this great redemption, verse 11. Then the great end is added, verse 12.

“That we should be to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ.” And then is mentioned the bestowing of the same great salvation on the Gentiles, in its beginning first fruits in the world, and in completing it in another world, in the two next verses. And then the same great end is added again. “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.” The same thing is expressed much in the same manner, in <sup>2404</sup>2 Corinthians 4:14, 15. — “He which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundance of grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God.”

The same is spoken of as the end of the work of redemption in the Old Testament, <sup>2399</sup>Psalms 79:9. “Help us O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name deliver us and purge away our sins, for thy name’s sake.” So in the prophecies of the redemption of Jesus Christ.

“Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains: O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel!” (<sup>2342</sup>Isaiah 44:23)

Thus the works of creation are called upon to rejoice at the attaining of the same end, by the redemption of God’s people, that the angels rejoiced at when Christ was born. See also <sup>2380</sup>Isaiah 48:10, 11. and <sup>2345</sup>Isaiah 49:3.

Thus it is evident, that the glory of God is the ultimate end of the work of redemption; which is the chief work of providence towards the moral world, as is abundantly manifest from Scripture. For the whole universe is put in subjection to Jesus Christ; all heaven and earth, angels and men, are subject to him, as executing this office: and are put under him to that end, that all things may be ordered by him, in subservience to the great designs of his redemption. All power, as he says, is given to him, in heaven and in earth, that he may give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him,



and he is exalted far above all principality and power, and might and dominion and made head over all things to the church. The angels are put in subjection to him, that he may employ them all as ministering spirits, for the good of them that shall be the heirs of salvation: and all things are so governed by their Redeemer, that all things are theirs, whether things present or things to come: and all God's works of providence in the moral government of the world, which we have an account of in scripture history, or that are foretold in scripture prophecy, are evidently subordinate to the great purposes and ends of this great work. And besides, the work of redemption is that, by which good men are, as it were brought into being, as good men, or as restored to holiness and happiness. The work of redemption is a new creation, according to Scripture, whereby men are brought into a new existence, or are made new creatures.

From these things it follows, according to the 5th, 6th and 7th positions, that the glory of God is the last end of the creation of the world.

**8.** The Scripture leads us to suppose that God's glory is his last end in his moral government of the world in general. This has been already shown concerning several things that belong to God's moral government of the world. As particularly in the work of redemption, the chief of all his dispensations in his moral government of the world. And I have also observed it, with respect to the duty, which God requires of the subjects of his moral government, in requiring them to seek his glory as their last end. And this is actually the chief end of the moral goodness required of them, the end which gives their moral goodness its chief value. And also, that it is what that person which God has set at the head of the moral world, as its chief governor, even Jesus Christ, seeks as his chief end. And it has been shown, that it is the chief end for which that part of the moral world which are good are made, or have their existence as good.

I now further observe, that this is the end of the establishment of the public worship and ordinances of God among mankind. Haggai 1:8. "Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house: and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord." This is spoken of as the end of God's promises of rewards, and of their fulfillment. 2 for. 1:20. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, to the glory of God by us." And this is spoken of as the end of the execution of God's

threatenings, in the punishment of sin. <sup>(1440)</sup>Numbers 14:20, 21, 22, 23. “And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word. But, as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of Jehovah.” The glory of Jehovah is evidently here spoken of, as that to which he had regard, as his highest and ultimate end, which therefore he could not fail of; but must take place every where, and in every case, through all parts of his dominion, whatever became of men. And whatever abatements might be made, as to judgments deserted; and whatever changes might be made in the course of God’s proceedings from compassion to sinners.; yet the attaining of God’s glory was an end, which, being ultimate and supreme, must in no case whatsoever give place. This is spoken of as the end of God executing judgments on his enemies in this world. <sup>(1447)</sup>Exodus 14:17, 18. “And I will get me honor (I will be glorified) upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host,” etc.

“Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee, O Zidon, and I will be glorified in the midst of thee: And they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall have executed judgments in her, and shall be sanctified in her.” (<sup>(1452)</sup>Ezekiel 28:22)

So <sup>(1453)</sup>Ezekiel 39:13. “Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown, the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord God.” And this is spoken of as the end both of the executions of wrath, end in the glorious exercises of mercy, in the misery and happiness of another world. <sup>(1452)</sup>Romans 9:22, 23. “What if God, willing, to show his wrath, and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.” And this is spoken of as the end of the day of judgment, which is the time appointed for the highest exercises of God’s authority as moral Governor of the world and is as it were the day of the consummation of God’s moral government, with respect to all his subjects in heaven, earth, and hell.

<sup>(1459)</sup>2 Thessalonians 1:9, 10. “Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.” Then his glory shall be obtained, with respect

both to saints and sinners. — From these things it is manifest by the fourth position, that God's glory is the ultimate end of the creation of the world.

**9.** It appears, from what has been already observed, that the glory of God is spoken of in Scripture as the last end of many of his works: and it is plain that this is in fact the result of the works of God's common providence, and of the creation of the world. Let us take God's glory in what sense soever, consistent with its being a good attained by any work of God, certainly it is the consequence of these works: and besides, it is expressly so spoken of in Scripture.

This is implied in the eighth psalm, wherein are celebrated the works of creation: the heavens, the work of God's fingers, the moon and the stars, ordained by him and man, made a little lower than the angels, etc. The first verse is — "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens," or upon the heavens. By name and glory, very much the same thing is intended here, as in many other places, as shall be particularly shown afterwards. The psalm concludes as it began. "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! So, in the 148th psalm, after a particular mention of most of the works of creation, enumerating them in order, the psalmist says, verse 13. "Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is excellent, his glory is above the earth and the heaven." And in the 104th psalm, after a very particular, orderly, and magnificent representation of God's works of creation and common providence, it is said in the <sup>24th</sup>31st verse, "The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works. "Here God's glory is spoken of as the grand result and blessed consequence, on account of which he rejoices in these works. And this is one thing doubtless implied in the song of the seraphim,

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts,  
the whole earth is full of his glory." (<sup>24th</sup>Isaiah 6:3)

The glory of God, in being the result and consequence of those works of providence that have been mentioned, is in fact the consequence of the creation. The good attained in the use of a thing, made for use, is the result of the making of that thing; as signifying the time of day, when actually attained by the use of a watch, is the consequence of making the watch. So

it is apparent, that the glory of God is actually the result and consequence of the creation of the world. And from what has been already observed, it appears, that it is what God seeks as good, valuable, and excellent in itself. And I presume none will pretend, that there is any thing peculiar in the nature of the case, rendering it a thing valuable in some of the instances wherein it takes place, and not in others: or that the glory of God, though indeed an effect of all God's works, is an exceeding desirable effect of some of them; but of others, a worthless and insignificant effect. God's glory therefore must be a desirable, valuable consequence of the work of creation. Therefore it is manifest, by position the third, that the glory of God is an ultimate end in the creation of the world.

## SECTION 4

*Places of Scripture that lead us to suppose, that God created the world for his name, to make his perfections known; and that he mark it for his praise.*

**1.** HERE I shall first take notice of some passages of Scripture that speak of God's name as being the object of his regard, and the regard of his virtuous and holy intelligent creatures, much in the same manner as has been observed of God's glory.

God's name is, in like manner, spoken of as the end of his acts of goodness towards the good part of the moral world, and of his works of mercy and salvation towards his people. As <sup>(1022)</sup>1 Samuel 12:22

“The Lord will not forsake his people, for his great name sake.”

“He restoreth my soul, he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake.” (<sup>(1023)</sup>Psalm 23:3)

<sup>(1024)</sup>Psalm 31:3. “For their name's sake, lead me, and guide me.” <sup>(1025)</sup>Psalm 109:21.

But do thou for me, — for thy name's sake.” The forgiveness of sin in particular, is often spoken of as being for God's name's sake. <sup>(1026)</sup>1 John 2:12. “I write unto you little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.” <sup>(1027)</sup>Psalm 25:11. “For thy name's sake, O Lord,

pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.” <sup><199B></sup>Psalm 79:9. “Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name; and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name’s sake.” <sup><244D></sup>Jeremiah 14:7. “O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name’s sake.”

These things seem to show, that the salvation of Christ is Or God’s name’s sake. Leading and guiding in the way of safety and happiness, restoring the soul, the forgiveness of sin; and that help, deliverance, and salvation, that is consequent therein, is for God’s name. And here it is observable, that those two great temporal salvations of God’s people, the redemption from Egypt, and that from Babylon, often represented as figures and similitudes of the redemption of Christ, are frequently spoken of as being wrought for God’s name’s sake.

Thus that great work of God, in delivering his people from Egypt, and conducting them to Canaan.

“And what one nation in the earth is like thy people even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name.” <sup><1073></sup>(2 Samuel 7:23)

“Nevertheless he saved them for his name’s sake.”  
<sup><144D></sup>(Psalm 106:8)

“That led them by the right hand of Moses, with his glorious arm, dividing the waters before them, to make himself an everlasting name.” <sup><261D></sup>(Isaiah 63:12)

In the 20th chapter of; Ezekiel God, rehearsing the various parts of this wonderful work adds, from time to time, “I wrought for my name’s sake that it should not be polluted before the heathen,” as in verse <sup><340D></sup>9, 14, 22. (See also <sup><610B></sup>Joshua 7:8, 9. <sup><209B></sup>Daniel 9:19.)

So is the redemption from the Babylonish captivity. <sup><380D></sup>Isaiah 48:9, 10. “For my name’s sake will I defer mine anger. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it; for how should my name be polluted?” In <sup><393D></sup>Ezekiel 36:21, 22, 23. the reason is given for God’s mercy in restoring Israel. “But I had pity for my holy name. Thus saith the Lord, I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for my holy name’s sake, — And I will sanctify my great name which was profaned among the

heathen.” And chapter <sup><3125></sup>39:25. “Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name.” Daniel prays, that God would forgive his people, and show them mercy for his own sake.

<sup><2099></sup>Daniel 9:19.

When God, from time to time, speaks of showing mercy, and exercising goodness, and promoting his people’s happiness for his name’s sake, we cannot understand it as of a merely subordinate end. How absurd would it be to say, that he promotes their happiness for his name’s sake in subordination to their good; and that his name may be exalted only for their sakes, as a means of promoting their happiness I especially when such expressions as these are used, “For mine own sake, even for mine own sake will I do it; for how should my name be polluted?” and “Not for your sakes do I this, but for my holy name’s sake.”

Again, it is represented as though God’s people had their existence, at least as God’s people, for God’s name’s sake. God’s redeeming or purchasing them, that they might be his people, for his name, implies this. As in that passage mentioned before,

“Thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name.” (<sup><1072></sup>2 Samuel 7:23)

So God making them a people for his name, is implied in <sup><2431></sup>Jeremiah 13:11.

“For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel, etc. — that they may be unto me for a people, and for a name.” <sup><4154></sup>Acts 15:14.

“Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit The Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.”

This also is spoken of as the end of the virtue, religion, and holy behavior of the saints. <sup><8106></sup>Romans 1:5. “By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations for his name.”

<sup><1099></sup>Matthew 19:29. “Every one that forsaketh houses, or brethren, etc. — for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit

everlasting life.” <sup><600></sup>3 John 7. “Because, that for his name’s sake, they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.”

“And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast labored and hast not fainted.” (<sup><600></sup>Revelation 2:3)

And we find that holy persons express their desire of this, and their joy in it, in the same manner as in the glory of God. <sup><100></sup>2 Samuel 7:26. “Let thy name be magnified for ever” <sup><900></sup>Psalm 76:1. “In Judah is God known, his name is great in Israel.” <sup><800></sup>Psalm 148:13. “Let them praise the name of the Lord; for his name alone is excellent, his glory is above the earth and heaven.” <sup><800></sup>Psalm 135:13. “Thy name, O Lord, endureth for ever, and thy memorial throughout all generations.” <sup><200></sup>Isaiah 12:4. “Declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.”

The judgments God executes on the wicked, are spoken of as being for the sake of his name, in like manner as for his glory.

“And in very deed, for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.” (<sup><100></sup>Exodus 9:16)

“And showedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land; for thou knewedst that they dealt proudly against them: so didst thou get thee a name, as at this day.” (<sup><100></sup>Nehemiah 9:10)

And this is spoken of as a consequence of the works of creation, in like manner as God’s glory. <sup><900></sup>Psalm 8:1. “O Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who best set thy glory above the heavens.” And then, at the conclusion of the observations on the works of creation the psalm ends thus, verse 9. “O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!” So <sup><800></sup>Psalm 148:13. after a particular mention of the various works of creation. “Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is excellent in all the earth, his glory is above the earth and the heaven.”

**2.** So we find the manifestation of God’s perfections, his greatness and excellency, is spoken of very much in the same manner as God’s glory.

There are several scriptures which would lead us to suppose this to be the great thing that God sought of the moral world, and the end aimed at in

moral agents, wherein they are to be active in answering their end. This seems implied in that argument God's people sometimes made use of, in deprecating a state of death and destruction: that, in such a state, they cannot know, or make known, the glorious excellency of God. <sup><1888></sup> Psalm 88:18, 19. "Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave, or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark, and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" So <sup><1810></sup> Psalm 30:9. <sup><2388></sup> Isaiah 38:18, 19. The argument seems to be this: Why should we perish? and how shall shine end, for which thou hast made us, be obtained in a state of destruction, in which thy glory cannot be known or declared?

This is the end of the good part of the moral world, or the end of God's people in the same manner as the glory of God.

"This people have I formed for myself,  
they shall show forth my praise." (<sup><2367></sup> Isaiah 43:21)

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into marvellous light."  
(<sup><4119></sup> 1 Peter 2:9)

And this seems to be represented as the thing wherein the value, the proper fruit and end of then virtue appears. <sup><2806></sup> Isaiah 60:6. speaking of the conversion of the Gentile nations to true religion, "They shall come and show forth the praises of the Lord." <sup><2669></sup> Isaiah 66:19. "I will send — unto the nations — and to the isles afar off, that have not heard Madame, neither have seen my glory, and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. — To which we may add, the proper tendency and rest of true virtue, and holy dispositions. <sup><1578></sup> 1 Chronicles 17:8. "Make known his deeds among the people." Verse 23 24. "Show forth from day to day thy salvation. Declare his glory among the heathen."

This seems to be spoken of as a great end of the acts of God's moral government; particularly, the great judgments he executes for sin.

<sup><1806></sup> Exodus 9:16. "And in very deed, for this cause have I raised thee up, to show in thee my power; and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."



“This matter is by the decree of the watchers, etc. To the intent, that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will; and setteth up over it the basest of men.” (<sup><2047></sup>Daniel 4:17)

But places to this purpose are too numerous to be particularly recited. See them in the margin.

This is also a great end of God’s works of favor and may to his people.

<sup><2099></sup>2 Kings 19:19. “Now, therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord God, even thou only.” <sup><1189></sup>1 Kings 8:59, 60. — “That he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel, at all times, as the matter shall require, that all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else.” See other passages to the same purpose referred to in the margin.

This is spoken of as the end of the eternal damnation of the wicked, and also the eternal happiness of the righteous. <sup><4102></sup>Romans 9:22, 23. “What if God, willing to show his wrath and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory?”

This is spoken of, from time to time, as a great end of the miracles which God wrought. (See <sup><1077></sup>Exodus 7:17. and <sup><1080></sup>8:10. and <sup><1010></sup>10:2.

<sup><1526></sup>Deuteronomy 29:5, 6. <sup><1347></sup>Ezekiel 24:17.) And of the ordinance he has established. <sup><1294></sup>Exodus 29:44, 45, 46. “ And I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priests” office. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God,” etc. Chapter <sup><1313></sup>31:13. “Verily, my sabbaths shall ye keep; for it is a sign between me and you, throughout your generations, that ye may, know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.” We have again almost the same words, <sup><1312></sup>Ezekiel 20:12. and verse 20.

This was a great end of the redemption out of Egypt. <sup><1448></sup>Psalms 106:8. Nevertheless he saved them for his name’s sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.” (See also <sup><1075></sup>Exodus 7:5. and <sup><1545></sup>Deuteronomy

4:34, 35.) And also of the redemption from the Babylonish captivity.

<sup><319></sup>Ezekiel 20:34-38. “And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries whither ye are scattered. — And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people; and there I will plead with you as I pleaded with our fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt. — And will bring you into the bond of the covenant. And I will purge out the rebels. — And ye shall know that I am the Lord.” Verse 42. “And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel.” Verse 44. “And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have wrought with you for my name’s sake.” (See also chapter <sup><325></sup>28:25, 26. and <sup><331></sup>36:11. and <sup><337></sup>37:6. 13.)

This is also declared to be a great end of the work of redemption by Jesus Christ: both of its purchase, and its application <sup><342></sup>Romans 3:25, 26.

“Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness. — To declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.” <sup><348></sup>Ephesians 2:4-7. “But God, who is rich in mercy, etc. That he might show the exceeding riches of his riches, of his kindness towards us through Jesus Christ.” Chapter <sup><354></sup>3:8, 9, 10. “To preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see, what is the fellowship of that mystery which, from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now into the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.” <sup><360></sup>Psalms 22:21, 22.

“Save me from the lion’s mouth. I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.” (Compared with <sup><366></sup>Hebrews 2:12. and <sup><372></sup>John 17:26.) <sup><378></sup>Isaiah 64:4. “O that thou wouldest rend the heavens — to make thy name known to thine adversaries.” And it is pronounced to be the end of that great, actual salvation, which should follow Christ’s purchase of salvation, both among Jews and Gentiles.

<sup><384></sup>Isaiah 49:22, 23. “I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, — and they shall bring thy sons in their arms — and kings shall be thy nursing-father — and thou shalt know that I am the Lord.”

This appears to be the end of God’s common providence, <sup><390></sup>Job 37:6, 7. “For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth. Likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength. He sealeth up the hand of every

man, that all men may know his work.” And of the day of judgment, that grand consummation of God’s moral government of the world, and the day for bringing all things to declaration, or openly manifesting of God’s excellency, is spoken of as the actual, happy consequence and effect of the work of creation. <sup><900></sup>Psalm 19:1, etc. “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his hand-work. Day unto day uttereth speech, might unto night showeth knowledge.-In them bath he placed a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run his race,” etc.

**3.** In like manner, there are many scriptures that speak of God’s PRAISE, in many of the forementioned respects, just in the same manner as of his name and people, in the same manner as before,

“For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel, and the whole house of Judah, saith the Lord: that they might be unto me for a name, and for a peace, and a glory.” (<sup><2431></sup>Jeremiah 13:11)

It is spoken of as the end of the moral works.

“Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou perfected praise.” (<sup><4216></sup>Matthew 21:16)

That is, so hast thou in thy sovereignty and wisdom ordered it, that thou shouldest obtain the great end for which intelligent creatures are made, more especially from some of them that are in themselves weak, Inferior, and more insufficient. (Compare <sup><981></sup>Psalm 8:1, 2.)

And the same thing that was observed before concerning the making known God’s excellency, may also be observed concerning God’s praise. That it is made use of as an argument in deprecating a state of destruction; that in such a state, this end cannot be answered, in such a manner as seems to imply its being an ultimate end for which God had made man.

<sup><889></sup>Psalm 88:10. “Shall the dead arise and praise thee? Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? — Shall thy wonders be known in the dark?” <sup><899></sup>Psalm 30:9. “What profit is there in my blood? When I go down to the pit, shall the dust praise thee? Shall it declare thy truth?” <sup><987></sup>Psalm 115:17, 18. “The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence: but we will bless the Lord, from this time forth and for evermore.

Praise ye the Lord.” <sup>238B</sup>Isaiah 38:18, 19 “For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee.” And God’s praise is spoken of as the end of the virtue of God’s people, in like manner as his glory.

“Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God.” (<sup>301B</sup>Philippians 1:11)

God’s praise is the end of the work of redemption. In <sup>400</sup>Ephesians 1 where that work in its various parts is particularly insisted on, and set forth in its exceeding glory, this is mentioned, from time to time, as the great end of all, that it should be “to the praise of his glory.” As in verse 6, 12, 14. By which we may doubtless understand much the same thing with what in <sup>301B</sup>Philippians 1:11. is expressed, “his praise and glory.” Agreeably to this, Jacob’s fourth son from whom the great Redeemer was to proceed, by the special direction of God’s providence, was called PRAISE. This happy consequence, and glorious end of that great redemption, Messiah, one of his posterity, was to work out.

In the Old Testament this praise is spoken of as the end of the forgiveness of God’s people, and their salvation in the same manner as God’s name and glory. <sup>238B</sup>Isaiah 48:9, 10, 11. “For my name’s sake will I defer mine anger and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. Behold I have refined thee — for mine own sake, even for mine own sake will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and my glory will I not give to another.” <sup>238B</sup>Jeremiah 33:8, 9. “And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity — and I will pardon all their iniquities. And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honor.”

And that the holy part of the moral world express desires of this, and delight in it, as the end which holy principles in them tend to, reach after, and rest in, in their highest exercises — just in the same manner as the glory of God, is abundantly manifest. It would be endless to enumerate particular places wherein this appears, wherein the saints declare this, by expressing their earnest desires of God’s praise; calling on all nations, and all beings in heaven and earth, to praise him; in a rapturous manner calling on one another, crying “Hallelujah; praise ye the Lord, praise him for everse” Expressing their resolutions to praise him as long as they live

through all generations, and for ever; declaring how good, how pleasant and comely the praise of God is, etc. And it is manifest, that God's praise is the desirable and glorious consequence and effect of all the works of creation, by such places as these. <sup><H25></sup>Psalm 145:5-10. and 148 throughout, and <sup><H39></sup>103:19-22.

## SECTION 5

*Places of scripture from whence it may be argued, that communication of good to the creature, was one thing which God had in view, as an ultimate end of the creation of the world.*

**1.** ACCORDING to the Scripture, communicating good to the creatures is what is in itself pleasing to God. And this is not merely subordinately agreeable, and esteemed valuable on account of its relation to a further end, as it is in executing justice in punishing the sins of men, but what God is inclined to on its own account, and what he delights in simply and ultimately. For though God is sometimes in Scripture spoken of as taking pleasure in punishing men's sins,

“The Lord will rejoice over you, to destroy you.”

(<sup><H26></sup>Deuteronomy 28:63)

<sup><H25></sup>Ezekiel 5:13. Then shall mine anger be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted.” Yet God is often spoken of as exercising goodness and showing mercy, with delight, in a manner quite different, and opposite to that of his executing wrath. For the latter is spoken of as what God proceeds to with backwardness and reluctance; the misery of the creature being not agreeable to him on its account. <sup><H26></sup>Nehemiah 9:17. “Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness.” <sup><H39></sup>Psalm 103:8. “The Lord's merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.” <sup><H25></sup>Psalm 145:8. “The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy.” We have again almost the same words, <sup><H26></sup>Jonah 4:2. <sup><H39></sup>Micah 7:18. “Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, etc. — He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.” <sup><H25></sup>Ezekiel 18:32. “I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.” <sup><H39></sup>Lamentations

3:33. "He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."

<sup><4991</sup>Ezekiel 33:11. As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel!

<sup><4992</sup>2 Peter 3:9. "Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

**2.** The work of redemption wrought out by Jesus Christ, is spoken of in such a manner as, being from the grace and love of God to men, does not well consist with his seeking a communication of good to them, only subordinately. Such expressions as that in <sup><4993</sup>John 3:16. carry another idea.

**"God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that  
whosoever believeth in him, should not perish,  
but have everlasting life."**

And <sup><4994</sup>1 John 4:9, 10. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." So <sup><4995</sup>Ephesians 2:4. "But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us," etc. But if indeed this was only from a regard to a further end, entirely diverse from our good then all the love is truly terminated in that, its ultimate object, and therein is his love manifested, strictly and properly speaking, and not in that he loved us, or exercised such high regard towards us. For if our good be not at all regarded ultimately, but only subordinately, then our good or interest is, in itself considered, nothing in God's regard.

The Scripture every where represents it, as though the great things Christ did and suffered, were in the most direct and proper sense from exceeding love to us. Thus the apostle Paul represents the matter, <sup><4996</sup>Galatians 2:20. "Who loved me, and gave himself for me." <sup><4997</sup>Ephesians 5:25. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." And Christ himself, <sup><4998</sup>John 17:19. "For their sakes I sanctify myself." And the scripture represents Christ as resting in the salvation and glory of his people, when obtained as in what he ultimately sought, as having therein reached the goal, obtained the prize he aimed at, enjoying the trail of his soul in which he is satisfied, as the recompence of his labors and

extreme agonies, <sup><2530></sup>Isaiah 53:10, 11. “When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall he satisfied, by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. “He sees the travail of his soul, in seeing his seed, the children brought forth as the result of his travail. This implies, that Christ has his delight, most truly and properly, in obtaining the salvation of his church, not merely as a means, but as what he rejoices and is satisfied in, most directly and properly. This is proved by those scriptures which represent him as rejoicing in his obtaining this fruit of his labor and purchase, as the bridegroom, when he obtains his bride,

“As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,  
so shall thy God rejoice over thee.” (<sup><2531></sup>Isaiah 62:5)

And how emphatical and strong to the purpose, are the expressions in <sup><3187></sup>Zephaniah 3:17. “The Lord the God in the midst of thee is mighty he will save he will rejoice over thee with joy, he will rest in his love, he will rejoice over thee with singing. “The same thing may be argued from <sup><3189></sup>Proverbs 8:30, 31. “Then was I by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him: rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, end my delights were with the sons of men.” And from those places, that speak of the saints as God’s portion, his jewels and peculiar treasure, these things are abundantly confirmed, <sup><3123></sup>John 12:23-32. But the particular consideration of what may be observed to the present purpose, in that passage of Scripture, may be referred to the next section.

**3.** The communications of divine goodness, particularly forgiveness of sin, and salvation are spoken of, from time to time, as being for God’s goodness’ sake, and for his mercies sake, just in the same manner as they are spoken of as being for God’s name’s sake, in the places observed before.

“Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions:  
according to thy mercy remember thou me, for thy goodness’ sake,  
O Lord.” (<sup><3120></sup>Psalms 25:7)

In the 11th verse, the psalmist says, “For thy name’s sake O Lord, pardon mine iniquity.” <sup><4001></sup>Nehemiah 9 “Nevertheless, For thy great mercies sake, thou hast not utterly consumed them, nor forsaken them. for thou art a gracious and a merciful God.” <sup><1004></sup>Psalm 6:4. “Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: O save me for thy mercies sake.” <sup><1816></sup>Psalm 31:16. “Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies’ sake.” <sup><1947></sup>Psalm 44:26 “Arise for our help, redeem us for thy mercies’ sake.” And here it may be observed, after what a remarkable manner God speaks of his love to the children of Israel in the wilderness, as though his love were for love’s sake, and his goodness were its own end and motive. <sup><1818></sup>Deuteronomy 7:7, 8. “The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you.”

**4.** That the government of the world in all its parts, is for the good of such as are to be the eternal subjects of God’s goodness is implied in what the Scripture teaches us of Christ being set at God’s right hand, made king of angels and men; set at the head of the universe, hating all power given him in heaven and earth, to that end that he may promote their happiness; being made head over all things to the church, and having the government of the whole creation for their good. Christ mentions it, <sup><4028></sup>Mark 2:28. as the reason why the Son of man is made Lord to the sabbath, because “the sabbath was made for man.” And if so, we may in like manner argue, that all things were made for man, because the Son of man is made Lord of all things.

**5.** That God uses the whole creation, in his government of it, for the good of his people, is most elegantly represented in <sup><1531></sup>Deuteronomy 33:26. “There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven.” The whole universe is a machine, or chariot, which God hath made for his own use, as is represented in Ezekiel’s vision God’s seat is heaven, where he sits and governs, <sup><1022></sup>Ezekiel 1:22 26-28. The inferior part of the creation, this visible universe, subject to such continual changes and revolutions, are the wheels of the chariot. God’s providence, in the constant revolutions, alterations, and successive events, is represented by the motion of the wheels of the chariot, by the spirit of him who sits on his throne on the heavens, or above the firmament. Moses tells us for whose sake it is, that God moves the wheels of this chariot, or rides in it,



sitting in his heavenly seat; and to what end he is making his progress, or goes his appointed journey in it, viz. the salvation of his people.

**6.** God's judgments on the wicked in this world, and also their eternal damnation in the world to come, are spoken of, as being for the happiness of God's people. So are his judgements on them in this world. <sup><489></sup>Isaiah 43:3, 4.

"For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior. I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou hast been precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life." So the works of God's vindictive justice and wrath are spoken of as works of mercy to his people, <sup><490></sup>Psalms 136:10,15, 17-20. And so is their eternal damnation in another world. <sup><491></sup>Romans 9:22, 23. "What if God, willing to show his wrath and make his power known endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." Here it is evident the last verse comes in, in connection with the foregoing, as giving another reason of the destruction of the flied, viz. showing the riches of his glory on vessels of mercy: higher degrees of their glory and happiness, in a relish of their own enjoyments, and a greater sense of their value, and of God's free grace in bestowing them.

**7.** It seems to argue, that God's goodness to them who are to be the eternal subjects of his goodness, is the end of the creation; since the whole creation, in all its parts, is spoken of as THEIRS. <sup><492></sup>1 Corinthians 3:22, 23. "All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours." The terms are very universal; and both works of creation and providence are mentioned, and it is manifestly the design of the apostle to be understood of every work of God whatsoever. Now, how can we understand this any otherwise, than that all things are for their benefit and that God made and uses all for their good?

**8.** All God's works, both of creation and providence, are represented as works of goodness or neck to his people; as in the 130th psalm. His wonderful works in general. Verse 4. "To him who alone doth great wonders; for his mercy endureth for everse" The works of creation in all

its parts. verse 5-9. "To him that by wisdom made the heavens, for his mercy endureth for ever. To him that stretched out the earth above the waters, for his mercy endureth forever. To him that made great lights, for his mercy endureth for ever. The sun to rule by day, for his mercy endureth for ever. The moon and stars to rule by night; for his mercy endureth forever." And God's works of providence, in the following part of the psalm.

9. That expression in the blessed sentence pronounced on the righteous at the day of judgment, "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," seems to hold forth thus much, that the fruits of God's goodness to them, was his end in creating the world, and in his providential disposals: that God in all his works, in laying the foundation of the world, and ever since the foundation of it, had been preparing this kingdom and glory for them.

10. Agreeable to this the good of men is spoken of as an ultimate end of the virtue of the moral world. ~~ROM~~ Romans 13:8, 9, 10. "He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, etc. — And if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying. Thou shalt love the neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." ~~ROM~~ Galatians 5:14. "All the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." ~~ROM~~ James 2:8. "If ye fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture,

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, thou shalt do well.

If the good of if creature be one end of God in all he does; and in all he requires moral agents to do; an end by which they should regulate all their conduct; these things may be easily explained: but otherwise, it seems difficult to be accounted for, that the Holy Ghost should thus express himself. The Scripture represents it to be the spirit of all true saints, to prefer the welfare of God's people to their chief joy. This was the spirit of Moses and the prophets of old: the good of God's church was an end by which they regulated all their conduct. And so it was with the apostles. ~~ROM~~ 2 Corinthians 4:15. "For all things are for your sake." ~~ROM~~ 2 Timothy 2:10. "I endured all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory." And the

Scriptures represent it, as though every Christian should, in all he does, be employed for the good of the church, as each particular member is employed for the good of the body, <sup><6124></sup>Romans 12:4, 5, etc. <sup><4015></sup>Ephesians 4:15, 16. <sup><4622></sup>1 Corinthians 12:12, 25, etc. To this end, the Scripture teaches us, the angels are continually employed, <sup><3014></sup>Hebrews 1:14.

## SECTION 6

*Wherein is considered what is meant by the glory of God and the name of God in Scripture, when spoken of as God's end in his works.*

HAVING thus considered, what are spoken of in the Holy Scriptures, as the ends which God had ultimately in view in the creation of the world, I now proceed particularly to inquire what they are, and how the terms are to be understood?

**I.** Let us begin with the phrase, the GLORY OF GOD — And here I might observe, that it is sometimes used to signify second person in the Trinity; but it is not necessary, at this time, to prove it from particular passages of Scripture. Omitting this, I proceed to observe some things concerning a Hebrew word, which is most commonly used in the Old Testament, where we have the word glory in the English Bible. The root it comes from, either the verb, which signifies to be heavy, or make heavy, or from the adjective which signifies health or weighty. These, as seems pretty manifest, are the primary signification of these words, though they have also other meanings, which seem to be derivative. The noun signifies gravity, heaviness, greatness, and abundance. Of very many places it will be sufficient to specify a few. <sup><1273></sup>Proverbs 27:3. <sup><1445></sup>2 Samuel 14:26. <sup><1121></sup>1 Kings 12:11. <sup><1380></sup>Psalms 38:4. <sup><2317></sup>Isaiah 30:27. And as the weight of bodies arises from two things, density and magnitude; so we find the word used to signify die, <sup><1296></sup>Exodus 19:16. (nubes gravis, Vulg. densissima,) a dense cloud, and is very often used for great. <sup><2317></sup>Isaiah 32:2. <sup><1089></sup>Genesis 5:9. <sup><1112></sup>1 Kings 10:2. <sup><1164></sup>2 Kings 6:14. and <sup><2817></sup>18:17. <sup><2317></sup>Isaiah 36:2. etc.

The Hebrew word which is commonly translated glory, is used in such a manner as might be expected from this signification of the words from

whence it comes. Sometimes it is used to signify what is internal, inherent, or in the possession of the person: and sometimes for emanation, exhibition, or communication of this internal glory: and sometimes for the knowledge, or sense of these, in those to whom the exhibition or communication is made; or an expression of this knowledge, sense, or effect. And here I would note, that agreeable to the use of this word in the Old Testament, is the Greek word (earn) in the New. For as this word is generally translated by the just mentioned Greek word in the Septuagint; so it is apparent, that this word is designed to be used to signify the same thing in the New Testament with the other in the Old. This might be abundantly proved, by comparing particular places of the Old Testament, but probably it will not be denied. I therefore proceed particularly to consider these words, with regard to their use in Scripture, in each of the fore-mentioned ways.

**1.** The word glory denotes sometimes what is internal. When the word is used to signify what is within, or in the possession of the subject, it very commonly signifies excellency, dignity, or worthiness of regard. This, according to the Hebrew idiom, is, as it were, the weight of a thing, as that by which it is heavy, as to be light, is to be worthless, without value, contemptible. <sup><0215</sup>Numbers 21:5. “This light bread.” <sup><0823</sup>1 Samuel 18:23. “Seemeth it a light thing.” <sup><0904</sup>Judges 9:4. “Light persons,” i. e. worthless, vain, vile persons. So <sup><0904</sup>Zephaniah 3:4. To set light by is to despise, <sup><0948</sup>2 Samuel 19:43. Belshazzar’s vileness in the sight of God, is represented by his being Tekel, weighed in the balances and found light, <sup><0727</sup>Daniel 5:27. And as the weight of a thing arises from its magnitude, and its specific gravity conjunctly; so the word glory is very commonly used to signify the excellency of a person or a thing, as consisting, either in greatness, or in beauty, or in both conjunctly, as will abundantly appear by considering the places referred to in the margin.

Sometimes that internal, great and excellent good, which is called glory, is rather in possession, than inherent. Any one may be called heavy, that possesses an abundance and he that is empty and destitute, may be called light. Thus we find riches are sometimes called glory.

“And of that which was our fathers’ hath he gotten all this glory.”

(<sup><0301</sup>Genesis 31:1)

<sup><1781></sup> Esther 5:11. "Haman told them of the glory of his riches." <sup><1906></sup> Psalm 49:16, 17. "Be not afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased. For when he dieth, he shall carry nothing away, his glory shall not descend after him." <sup><3189></sup> Nahum 2:9. "Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold, for there is none end of the store and glory out of the pleasant furniture."

And it is often put for a great height of prosperity, and fullness of good in general. <sup><1013></sup> Genesis 14:13 "You shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt." <sup><1899></sup> Job 19:9. "He hath stripped me of my glory." <sup><2908></sup> Isaiah 10:3. "Where will you leave your glory: Verse 16. "Therefore shall the Lord of hosts send among his fat ones leanness, and under his glory shall he kindle a burning, like the burning of a fire." <sup><2707></sup> Isaiah 17:3, 4. "The kingdom shall cease from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria; they shall be as the glory of the children of Israel: And in that day, it shall come to pass, that the glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and the fatness of his flesh shall be made lean." <sup><2916></sup> Isaiah 21:16. "And all the glory of Kedar shall fail."

**"Ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves." ( <sup><2606></sup> Isaiah 61:6)**

Chapter <sup><2611></sup> 66:11, 12. "That ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. — I will extend peace to her, like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream." <sup><3011></sup> Hosea 9:11. "As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away as a bird." <sup><1008></sup> Matthew 4:8. "Showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them." <sup><1209></sup> Luke 24:26. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" <sup><1672></sup> John 17:22. "And the glory which thou gayest me, have I given them." <sup><1812></sup> Romans 5:2. "And rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Chapter <sup><1888></sup> 8:18. "The sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (See also chapter <sup><1810></sup> 2:7, 10. and <sup><1823></sup> 3:23. and <sup><1822></sup> 9:23.) <sup><1417></sup> 1 Corinthians 2:7. "The hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world, unto our glory." <sup><1417></sup> 2 Corinthians 4:17. "Worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." <sup><1018></sup> Ephesians 1:18. "And what the riches of the glory of kits inheritance in the saints." <sup><1013></sup> 1 Peter 4:13. "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are made partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be

revealed ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.” Chapter 1:8. “Ye rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

**2.** The word glory is used in Scripture often to express the exhibition, emanation, or communication of the internal glory. Hence it often signifies an effulgence, or shining brightness, by an emanation of beams of light. Thus the brightness of the sun, and moons and stars, is called their glory, in <sup><435b></sup>1 Corinthians 15:41. But in particular, the word is very often thus used, when applied to God and Christ. As in <sup><300b></sup>Ezekiel 1:28

“As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.”

And chapter <sup><300b></sup>10:4. “Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house, and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was fill of the brightness of the Lord’s glory.” <sup><300b></sup>Isaiah 6:1, 2, 3. “I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lined up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim — And one cried to another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts the whole earth is full of his glory.” Compared with <sup><300b></sup>John 12:41. These things said Esaias, when He saw his glory and spake of him.” <sup><300b></sup>Ezekiel 43:2. “And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east — And the earth shined with his glory.” <sup><300b></sup>Isaiah 24:23. Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.” <sup><300b></sup>Isaiah 60:1, 2. “Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.” Together with verse 19. “The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.” <sup><300b></sup>Luke 2:9. “The glory of the Lord shone round about them.” <sup><421b></sup>Acts 22:11. “And when I could not see for the glory of that light.” In <sup><400b></sup>2 Corinthians 3:7. The shining of Moses’s face is called the glory of his countenance. And to this Christ’s glory is compared, verse to “But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory.” And so chapter 4:4.

“Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” Verse 6. “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” <sup><800></sup>Hebrews 1:3. “Who is the brightness of his glory.” The apostle Peter, speaking of that emanation of exceeding brightness, from the bright cloud that overshadowed the disciples in the mount of transfiguration, and of the shining of Christ’s face at that time says,

“For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (<sup><601></sup>2 Peter 1:17)

<sup><680></sup>Revelation 18:1. “Another angel came down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was lightened, with his glory.” <sup><621></sup>Revelation 21:11. “Having the glory of God, and her light was like unto a stone most precious, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.” Verse 23. “And the city, had no need of the sun nor of the moon to shine in it, for the theology of God did lighten it.” See the word for a visible effulgence or emanation of light in the places to be seen in the margin.

The word glory, as applied to God or Christ, sometimes evidently signifies the communications of God’s fullness, and means much the same thing with God’s abundant goodness and grace. So <sup><406></sup>Ephesians 3:16. “That he would grant you, accord to the rich of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.” The expression, “According to the riches of his glory,” is apparently equivalent to that in the same epistle, chapter <sup><607></sup>1:7. “According to the riches of his grace.” And chapter <sup><405></sup>2:7. “The exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us, through Christ Jesus.” In like manner is the word glory used in <sup><509></sup>Philippians 4:19.

“But my God shall supply all your need,  
according to his right in glory, by Christ Jesus.”

And <sup><602></sup>Romans 9:23.

“And that he might make known he riches of his glory,  
on the vessels of his mercy.”

In this and the foregoing verse, the apostle speaks of God's making known two things, his great wrath, and his rich grace. The former on the vessels of wrath, verse 22. The latter, which he calls the riches of his glory, on the vessels of mercy, verse 23. So when Moses says, "I beseech thee show me thy glory;" God granting his request, makes answer, "I will make all my goodness to pass before thee." ~~Exodus~~ Exodus 33:18,19.

What we find in ~~John~~ John 12:23-32. is worthy of particular notice in this place. The words and behavior of Christ, of which we have here an account, argue two things.

**1.** That the happiness and salvation of men, was an end that Christ ultimately aimed at in his labors and sufferings. The very same things which were observed before, (chapter second, section third,) concerning God's glory, are in the same manner observable, concerning the salvation of men. Christ. in the near approach of the most extreme difficulties which attended his undertaking comforts himself in a certain prospect of obtaining the glory of God, as his great end. And at the same time, and exactly in the same manner, is the salvation of men mentioned, as the end of these great labors and sufferings, which satisfied his soul in the prospect of undergoing them. (Compare the 23rd and 24th verses, and also the 28th and 29th verses, verse 31 and 32.)

**2.** The glory of God, and the emanations and fruits of his grace in man's salvation, are so spoken of by Christ on this occasion in just the same manner, that it would be quite unnatural to understand him as speaking of two distinct things. Such is the connection, that what he says of the latter, must most naturally be understood as exegetical of the former. He first speaks of his own glory, and the glory of his Father, as the great end that should be obtained by what he was about to suffer; and then explains and amplifies this, in what he expresses of the salvation of men that shall be obtained by it. Thus, in the 23rd verse. he says, "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified." And in what next follows, he evidently shows how he was to be glorified, or wherein his glory consisted: " Verity, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." As much fruit is the glory of the seed, so is the multitude of redeemed ones, which should spring from his death, his glory. So



concerning the glory of his Father, in the 27th and following verses. “Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour! But for this cause came I unto this hour, Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” In an assurance of this, which this voice declared, Christ was flatly comforted and his soul even calmed under the view of his approaching sufferings. And what this glory was, in which Christ’s soul was so comforted on this occasion, his own words plainly show. When the people said, it thundered, and others said, an angel spoke to him, then Christ tells them what this voice meant. Verse 30-32. “Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” By this behavior and there speeches of our Redeemer, it appears, that the expressions of divine grace, in the sanctification and happiness of the redeemed, are especially that glory of his, and his Father, which was the joy that was set before him, for which he endured the cross, and despised the shame: and that this glory especially was the end of the travail of his soul, in obtaining which end he was satisfied. (<sup><2530></sup> Isaiah 53:10, 11.)

This is agreeable to what has been just observed, of God’s glory being so often represented by an effulgence, or emanation, or communication of light, from a luminary or fountain of light. What can so naturally and aptly represent the emanation of the internal glory of God, or the flowing forth and abundant communication of that infinite fullness of good that is in God? Light is very often in Scripture put for comfort, joy, happiness, and for good in general.

**3.** Again, the word glory, as applied to God in Scripture implies the view or knowledge of God’s excellency. The exhibition of glory is to the view of beholders. The manifestation of glory, the emanation or effulgence of brightness, has relation to the eye. Light or brightness is a quality that has relation to the sense of seeing; we see the luminary by its light. And knowledge is often expressed in Scripture by light. The word glory very often in Scripture signifies, or implies, honor, as any one may soon see by casting his eye on a concordance.” But honor implies the knowledge of the dignity and excellency of him who hath the honor and this is open more especially signified by the word glory when applied to God. (<sup><0442></sup> Numbers

14:21. "But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord," i. e. All the inhabitants of the earth shall see the manifestations I will make of my perfect holiness and hatred of sin, and so of my infinite excellence. It thus appears by the context. So <sup><352></sup>Ezekiel 39:21, 22, 23. "And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my Judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God. And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity." And it is manifest in many places, There we read of God glorifying himself, or of his being glorified that one thing, directly intended, is making known his divine greatness and excellency.

**4.** Again, glory, as the word is used in Scripture, often signifies or implies praise. This appears from what was observed before, that glory very often signifies honor, which is much the same thing with praise, viz. high esteem and the expression of it in words and actions. And It is manifest that the words glory and praise, are open used as equivalent expressions in Scripture. <sup><402></sup>Psalm 1:23. "Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me." <sup><402></sup>Psalm 22:23. "Ye that fear the Lord praise him, all ye seed of Israel, glorify him." <sup><305></sup>Isaiah 42:8. "My glory I will not give unto another nor my praise to graven images." Verse 12. "Let them give glory unto the Lord, and declare his praise in the islands." <sup><389></sup>Isaiah 48:9-11. "For my name sake will I defer mine anger; for my praise will I refrain for thee. — For mine own sake will I do it, for — I will not give my glory unto another." <sup><431></sup>Jeremiah 13:11. "That they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory." <sup><400></sup>Ephesians 1:6. "To the praise of the glory of his grace." Verse 12. "To the praise of his glory." So verse 14. The phrase is apparently equivalent to this, <sup><501></sup>Philippians 1:11. "Which are by Jesus Christ unto the praise and glory of God." <sup><405></sup>2 Corinthians 4:15. "That the abundant grace might, through the Thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of

It is manifest the praise of God, as the phrase is used in Scripture, implies the high esteem and love of the heart exalting thoughts of God, and complacency in his excellence and perfection. This is manifest to every one acquainted with the Scripture. However, if any need satisfaction, they may, among innumerable other places which might be mentioned, turn to those in the margin.

It also implies joy in God, or rejoicing in his perfections, as is manifest by ~~Exod~~ Psalm 33:2.

“Rejoyce in the Lord, O ye righteous,  
for praise is comely for the upright.”

Other passages to the same purpose see in the margin. How open do we read of singing praise! But singing is commonly an expression of joy. It is called, making a joyful noise. And as it is often used, it implies gratitude or love to God for his benefits to us.

**II.** Having thus considered what is implied in the phrase, the glory of God, as we find it used in Scripture; I proceed to inquire what is meant by the NAME of God.

God’s name and his glory, at least very often, signify the same thing in Scripture. As it has been observed concerning the glory of God, that it sometimes signifies the second person in the Trinity; the same might be shown of the name of God, if it were needful in this place. But that the name and glory of God are often equipollent expressions, is manifest by ~~Exod~~ Exodus 33:18, 19. When Moses says, “I beseech thee show me thy glory,” and God grants his request, he says, “I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee.” ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 8:1. “O Lord, how excellent is thy mane in all the earth! who host set thy glory above the heavens,” Psalm. 79:9. “Help us! O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name; and deliver us, and purge away our sins for thy name’s sake.” ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 102:15. “So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord and all the kings of the earth thy glory.” ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 147:13. “His name alone is excellent, and his glory is above the earth and heaven.” ~~Isaiah~~ Isaiah 48:9. “For my name’s sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee.” Verse 11. “For mine own sake, even for mine own sake will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? And I will not give my glory unto another.” ~~Isaiah~~ Isaiah 59:10. They shall fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun.” ~~Jeremiah~~ Jeremiah 13:11. “That they might be unto me for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory.” As glory often implies the manifestation, publication, and knowledge of excellency, and the honor that any one has in the world; so does name. ~~Genesis~~ Genesis 11:4. “Let us make us a name.” ~~Deuteronomy~~ Deuteronomy 26:19. “And to make thee high above all nations, in praise, in name, and in honor.”

So it is evident, that by name is sometimes meant much the same thing as praise, by several places which have been just mentioned. (as <sup><348></sup>Isaiah 48:9. <sup><2431></sup>Jeremiah 13:11. <sup><535></sup>Deuteronomy 26:19.) And also by <sup><343></sup>Jeremiah 33:9.

“And it shall be unto me for a name, a praise, and an honor, before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear of all the good I do unto them.”

“I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth.” (<sup><3181></sup>Zephaniah 3:20)

And it seems that the expression or exhibition of God’s goodness is especially called his name, in <sup><1235></sup>Exodus 33:19.

“I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee.”

And chapter <sup><1245></sup>34:5, 6, 7. “And the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, gracious and merciful, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands,” etc.

And the same illustrious brightness and effulgence in the pillar of cloud that appeared in the wilderness, and dwelt above the mercy-seat in the tabernacle and temple, (or rather the spiritual, divine brightness and effulgence represented by it,) so often called the glory of the Lord, is also often called the name of the Lord. Because God’s glory was to dwell in the tabernacle, therefore he promises, <sup><1246></sup>Exodus 29:43. “There will I meet with the children of Israel and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory.” And the temple was called the house of God’s glory <sup><3617></sup>Isaiah 60:7. In like manner, the name of God is said to dwell in the sanctuary. Thus we often read of the place that God chose, to put his name there: or, as it is in the Hebrew, to cause his NAME to inhabit there. So it is sometimes rendered by our translators. As <sup><1521></sup>Deuteronomy 12:11. “Then there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there.” And the temple is often spoken of as built for God’s name. And in <sup><5743></sup>Psalms 74:7. the temple is called the dwelling-place of God’s

name. The mercy-seat in the temple was called the throne of God's name or glory,

"Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake do not disgrace the throne of thy glory. " (<sup>2440</sup>Jeremiah 14:21)

Here God's name and his glory seem to be spoken of as the same.

## SECTION 7

*Showing that the ultimate end of the creation of the world is but one, and what that one end is.*

FROM what has been observed in the last section, it appears, if the whole of what is said relating to this affair be duly weighed, and one part compared with another, we shall have reason to think, that the design of the Spirit of God is not to represent God's ultimate end as manifold, but as ONE. For though it be signified by various names yet they appear not to be names of different things, but various names involving each other in their meaning: either different names of the same thing, or names of several parts of one whole; or of the same whole viewed in various lights or in its different respects and relations. For it appears, that all that is ever spoken of in the Scripture as art ultimate end of God's works, is included in that one phase, the, story of God; which is the name by which the ultimate end of God's works is most commonly called in Scripture and seems most aptly to signify the think.

The thing signified by that name, the glory of God when spoken of as the supreme and ultimate end of all God's works, is the emanation and true external expression of God's internal glory and fullness, meaning by his fullness what has already been explained, or, in other words, God's internal glory; in a true and just exhibition, or external existence of it. It is confessed, that there is a degree of obscurity in these definitions; but perhaps an obscurity which is unavoidable, through the Imperfection of language to express things of so sublime a nature. And therefore the thing may possibly be better understood, by using a variety of expressions, by a particular consideration of it, as it were, by parts, than by any short definition.

It includes the exercise of God's perfections to produce a proper effort, in opposition to their lying eternally dormant and ineffectual: as his power being eternally without any act or fruit of that power; his wisdom eternally ineffectual in any wise production, or prudent disposal of any thing, etc. The manifestation of his internal glory to created understandings. The communication of the infinite fullness of God to the creature. The creature's high esteem of God, love to him, and complacency and joy in him; and the proper exercises and expressions of these.

These at first view may appear to be entirely distinct things: but if we more closely consider the matter they will all appear to be ONE thing, in a variety of views and relations. They are all but the emanation of God's glory or the excellent brightness and fullness of the divinity diffused, overflowing, and as it were engorged; or in one word, existing as extra. God exercising his perfection to produce a proper effect, is not distinct from the emanation or communication of his fullness for this is the effect, viz. his fullness communicated, and the producing of this effect is the communication of his fullness; and there is nothing in this effectual exerting of God's perfection, but the emanation of God's internal glory.

Now God's internal glory is either in his understanding or will. The glory or fullness of his understanding is his knowledge. The internal glory and fullness of God having its special seat in his will, is his holiness and happiness. The whole of God's internal good or glory, is in these three things, viz. his infinite knowledge, his infinite virtue or holiness, and his infinite joy and happiness. Indeed there are a great many attributes in God, according to our way of conceiving them: but all may be reduced to these; or to their degree, circumstances, and relations. We have no conception of God's power, different from the degree of these things, with a certain relation of them to effects. God's infinity is not properly a distinct kind of good, but only expresses the degree of good there is in Him. So God's eternity is not a distinct good; but is the duration of good. His immutability is still the same good with a negation of change. So that, as I said, the fullness of the Godhead is the fullness of his understanding, consisting in his knowledge; and the fullness of his will consisting in his virtue and happiness.

And therefore, the external glory of God consists in the communication of these. The communication of his knowledge is chiefly in giving the knowledge of himself: for this is the knowledge in which the fullness of God's understanding chiefly consists. And thus we see how the manifestation of God's glory to created understandings, and their seeing and knowing it, is not distinct from an emanation or communication of God's fullness, but clearly implied in it. Again, the communication of God's virtue or holiness, is principally in communicating the love of himself. And thus we see how, not only the creatures seeing and knowing God's excellence, but also supremely esteeming and loving him, belongs to the communication of God's fullness. And the communication of God's joy and happiness, consists chiefly in communicating to the creature that happiness and joy which consists in rejoicing to God, and in his glorious excellency; for in such joy God's own happiness does principally consist. And in these things, knowing God's excellency, loving God for it, and rejoicing in it, and in the exercise and expression of these, consists God's honor and praise; so that these are clearly implied in that glory of God, which consists in the emanation of his internal glory.

And though all these things, which seem to be so various, are signified by that glory, which the Scripture speaks of as the ultimate end of all God's works; yet it is manifest there is no greater, and no other variety in it, than in the internal and essential glory of God itself. God's internal glory is partly in his understandings and partly in his will. And this internal glory, as seated in the will of God, implies both his holiness and his happiness: both are evidently God's glory, according to the use of the phrase. So that as God's external glory IS only the emanation of his internal, this variety necessarily follows. And again, it hence appears that here is no other variety or distinction but what necessarily arises from the distinct faculties of the creature, to which the communication is made, as created in the image of God: even as having these two faculties of understanding and will. God communicates himself to the understanding of the creature, in giving him the knowledge of his glory; and to the will of the creature, in giving him holiness, consisting primarily in the love of God: and in giving the creature happiness, chiefly consisting in joy in God. These are the sum of that emanation of divine fullness called in Scripture, the glory of God. The first part of this glory is called truth, the latter, grace

“We beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father,  
full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)

Thus we see that the great end of God’s works, which is so variously expressed in Scripture, is indeed but ONE; and this one end is most properly and comprehensively called, THE GLORY OF GOD; by which name it is most commonly called in Scripture; and is fitly compared to an effulgence or emanation of light from a luminary. Light is the external expression, exhibition, and manifestation of the excellency of the luminary, of the sun for instance: It is the abundant, extensive emanation and communication of the fullness of the sun to innumerable beings that partake of it. It is by this that the sun itself is seen and his glory be held, and all other things are discovered: it is by a participation of this communication from the sun, that surrounding objects receive all their lustre, beauty, and brightness. It is by this that all nature receives life, comfort, and joy. Light, is abundantly used in Scripture to represent and signify these three things, knowledge, holiness, and happiness.

What has been said may be sufficient to show, how those things, which are spoken of in Scripture as ultimate ends of God’s works, though they seem at first view to be distinct, are all plainly to be reduced to this one thing, viz. God’s internal glory or fullness existing in its emanation. And though God; in seeking this end, seeks the creature’s good, get therein appears his supreme regard to himself.

The emanation or communication of the divine fullness consisting in the knowledge of God, love to him, and joy in him, has relation indeed both to God and the creature: but it has relation to God as its fountain, as the thing communicated is something of its internal fullness. The water in the stream is something of the fountain; and the beams of the sun are something of the sun. And again, they have relation to God as their object: for the knowledge communicated, is the knowledge of God, and the love communicated, is the love of God, and the happiness communicated, is joy in God. In the creature’s knowing esteeming, loving, rejoicing in, and praising God, the glory of God is both exhibited and acknowledged; his fullness is received and returned. Here is both an emanation and emanation. The refulgence shines upon and into the creature, and is reflected back to the luminary. The beams of glory come from God, are something of God,



and are refunded back again to their original. So that the whole is of God, and in God, and to God, and he is the beginning, and the middle, and the end.

And though it be true that God has respect to the creature in these things, yet his respect to himself, and to the creature, are not properly a double and divided respect. What has been said, (chapter 1. Section 3, 4 ) may be sufficient to show this. Nevertheless, it may not be amiss here briefly to say a few things; though mostly implied in what has been said already.

When God was about to create the world, he had respect to that emanation of his glory, which is actually the consequence of the creation, both with regard to himself and the creature. He had regard to it as an emanation from himself a communication of himself, and as the thing communicated, in its nature returned to himself, as its final term. And he had regard to it also as the emanation was to the creature, and as the thing communicated was in the creature, as its subject.

And God had regard to it in this manner, as he had a supreme regard to himself, and value for his own infinite internal glory. It was this value for himself that caused him to value and seek that his internal glory should flow forth from himself. It was from his value for his glorious perfections of wisdom, righteousness, etc. that he valued the proper exercise and effect of these perfections, in wise and righteous acts and effects. It was from his infinite value for his internal glory and fullness, that he valued the thing itself communicated, which is something of the same extant in the creature. Thus, because he infinitely values his own glory, consisting in the knowledge of himself, love to himself, and complacency and joy in himself; he therefore valued the image, communication, or participation of these in the creature. And it is because he value himself, that he delights in the knowledge, and love, and joy of the creature; as being himself the object of this knowledge, love, and complacency. For it is the necessary consequence of true esteem and love, that we value others, esteem of the same object, and dislike the contrary. For the same reason, God approves of others, esteem and love of himself.

Thus it is easy to conceive, how God should seek the good of the creature, consisting in the creature's knowledge and holiness, and even his happiness, from a supreme regard to himself as his happiness arise from

that which is an image and participation of God's own beauty; and consists in the creature's exercising a supreme regard to God, and complacency in him; in beholding God's glory, in esteeming and loving it, and rejoicing in it, and in his exercising and testifying love and supreme respect to God: which is the same thing with the creature's exalting God as his chief good, and making him his supreme end.

And though the emanation of God's fullness, intended in the creation, is to the creature as its object and though the creature is the subject of the fullness communicated, which is the creature's 'good; get it does not necessarily follow, that even in so doing, God did not make himself his end. It comes to the same thing. God's respect to the creature's good, and his respect to himself, is not a divided respect; but both are united in one, as the happiness of the creature aimed at is happiness in union with himself. The creature is no farther happy with this happiness which God makes his ultimate end, than he becomes one with God. The more happiness the greater union: when the happiness is perfect, the union is perfect. And as the happiness will be increasing to eternity, the union will become more and more strict and perfect nearer and more like to that between God the Father and the Son who are so united, that their interest is perfectly one. If the happiness of the creature be considered in the whole of the creature's eternal duration, with all the infinity of its progress, and infinite increase of nearness and union to God, In this view, the creature must be looked upon as united to God in an infinite strictness.

If God has respect to something in the creature, which he views as of everlasting duration, and as rising higher and higher through that infinite duration, and that not with constantly diminishing (but perhaps an increasing) celerity; then he has respect to it, as, in the whole, of infinite height; though there never will be any particular time when it can be said already to have come to such a height.

Let the most perfect union with God be represented by something at an infinite height above us; and the eternally increasing union of the saints with God, by something that is ascending constantly towards that infinite height, moving upwards with a given velocity, and that is to continue thus to move to all eternity. God, who views the whole of this eternally increasing height, views it as an infinite height. And if he has respect to it,

and makes it his end, as in the whole of it, he has respect to it as an infinite height, though the time will never come when it can be said it has already arrived at this infinite height.

God aims at that which the motion or progression which he causes, aims at, or tends to. If there be many things supposed to be so made and appointed, that, by a constant eternal motion, they all tend to a certain center; then it appears that he who made them, and is the cause of their motion, aimed at that center: that term of their motion, to which they eternally tend, and are eternally, as it were, striving after. And if God be this center, then God aimed at himself. And herein it appears, that as he is the first author of their being and motion, so he is the last end the final terms to which is their ultimate tendency and aim.

We may judge of the end that the Creator aimed at, in the being, nature, and tendency he gives the creature, by the mark or term which they constantly aim at in their tendency and eternal progress; though the time will never come, when it can be said it is attained to, in the most absolutely perfect manner.

But if strictness of union to God be viewed as thus infinitely exalted, then the creature must be regarded as nearly and closely united to God. And viewed thus, their interest must be viewed as one with God's interest; and so is not regarded properly with a disjunct and separate, but an undivided respect. And as to any difficulty of reconciling God's not making the creature his ultimate end, with a respect properly distinct from a respect to himself; with his benevolence and free grace, and the creature's obligation to gratitude, the reader must be referred to chapter 1. Section 4. obj. 4. where this objection has been considered and answered at large.

If by reason of the strictness of the union of a man and his family, their interest may be looked upon as one, how much more so is the interest of Christ and his church, — whose first union in heaven is unspeakably more perfect and exalted, than that of an earthly father and his family — if they be considered with regard to their eternal and increasing union? Doubtless it may justly be esteemed so much one, that it may be sought, not with a distinct and separate, but an undivided respect. It is certain that what God aimed at in the creation of the world, was the good that would be the consequence of the creation, in the whole continuance of the thing created.

It is no solid objection against God aiming at an infinitely perfect union of the creature with himself, that the particular time will never come when it can be said, the union is now infinitely perfect. God aims at satisfying justice in the eternal damnation of sinners; which will be satisfied by their damnation, considered no otherwise than with regard to its eternal duration. But yet there never will come that particular moment, when it can be said, that now justice is satisfied. But if this does not satisfy our modern free-thinkers who do not like the talk about satisfying justice with an infinite punishment; I suppose it will not be denied by any, that God, in glorifying the saints in heaven with eternal felicity, aims to satisfy his infinite grace or benevolence, by the bestowment of a good infinitely valuable, because eternal: and yet there never will come the moment, when it can be said, that now this infinitely valuable good has been actually bestowed.

## DISSERTATION

## CONCERNING

## THE NATURE OF TRUE VIRTUE.

## CHAPTER 1.

*Showing wherein the essence of true virtue consists.*

WHATEVER controversies and variety of opinions there are about the nature of virtue, yet all excepting, some skeptics, who deny any real difference between virtue and vice, mean by it something beautiful, or rather some kind of beauty, or excellence. It is not all beauty that is called virtue; for instate, not the beauty of a building, of a flower, or of the rainbow; but some beauty belonging to beings that have perception and will. It is not all beauty of mankind that is called virtue; for instance, not the external beauty of the countenance, or shape, gracefulness of motion, or harmony of voice: but it is a beauty that has its original seat in the mind. But yet perhaps not every think that may be called a beauty of mind, is properly called virtue. There is a beauty of understanding and speculation; there is something in the ideas and conceptions of great philosophers and. statesmen, that may be called beautiful; which is a different thing from what is most commonly meant by virtue.

But virtue is the beauty of those qualities and acts of the mind, that are of a moral nature, i. e. such as are attended with desert or worthiness of praise or blame. Things of this sort, it is generally agreed, so far as I know, do not belong merely to speculation: but to the disposition and will, or (to use a general word, I suppose commonly well understood) to the heart. Therefore, I suppose, I shall not depart from the common opinion, when I say, that virtue is the beauty of the qualities and exercises of the heart, or those actions which proceed from them. So that when it is inquired, what is the nature of true virtue? this is the same as to inquire, what that is,

which renders any habit, disposition, or exercise of the heart truly beautiful?

I use the phrase true virtue, and speak of things truly beautiful, because I suppose it will generally be allowed, that there is a distinction to be made between some things which are truly virtuous, and others which only seem to be so, through a partial and imperfect view of things: that some actions and dispositions appear beautiful, if considered partially and superficially, or with regard to some things belonging to them, and in some of their circumstances and tendencies, which would appear otherwise in a more extensive and comprehensive view, wherein they are seen clearly in their whole nature, and the extent of their connexions in the universality of things.

There is a general and particular beauty. By a particular beauty, I mean that by which a thing appears beautiful when considered only with regard to its connection with and tendency to, some particular things within a limited and as it were a private, sphere. And a general beauty is that by which a thing appears beautiful when viewed most perfectly, comprehensively, and universally, with regard to all its tendencies, and its connexions with every thing to which it stands related. The former may be without and against the latter. As a few notes in a tune, taken only by themselves, and in their relation to one another, may be harmonious, which, when considered with respect to all the notes in the tune, or the entire series of sounds they are connected with, may be very discordant, and disagreeable. That only, therefore, is what I mean by true virtue which, belonging to the heart of an intelligent being, is beautiful by a general beauty, or beautiful in a comprehensive view, as it is in itself, and as related to every thing with which it stands connected. And therefore when we are inquiring concerning the nature of true virtue — wherein this true and general beauty of the heart does most essentially consist — this is my answer to the inquiry: —

True virtue most essentially consists in BENEVOLENCE TO BEING IN GENERAL. Or perhaps, to speak more accurately, it is that consent, propensity and union of heart to being in general, which is immediately exercised in a general good will.

The things before observed respecting, the nature of true virtue, naturally lead us to such a notion of it. If it has its seat in the heart, and is the general goodness and beauty of the disposition and its exercise, in the most comprehensive view, considered with regard to its universal tendency, and as related to every thing with which it stands connected; what can it consist in, but a consent and good will to being in general? Beauty does not consist in discord and dissent but in consent and agreement. And if every intelligent being is some way related to being in general, and is a part of the universal system of existence and so stands in connection with the whole, what can its general and true beauty be, but its union and consent with the great whole!

If any such thing can be supposed as a union of heart to some particular being, or number of beings, disposing it to benevolence to a private circle or system of beings which are but a small part of the whole; not implying a tendency to an union with the great system, and not at all inconsistent with enmity towards being in general, this I suppose not to be of the nature of true virtue, although it may in some respects be good, and may appear beautiful in a confined and contracted view of things. — But of this more afterwards.

It is abundantly plain by the Holy Scriptures, and generally allowed, not only by Christian divines, but by the more considerable Deists that virtue most essentially consists in love. And I suppose it is owned by the most considerable writers, to consist general love of benevolence, or kind affection: though it seems to me the meaning of some in this affair is not sufficiently explained; which perhaps occasions some error or confusion in discourses on this subject.

When I say, true virtue consists in love to being in general, I shall not be likely to be understood, that no one act of the mind or exercise of love is of the nature of true virtue, but what has being in general, or the great system of universal existence, for its direct and immediate object: so that no exercise of love, or kind affection, to any one particular being, that is but a small part of this whole, has any thing of the nature of true virtue. But, that the nature of this virtue consists in a disposition to benevolence towards being in general; though from such a disposition may arise exercises of love to particular beings, as objects are presented, and

occasions arise. No wonder, that he who is of a generally benevolent disposition, should be more disposed than another to have his heart moved with benevolent affection to particular persons, with whom he is acquainted and conversant, and from whom arise the greatest and most frequent occasions for exciting his benevolent temper. But my meaning is, that no affections towards particular persons or beings are of the nature of true virtue, but such as arise from a generally benevolent temper, or from that habit or frame of mind, wherein consists a disposition to love being in general.

And perhaps it is needless for me to give notice to my readers, that when I speak of an intelligent being having a heart united and benevolently disposed to being in general, I thereby mean intelligent being in general. Not inanimate things, or beings that have no perception or will; which I are not properly capable objects of benevolence.

Love is commonly distinguished into love of benevolence, and love of complacence. Love of benevolence is that affection or propensity of the heart to any being, which causes it to incline to its well-being, or disposes it to desire and take pleasure in its happiness. And if I mistake not it is agreeable to the common opinion, that beauty in the object is not always the ground of this propensity, but that there may be a disposition to the welfare of those that are not considered as beautiful, unless mere existence be accounted a beauty. And benevolence or goodness in the Divine Being is generally supposed, not only to be prior to the beauty of many of its objects, but to their existence; so as to be the ground both of their existence and their beauty, rather than the foundation of God's benevolence; as it is supposed that it is God's goodness which moved him to give them both being and beauty. So that if all virtue primarily consists in that affection of heart to being, which is exercised in benevolence, or an inclination to its good, then God's virtue is so extended as to include a propensity not only to being actually existing, and actually beautiful, but to possible being, so as to incline him to give a being beauty and happiness.

What is commonly called love of complacence, presupposes beauty. For it is no other than delight in beauty; or complacence in the person or being beloved for his beauty. If virtue be the beauty of an intelligent being, and



virtue consists in love, then it is plain inconsistency, to suppose that virtue primarily consists in any love to its object for its beauty, either in a love of complacency which is delight in a being for its beauty or in a love of benevolence, that has the beauty of its object for its foundation. For that would be to suppose, that the beauty of intelligent beings primarily consists in love to beauty; or that their virtue first of all consists in their love to virtue. Which is an inconsistency, and going in a circle. Because it makes virtue, or beauty of mind, the foundation or first motive of that love wherein virtue originally consists, or wherein the very first virtue consists; or, it supposes the first virtue to be the consequence and effect of virtue. Which makes the first virtue both the ground and the consequence, both cause and effect of itself. Doubtless virtue primarily consists in something else besides and effect or consequence of virtue. If virtue consider primarily in love to virtue, then virtue, the thing loved, is the love of virtue: so that virtue must consist in the love of the love of virtue and so on in infinity. For there is no end of going back in a circle. We never come to any beginning or foundation; it is without beginning, and hangs on nothing.

Therefore, if the essence of virtue, or beauty of mind lies in love, or a disposition to love, it must primarily consist in something different both from complacency, which is a delight in beauty, and also from any benevolence that has the beauty of its object for its foundation. Because it is absurd to say, that virtue is primarily and first of all the consequence of itself; which makes virtue primarily prior to itself.

Nor can virtue primarily consist in gratitude; or one being's benevolence to another for his benevolence to him. Because this implies the same inconsistency. For it supposes a benevolence prior to gratitude, which is the cause of gratitude. The first benevolence cannot be gratitude. Therefore there is room left for no other conclusion, than that the primary object of virtuous love is being, simply considered; or that true virtue primarily consists, not in love to any particular beings, because of their virtue or beauty, nor in gratitude, because they love us, but in a propensity and union of heart to being simply considered exciting absolute benevolence, if I may so call it, to being in general. I say, true virtue primarily consists in this. For I am far from asserting, that there is no true virtue in any other

love than this absolute benevolence. But I would express what appears to me to be the truth, on this subject, in the following particulars.

The first object of a virtuous benevolence is being, simply considered: and if being, simply considered, be its object, then being in, general is its object; and what it has an ultimate propensity to, is the highest good of being in general. And it will seek the good of even individual being unless it be conceived as not consistent with the highest good of being in general. In which case the good of a particular being, or some beings, maybe given up for the sake of the highest good of being in general. And particularly, if there be any being statedly and irreclaimably opposite, and an enemy to being in general, then consent and adherence to being in general will induce the truly virtuous heart to forsake that enemy, and to oppose it.

Further, if BEING, simply considered, be the first object of a truly virtuous benevolence, then that object who has most of being, or has the greatest share of existence, rather things being equal, so far as such a being is exhibited to our facilities, will have the greatest share of the propensity and benevolent affections of the heart. I say, “other things being equal,” especially because there is a secondary object of virtuous benevolence, that I shall take notice of presently, which must be considered as the ground or motive to a purely virtuous benevolence. Pure benevolence in its first exercise is nothing else but being’s uniting consent, or propensity to being; and inclining to the general highest good, and to each being whose welfare is consistent with the highest general good, in proportion to the degree of existence, understand, “other things being equal.”

The second object of a virtuous propensity of heart is benevolent being. A secondary ground of pure benevolence is virtuous benevolence itself in its object. When any one under the influence of general benevolence, sees another being possessed of the like general benevolence, this attaches his heart to him, and draws forth greater love to him, than merely his having existence: because so far as the being beloved has love to the being in general, so far his own being is, as it were, enlarged; extends to, and in some sort comprehends, being in general: and therefore, he that is governed by love to being in general, must of necessity have complacency in him, and the greater degree of benevolence to him, as it were out of gratitude to him for his love to general existence, that his own heart is extended and

united to, and so looks on its interest as its own. It is because his heart is thus united to being in general, that he looks on a benevolent propensity to being in general, wherever he sees it, as the beauty of the being in whom it is, an excellency that renders him worthy of esteem, complacence, and the greater good will. — But several things may be noted more particularly this secondary ground of a truly virtuous love.

**1.** That loving a being on this ground necessarily arises from pure benevolence to being in general, and comes to the same thing. For he that has a simple and pure good will to general existence, must love that temper in to, that agrees and conspires with itself. A spirit of consent to being must agree with consent to being. That which truly and sincerely seeks the good of others, must approve of and love that which joins with him in seeking the good of others.

**2.** This secondary ground of virtuous love, is the thing wherein true moral or spiritual beauty primarily consists. Yea, spiritual beauty consists wholly in this, and in the various qualities and exercises of mind which proceed from it and the external actions which proceed from these internal qualities and exercises. And in these things consists all true virtue, viz. in this love of being, and the qualities and acts which arise from it.

**3.** As all spiritual beauty lies in these virtuous principles and acts, so it is primarily on this account they are beautiful, viz. that they imply consent and union with being in general. This is the primary and most essential beauty of every thing that can justly be called by the name of virtue, or is any moral excellency in the eye of one that has a perfect view of things. I say, “the primary and most essential beauty,” because there is a secondary and inferior sort of beauty; which I shall take notice of afterwards.

**4.** This spiritual beauty, which is but a secondary ground of virtuous benevolence, is the ground, not obey of benevolence, but complacence, and is the primary ground of the latter, that is, when the complacence is truly virtuous. Love to us in particular, and kindness received, may be a secondary ground: but this is the primary objective foundation of it.

**5.** It must be noted, that the degree of the amiableness of true virtue, primarily consisting in consent, and a benevolent propensity of heart to being in general, is not in the simple proportion of the degree of benevolent

affection seen, but in a proportion compounded of the greatness of the benevolent being, or the degree of being and the degree of benevolence. One that loves being. In general, will necessarily value good will to being in general, wherever he sees it. But if he sees the same benevolence in two beings, he will value it more in two, than in one only. Because it is a greater thing, more favorable to being in general, to have two beings to favor it, than only one of them. For there is more being that favors being: both together having more being than one alone. So, if one being, be as great as two, has as much existence as both together, and has the same degree of general benevolence it is more favorable to being in general, than if there were general benevolence in a being that had but half that share of existence. As a large quantity of gold, with the same quality, is more valuable than a small quantity of the same metal.

**6.** It is impossible that any one should truly relish, this beauty, consisting in general benevolence, who has not that temper himself. I have observed, that if any being is possessed of such a temper, he will unavoidably be pleased with the same temper in another. And it may in like manner be demonstrated, that it is such a spirit, and nothing else, which will relish such a spirit. For if a being, destitute of benevolence, should love benevolence to being in general, it would prize and seek that for which it had no value. For how should one love and value a disposition to a thing, or a tendency to promote it, and for that very reason, when the thing itself is what he is regardless of and has no value for, nor desires to have promoted.

## CHAPTER 2.

*Showing how that love wherein true virtue consists, respects the Divine Being and created beings.*

FROM what has been said, it is evident, that true virtue must chiefly consist in LOVE TO GOD; the Being of beings, infinitely the greatest and best. This appears, whether we consider the primary or secondary ground of virtuous love. It was observed, that the first objective ground of that love, wherein true virtue consists, is BEING simply considered: and, as a necessary consequence of this, that being who has the greatest share of universal existence has proportionally the greatest share of virtuous benevolence, so far as such a being is exhibited to the faculties of our minds, other things being equal. But God has infinitely the greatest share of existence. So that all other being, even the whole universe, is as nothing in comparison of the Divine Being.

And if we consider the secondary ground of love, or moral excellency, the same thing will appear. For as God is infinitely the greatest Being, so he is allowed to be infinitely the most beautiful and excellent: and all the beauty to be found throughout the whole creation, is but the reflection of the diffused beams of that Being who hath an infinite fullness of brightness and glory. God's beauty is infinitely more valuable than that of all other beings upon both those accounts mentioned, viz. the degree of his virtue, and the greatness of his being, possessed of this virtue. And God has sufficiently exhibited himself, both in his being, and his infinite greatness and excellency: and has given us faculties, whereby we are capable of plainly discovering his immense superiority to all other beings, in these respects. Therefore, he that has true virtue, consisting in benevolence to begin in general, and in benevolence to virtuous being, must necessarily have a supreme love to God, both of, benevolence and complacence. And all true virtue must radically and essentially, and, as it were, summarily, consist in this. Because God is not only infinitely greater and more excellent than all other being, but he is the head of the universal system of existence; the foundation and fountain of all being and all beauty; from whom all is perfectly derived, and on whom all is most absolutely and perfectly dependent; of whom, and through whom, and to, whom is all

being and all perfection, and whose being and beauty are, as it were, the sum and comprehension of all existence and excellence: much more than the sun is the fountain and summary comprehension of all the light and brightness of the day.

If it should be objected, that virtue consists primarily in benevolence, but that our fellow-creatures, and not God, seem to be the most proper objects of our benevolence; inasmuch as our goodness extendeth not to God, and we cannot be profitable to him. — To this I answer,

**1.** A benevolent propensity of heart it exercised, not only in seeking to promote the happiness of the being towards whom it is exercised, but also in rejoicing in his happiness. Even as gratitude for benefits received will not only excite endeavors to requite the kindness we receive, by equally benefiting our benefactor, but also if he above any need of use or we have nothing to bestow, and are unable to repay his kindness, it will dispose us to rejoice in his prosperity.

**2.** Though we are not able to give any thing to God, which we have of our own, independently, yet we may be the instruments of promoting his glory, in which he takes a true and proper delight. — Whatever influence such an objection may seem to have on the minds of some, yet is there any that owns the being of a God, who will deny that any benevolent affection is due to God, and proper to be exercised towards him? If no benevolence is to be exercised towards God, because we cannot profit him, then for the same reason, neither is gratitude to be exercised towards him for his benefits to us because we cannot requite him. But where is the man who believes a God and a providence, that will say this?

There seems to be an inconsistency in some writers on morality, in this respect, that they do not wholly exclude a regard to the Deity out of their schemes of morality, but yet mention it so slightly, that they leave me room and reason to suspect they esteem it a less important and subordinate part of true morality; and insist on benevolence to the created system, in such a manner as would naturally lead one to suppose they look upon that as by far the most important and essential thing in their scheme. But why should this be? If true virtue consists partly in a respect to God, then doubtless it consists chiefly in it. If true morality requires that we should have some regard, some benevolent affection to our

Creator, as well as to his creatures, then doubtless it requires the first regard to be paid to him; and that he be every way the supreme object of our benevolence. If his being above our reach, and beyond all capacity of being profited by us, does not hinder but that nevertheless he is the proper object of our love then it does not hinder that he should be loved according to his dignity, or according to the degree in which he has those things wherein worthiness of regard consists, so far as we are capable of it. But this worthiness, none will deny, consists in these two things, greatness and moral goodness. And those that own a God, do not deny that he infinitely exceeds all other beings in these. If the Deity is to be looked upon as within that system of beings which properly terminates our benevolence, or belonging to that whole, certainly he is to be regarded as the head of the system, and the chief part of it: if it be proper to call him a part, who is infinitely more than all the rest, and in comparison of whom, and without whom, all the rest are nothing, either as to beauty or existence. And therefore certainly, unless we will be atheists, we must allow that true virtue does primarily and most essentially consist in a supreme love to God, and that where this is wanting, there can be no true virtue.

But this being a matter of the highest importance, I shall say, something further to make it plain, that love to God is most essential to true virtue; and that no benevolence whatsoever to other beings can be of the nature of true virtue without it.

And therefore, let it be supposed, that some beings, by natural instinct, or by some other means, have a determination of mind to union and benevolence to a particular person, or private system, which is but a small part of the universal system of being: and that this disposition or determination of mind is independent on, or not subordinate to, benevolence to begin in general. Such a determination, disposition, or affection of mind is not of the nature of true virtue.

This is allowed by all with regard to self-love; in which good will is confined to one single person only. And there are the same reasons why any other private affection or good will, though extending to a society of persons independent of, and insubordinate to, benevolence to the universality, should not be esteemed truly virtuous. For, notwithstanding

it extends to a number of persons, which taken together are more than a single person, yet the whole falls infinitely short of the universality of existence; and if put in the scales with it, has no greater proportion to it than a single person.

If however, it may not be amiss more particularly to consider the reasons why private affections, or good will limited to a particular circle of beings, falling infinitely short of the whole existence, and not dependent upon it, nor subordinate to general benevolence, cannot be of the nature of true virtue.

**1.** Such a private affection, detached from general benevolence, and independent on it, as the case may be, will be against general benevolence, or of a contrary tendency; and will set a person against general existence, and make him an enemy to it. As it is with selfishness, or when a man is governed by a regard to his own private interest, independent of regard to the public good, such a temper exposes a man to act the part of an enemy to the public. As. in every case wherein his private interest seems to clash with the public; or in all those cases wherein such thinks are presented to his view, that suit his personal appetites or private inclinations, but are inconsistent with the good of the public. On which account, a selfish, contracted, narrow spirit is generally abhorred, and is esteemed base and sordid. But if a man's affection takes in half a dozen more, and his regards extend so far beyond his own single person as to take in his children and family; or if it reached further still to a larger circle, but falls infinitely of the universal system, and is exclusive of being; his general; his private affection exposes him to the same thing, viz. to pursue the interest of its particular object in opposition to general existence: which is certainly contrary to the tendency of true virtue; yea, directly contrary to the main and most essential thing in its nature, the thing on account of which chiefly its nature and tendency is good. For the chief and most essential good that is in virtue, is its favoring being in general. Now certainly, if private affection to a limited system had in itself the essential nature of virtue, it would be impossible that it should, in any circumstance whatsoever, have a tendency and inclination directly contrary to that wherein the essence of virtue chiefly consists.



**2.** Private affection, if not subordinate to general affection, is not only liable, as the case may be, to issue in enmity to being in general, but has a tendency to it as the case certainly is, and must necessarily be. For he that is influenced by private affection, not subordinate to a regard to being in general, sets up its particular or limited object above being in general; and this most naturally tends to enmity against the latter, which is by right the great supreme, ruling, and absolutely sovereign object of our regard. Even as the setting up another prince as supreme in any kingdom, distinct from the lawful sovereign, naturally tends to enmity against the lawful sovereign. Wherever it is sufficiently published, that the supreme, infinite, and all-comprehending Being requires a supreme regard to himself; and insists upon it, that our respect to him should universally rule in our hearts, and every other affection be subordinate to it, and this under the pain of his displeasure, (as we must suppose it is in the world of intelligent creatures, if God maintains a moral kingdom in the world,) then a consciousness of our having chosen and set up another prince to rule over us, and subjected our hearts to him, and continuing in such an act, must unavoidably excite enmity, and fix us in a stated opposition to the Supreme Being. This demonstrates, that affection to a private society or system, independent on general benevolence, cannot be of the nature of true virtue. For this would be absurd, that it has the nature and essence of true virtue, and yet at the same time has a tendency opposite to true virtue.

**3.** Not only would affection to a private system, insubordinate to a regard to being in general, have a tendency to oppose the supreme object of virtuous affection as its effect and consequence, but would become itself an opposition to that object. Considered by itself in its nature, detached from its effects, it is an instance of great opposition to the rightful supreme object of our respect. For it exalts its private object above the other great and infinite object; and sets that up as supreme, in opposition to this.

It puts down being in general, which is infinitely superior in itself, and infinitely more important, in an infinitely place, yea, subjects the supreme general object to this private infinitely inferior object: which is to treat it with great contempt, and truly to act in opposition to it and to act in opposition to the true order of things, and in opposition to that which is

infinitely the supreme interest making this supreme and infinitely important interest, as far as in us lies to be subject to, and dependent on, an interest infinitely inferior. This is, to act the part of an enemy to it. He that takes a subject, and exalts him above his prince, sets him as supreme instead of the prince, and treats his prince wholly as a subject, therein acts the part of an enemy to his prince.

From these things, I think, it is manifest, that no affection limited to any private system, not depending on nor subordinate to being in general, can be of the nature of true virtue; and this, whatever the private system be, let it be more or less extensive, consisting of a greater or smaller number of individuals, so long as it contains are infinitely little part of universal existence, and so bears no proportion to the great all-comprehending system. And consequently, that no affection whatsoever to any creature or any system of created beings, which is not dependent on, nor subordinate to, a propensity or union of the heart to God, the supreme and infinite Being, can be of the nature of true virtue.

From hence also it is evident, that the divine virtue, or the virtue of the divine mind, must consist primarily in love to himself, or in the mutual love and friendship which subsists eternally and necessarily between the several persons in the Godhead, or that infinitely strong propensity there is in these divine persons one to another. There is no need of multiplying words, to prove that it must be thus, on a supposition that virtue, in its most essential nature, consists in benevolent affection or propensity of heart towards being in general; and so flowing out to particular beings, in a greater or lesser degree, according to the measure of existence and beauty which they are possessed of. It will also follow, from the foregoing things, that God's goodness and love to created beings, is derived from and subordinate to his love to himself.

With respect to the manner in which a virtuous love in created beings, one to another, is dependent on, and derived from love to God, this will appear by a proper consideration of what has been said, that it is sufficient to render love to any created being, virtuous, if it arise from the temper of mind wherein consists a disposition to love God supremely. Because it appears from what has been already observed, all that love to particular beings, which is the fruit of a benevolent propensity of heart to being, in

general, is virtuous love. But, as has been remarked, a benevolent propensity of heart to being in general, and a temper or disposition to love God supremely are in effect the same thing. Therefore, if love to a created being comes from that temper, or propensity of the heart, it is virtuous. However, every particular exercise of love to a creature may not sensibly arise from any exercise of love to God, or an explicit consideration of any similitude, conformity, union, or relation to God, in the creature beloved.

The most proper evidence of love to a created being arising from that temper of mind wherein consists a supreme propensity of heart to God, seems to be the agreeableness of the kind and degree of our love to God's end in our creation, and in the creation of all things, and the coincidence of the exercise of our love, in their manner order, and measure, with the manner in which God himself exercises love to the creature in the creation and government of the world, and the way in which God, as the first cause and supreme disposer of all things, has respect to the creature's happiness, in subordination to himself as his own supreme end. For the true virtue of created beings is doubtless their highest excellency, and their true goodness, and that by which they are especially agreeable to the mind of their Creator. But the true goodness of a thing, must be its agreeableness to its end, or its fitness to answer the design for which it was made. Therefore, they are good moral agents, whose temper of mind, or propensity of heart, is agreeable to the end for which God made moral agents. But, as has been shown, the last end for which God has made moral agents, must be the last end for which God has made all things: it being evident, that the moral world is the end of the rest of the world, the inanimate and unintelligent world being made for the rational and moral world, as much as a house is prepared for the inhabitants.

By these things, it appears, that a truly virtuous mind, being as it were under the sovereign dominion of love to God, above all things, seeks the glory of God, and makes this his supreme, governing, and ultimate end. This consists in the expression of God's perfections in their proper effects, — the manifestation of God's glory to created understanding — the communications of the infinite fullness of God to the creature — the creature's highest esteem of God, love to, and joy in him, — and in the proper exercises and expressions of these. And so far as a virtuous mind

exercises true virtue in benevolence to created beings, it chiefly seeks the good of the creature; consisting in its knowledge or view of God's glory and beauty, its union with God, conformity and love to him, and joy in him. And that disposition of heart, that consent, union, or propensity of mind to being in general, which appears chiefly in such exercises, is VIRTUE, truly so called; or in other words true GRACE and real HOLINESS. And no other disposition or affection but this is of the nature of true virtue.

Corollary. Hence it appears, that those schemes of religion or moral philosophy, which — however well in some respect they may treat of benevolence to mankind, and other virtues depending on it, yet — have not a supreme regard to God, and love to him, laid as the foundation, and all other virtues handled in a connection with this and in subordination to it, are not true schemes of philosophy but are fundamentally and essentially defective. And whatever other benevolence or generosity towards mankind, and other virtues, or moral qualifications which go by that name, any are possessed of, that are not attended with a love to God, which is altogether above them and to which they are subordinate, and on which they are dependent, there is nothing of the nature of true virtue or religion in them. And it may be asserted in general, that nothing is of the nature of true virtue, in which God is not the first and the last; or which, with regard to their exercises in general, have not their first foundation and source in apprehensions of God's supreme dignity and glory, and in answerable esteem and love of him, and have not respect to God as the supreme end.

## CHAPTER 3.

### *Concerning the secondary and inferior kind of beauty.*

THOUGH what has been spoken of is, alone, justly esteemed the true beauty of moral agents, or spiritual beings; this alone being what would appear beautiful in them upon a clear and comprehensive view of things, and therefore alone is the moral amiableness of beings that have understanding and will, in the eyes of him that perfectly sees all things as they are; yet there are other qualities, other sensations, propensities, and affections of mind, and principles of action, that often obtain the epithet of virtuous, and by many are supposed to have the nature of true virtue; which are entirely of a distinct nature from this, and have nothing of that kind; and therefore are erroneously confounded with real virtue.

That consent, agreement, or union of being to being, which has been spoken of, viz. the union or propensity of minds to mental or spiritual existence, may be called the highest and primary beauty; being the proper and peculiar beauty of spiritual and moral beings, which are the highest and first part of the universal system, for whose sake all the rest has existence. Yet there is another, inferior, secondly beauty, which is some image of this, and which is not peculiar to spiritual beings, but is found even in inanimate things; which consists in a mutual consent and agreement of different things, in form, manner, quantity and visible end or design; called by the various names of regularity, order, uniformity, symmetry, proportion, harmony, etc. Such is the mutual agreement of the various sides of a square, or equilateral triangle, or of a regular polygon. Such is, as it were, the mutual consent of the different parts of the periphery of a circle, or surface of a sphere, and of the corresponding parts of an ellipsis. Such is the agreement of the colors figures, dimensions and distances of the different spots on a chess board. Such is the beauty of the figures on a piece of chintz or brocade. Such is the beautiful proportion of the various parts of a humans body, or countenance. And such is the sweet mutual consent and agreement of the various notes of a melodious tune. This is the same that Mr. Hutchinson, in his Treastise on Beauty, expresses by uniformity in the midst of variety. Which is no other than the consent or agreement of different things, in form, quantity, etc. He observes, that the

greater the variety is in equal uniformity the greater the beauty. Which is no more than to say, the more there are of different mutually agreeing things, the greater is the beauty. And the reason of that is, because it is more considerable to have many things consent one with another, than a few only.

The beauty, which consists in the visible fitness of a thing to its use, and unity of design, is not a distinct sort of beauty from this. For it is to be observed, that one thing which contributes to the beauty of the agreement and proportion of various things, is their relation one to another which connects them, and introduces them together into view and consideration, and whereby one suggests the other to, the mind, and the mind is led to compare them, and so to expect and desire agreement. Thus the uniformity of two or more pillars, as they may happen to be found in different places, is not an equal degree of beauty, as that uniformity in so many pillars in the corresponding parts of the same building. So means and an intended effect are related one to another. The answerableness of a thing to its use is only the proportion and fitness of a cause, or means, to a visibly designed effect, and so an effect suggested to the mind by the idea of the means. This kind of beauty is not entirely different from that beauty which there is in fitting a mortise to its tenon. Only when the beauty consists in unity of design, or the adaptedness of a variety of things to promote one intended effect, in which all conspire, as the various parts of an ingenious complicated machine, there is a double beauty, as there is a twofold agreement and conformity. First there is the agreement of the various parts to the designed end. Secondly, through this designed end or effect, all the various particulars agree one with another as the general medium of their union, whereby they, being united in this third, are all united one to another.

The reason, or at least one reason, why God has made this kind of mutual agreement of things beautiful and grateful to those intelligent beings that perceive it, probably is, that there is in it some image of the true, spiritual, original beauty, which has been spoken of; consisting in being's consent to being, or the union of spiritual beings in a mutual propensity and affection of heart. The other is an image of this, because by that uniformity diverse things become as it were one, as it is in this cordial union. And it pleases God to observe analogy in his works, as is manifest in fact, in innumerable

instances; and especially to establish inferior things with analogy to superior. Thus, in how many instances has he formed brutes in analogy to the nature of mankind! and plants, in analogy to animals, with respect to the manner of their generation, nutrition, etc. And so he has constituted the external world in analogy to the spiritual world, in numberless instances; as might be shown, if it were necessary, and here were a proper place for it. Why such analogy in God's works pleases him, it is not needful now to inquire. It is sufficient that he makes an agreement of different things, in their form, manner, measure, etc. to appear beautiful, because here is some image of a higher kind of agreement and consent of spiritual beings.

It has pleased him to establish a law of nature, by virtue of which the uniformity and mutual correspondence of a beautiful plant, and the respect which the various parts of a regular building seem to have one to another, and their agreement and union, and the consent or concord of the various notes of a melodious tune, should appear beautiful; because therein is some image of the consent of mind, of the different members of, a society or system of intelligent beings, sweetly united in a benevolent agreement of heart.

And here by the way, I would further observe, probably it is with regard to this image or resemblance, which secondary beauty has of true spiritual beauty, that God has so constituted nature, that the presenting of this inferior beauty, especially in those kinds of it which have the greatest resemblance of the primary beauty, as the harmony of sounds, and the beauties of nature, have a tendency to assist those whose hearts are under the influence of a truly virtuous temper, to dispose them to the exercises of divine love, and enliven in them a sense of spiritual beauty.

From what has been said we may see, that there are two sorts of agreement or consent of one thing to another.

- (1.) There is a cordial agreement, that consists in concord and union of mind and heart which, if not attended (viewing things in general) with more discord than concord, is true virtue, and the original or primary beauty, which is the only true moral beauty.

**(2.)** There is a natural union or agreement which, though some image of the other, is entirely a distinct thing; the will, disposition, or affection of the heart having no concern in it, but consisting only in uniformity and consent of nature, form, quantity, etc. (as before described,) wherein lies an inferior secondary sort of beauty, which may in distinction from the other, be called natural beauty.

This may be sufficient to let the reader know how I shall hereafter use the phrases cordial and natural agreement; and moral, spiritual, divine, and primary original beauty, and secondary or natural beauty. Concerning this latter, the inferior kind of beauty, the following, things may be observed:

**1.** The cause why secondary beauty is grateful to men, is only a law of nature, which God has fixed, or an instinct he has given to mankind; and not their perception of the same thing which God is pleased to regard as the ground or rule by which he has established such a law of nature. This appears in two things.

**(1.)** That which God respects, as the ground of this law of nature, whereby things having a secondary beauty are made grateful to men, is their mutual agreement and proportion, in measure, form, etc. But, in many instances persons that are gratified and affected with this beauty, do not reflect on that particular agreement and proportion, which, according to the law of nature, is the ground and rule of beauty in the case, yea, are ignorant of it. Thus, a man may be pleased with the harmony of the notes in a tune, and yet know nothing of that proportion or adjustments of the notes, which, by the law of nature, is the ground of the melody. He knows not, that the vibrations in one note regularly coincide with the vibrations in another, that the vibrations of a note coincide in time with two vibrations of its octave and that two vibrations of a note coincide with three of its fifth, etc. — Yea, he may not know, that there are vibrations of the air in the case, or any corresponding motions in the organs of hearing, in the auditory nerve, or animal spirits. — So a man may be affected and pleased with a beautiful proportion of the features in a face, and yet not know what that proportion is, or in what measures, quantities, and distances it consists. In this, therefore, a sensation of secondary beauty differs from a sensation of primary and spiritual beauty, consisting in a



spiritual union and agreement. What makes the latter grateful, is perceiving the union itself. It is the immediate view of that wherein the beauty fundamentally lies, that is pleasing to the virtuous mind.

(2.) God, in establishing such a law — that mutual natural agreement of different things, in form, quantity, etc. should appear beautiful or grateful to men — seems to have had regard to the resemblance there is in such a natural agreement, to that spiritual, cordial agreement, wherein original beauty consists. But it is not any reflection upon, or perception of, such a resemblance, that is the reason why such a form or state of objects appear beautiful to men: but their sensation of pleasure, on a view of this secondary beauty, is immediately owing to the law God has established, or the instinct he has given.

2. Another thing observable concerning this kind of beauty, is, that it affects the mind more (other things being equal) when taken notice of in objects which are of considerable importance, than in little trivial matters. Thus, the symmetry of the parts of a human body, or countenance; affects the mind more than the beauty of a flower. So the beauty of the solar system, more than as great and as manifold an order and uniformity in a tree. And the proportions of the parts of a church, or a palace, more than the same proportions in some little slight compositions, made to please children.

3. Not only uniformity and proportion, etc. of different things, is requisite, in order to this inferior beauty; but also some relation or connection of the things thus agreeing one with another. As the uniformity or likeness of a number of pillars, scattered hither and thither, does not constitute beauty, or at least by no means in an equal degree, as uniformity in pillars connected in the same building in parts that have relation one to another. So if we see things unlike, and very disproportioned, in distant places, which have no relation to each other, this excites no such idea of deformity, as disagreement, inequality, or disproportion in things related and connected; and the nearer the relation, and the stricter the connection, so much the greater and more disgustful is the deformity, consisting in their disagreement.

4. This secondary kind of beauty, consisting in uniformity and proportion, not only takes place in material and external things, but also in things

immaterial; and is, in very many things, plain and sensible in the latter, as well is the former. And when it is so, there is no reasons why it should not be grateful to them that behold it, in these as well as the other, by virtue of the same sense, or the same determination of mind, to be gratified with uniformity and proportion. If uniformity and proportion be the things that affect and appear agreeable to this sense of beauty, their why should not uniformity and proportion affect the same sense in immaterial things as well as material, if there be equal capacity of discerning it in both? and indeed more in spiritual things (*cateris paribus*) as these are more important than things merely external and material?

This is not only reasonable to be supposed, but is evident in fact, in numberless instances. There is a beauty of order in society, besides what consists in benevolence, or can be referred to it, which is of the secondary kind. As, when the different members of society have all their appointed office, place, and station, according to their several capacities and talents, and every one keeps his place, and continues in his proper business. In this there is a beauty, not of a different kind from the regularity of a beautiful building, or piece of skillful architecture, where the strong pillars are set in their proper place, the pilasters in a place fit for them, the square pieces of marble in the pavement, the pannels, partitions, and cornices, etc. in places proper for them. As the agreement of a variety of things in one common design, — as of the parts of a building, or complicated machine, — is one instance of that regularity which belongs to the secondary kind of beauty, so there is the same kind of beauty in what is called wisdom, consisting in the united tendency of thoughts, ideas, and particular volitions, to one general purpose: which is a distinct thing from the goodness of that general purpose, as being useful and benevolent.

There is a beauty in the virtue called justice, which consists in the agreement of different things, that have relation to one another, in nature, manner, and measure, and therefore is the very same sort of beauty with that uniformity and proportion, which is observable in those external and material things that are esteemed beautiful. There is a natural agreement and adaptedness of things that have relation one to another, and an harmonious corresponding of one thing with another. He who from his will does evil to others, should receive evil from the will of him or them whose business it is to take care of the injured, and to act in their behalf, in

proportion to the evil of his doings. Things are natural regularity and mutual agreement, in a literal sense, when he whose heart opposes the general system, should have the hearts of that system or the heart of the ruler of the system, against him; and; in consequence, should receive evil, in proportion to the evil tendency of the opposition of his heart. So, there is an agreement in nature and measure, when he that loves has the proper returns of love; when he that from his heart promotes the good of another, has his good promoted by the other; for there is a kind of justice in becoming gratitude.

Indeed most of the duties incumbent on us if well considered, will be found to partake of the nature of justice. There is some natural agreement of one thing to another; some adaptedness of the agent to the object, some answerableness of the act to the occasion; some equality and proportion in shines of a similar nature, and of a direct relation one to another So it is in relative duties, duties of children to parents, and of parents to children, duties of husbands and wives; duties of rulers and subjects duties of friendship and good neighborhood; and all duties that we owe to God, our creator, preserver, and benefactor; and all duties whatsoever, considered as required by God, and as what are to be performed with a regard to Christ.

It is this secondary kind of beauty, which Mr. Wollaston seems to have had in his eye, when he resolved all virtue into an agreement of inclinations, volitions, and actions with truth. He evidently has respect to the justice there is in virtue, and duties; which consists in one being expressing such affections, and using such a conduct, towards another, as hath a natural agreement and proportion to what is in them, and what we receive from them: which is as much a natural conformity of affection and action with its ground, object, and occasion, as that which is between a true proposition and the thing spoken of in it.

But there is another and higher beauty in true virtue, and in all truly virtuous dispositions and exercises, than what consists in any uniformity or similarity of various things; viz. the union of heart to being in general, or to GOD, the Being of beings, which appears in those virtues and of which those virtues, when true, are the various expressions or effects. Benevolence to being in general, or to being simply considered, is entirely a

distinct thing from uniformity in the midst of variety, and is a superior kind of beauty.

It is true, that benevolence to being in general, will naturally incline to justice, or proportion in the exercises of it. He that loves being, simply considered, will naturally, other things being equal, love particular beings, in a proportion compounded of the degree of being, and the degree of virtue, or benevolence to being, which they have. And that is to love beings in proportion to their dignity. For the dignity of any being consists in those two things. Respect to being, in this proportion, is the first and most general kind of justice; which will prelude all the subordinate kinds. So that, after benevolence to being in general exists, the proportion which is observed in objects may be the cause of the proportion of benevolence to those objects: but no proportion is the cause or ground of the existence of such a think as benevolence to being. The tendency of objects to excite that degree of benevolence which is proportionable to the degree of being, etc. is the consequence of the existence of benevolence, and not the ground of it. Even as a tendency of bodies one to another, by mutual attraction, in proportion to the quantity of matter, is the consequence of the being of such a thing as mutual attraction; and not attraction the effect of proportion.

By this it appears, that just affections and acts have a beauty in them, distinct from and superior to the uniformity and equality there is in them: for which, he that has a truly virtuous temper, relishes and delights in them. And that is the expression and manifestation there is in them of benevolence to being in general. And besides this there is the agreement of justice to the will and command of God; and also something in the tendency and consequences of justice, agreeable to general benevolence, as the glory of God, and the general good. Which tendency also makes it beautiful to a truly virtuous mind. So that the tendency of general benevolence to produce justice, also the tendency of justice to produce effects agreeable to general benevolence, both render justice pleasing to a virtuous mind. And it is on these accounts chiefly, that justice is grateful to a virtuous taste, or a truly benevolent heart. But though it be true, that the uniformity and proportion there is in justice, is grateful to a benevolent heart, as this uniformity and proportion tends to the general good; set that is no argument that there is no other beauty in it but its agreeing with

benevolence. For so the external regularity and order of the natural world gratifies benevolence, as it is profitable, and tends to the general good; but that is no argument that there is no other sort of beauty in external uniformity and proportion but only its suiting benevolence, by tending to the general good.

**5.** From all that has been observed concerning this secondary kind of beauty, it appears, that the disposition which consists in a determination of mind to approve and be pleased with this beauty, considered simply and by itself, has nothing of the nature of true virtue, and is entirely a different thing from a truly virtuous taste. For it has been shown, that this kind of beauty is entirely diverse from the beauty of true virtue, whether it takes place in material or immaterial things, and therefore it will follow that a taste of this kind of beauty is entirely a different thing from a taste of true virtue. Who will affirm, that a disposition to approve of the harmony of good music, or the beauty of a square, or equilateral triangle, is the same with true holiness, or a truly virtuous disposition of mind? It is a relish of uniformity and proportions that determines the mind to approve these things. And there is no need of any thing higher, or of any think in any respect diverse to determine the mind to approve and be pleased with equal uniformity and proportion among spiritual things which are equally discerned. It is virtuous to love true virtue, as that denotes an agreement of the heart with virtue. But it argues no virtue for the heart to be pleased with that which is entirely distinct from it.

Though it be true, that there is some analogy in it to spiritual and virtuous beauty-as far as material things can have analogy to things spiritual, of which they can have no more than a shadow-yet, as has been observed, men do not approve it breathe of any such analogy perceived. And not only reason but experience plainly shows, that men's approbation of this sort of beauty does not spring from any virtuous temper, and has no connection with virtue. For otherwise their delight in the beauty of squares, and cubes, and regular polygons, in the regularity of buildings, and the beautiful figures in a piece of embroidery, would increase in proportion to men's virtue; and would be raised to a great height in some eminently virtuous or holy men but would be almost wholly lost in some others that are very vicious and lewd. It is evident in fact that a relish of these things does not depend on general benevolence, or any benevolence of all to any

being whatsoever, any more than a man's loving the taste of honey, or his being pleased with the smell of a rose. A taste of this inferior beauty in thing immaterial, is one thing which has been mistaken by some moralists, for a true virtuous principle, supposed to be implanted naturally in the heart of all mankind.

## CHAPTER 4

*Of self-love and its various influence,  
to cause love to others, or the contrary.*

MANY assert, that all love arises from self-love. In order to determine this point, it should be clearly determined what is meant by self-love. Self-love, I think, is generally defined “a man’s love of his own happiness,” which is short, and may be thought very plain: but in reality is an ambiguous definition, as the expression his own is equivocal, and liable to be taken in two very different senses. For a man’s own happiness may either be taken universally, for all the happiness or pleasure of which the mind is in any regard the subject, or whatever is grateful and pleasing to men; or it may be taken for the pleasure a man takes in his own proper, private, and separate good. And so self-love may be taken two ways.

**1.** It may be taken for the same as his loving whatsoever is pleasing to him. Which comes only to this, that self-love is a man’s liking, and being suited and pleased in that which he likes, and which pleases him, or, that it is a man’s loving what he loves. For whatever a man loves, that thing is grateful and pleasing to him, whether that be his own peculiar happiness, or the happiness of others. And if this be all that they mean by self-love no wonder they suppose that all love may be resolved into self-love. For it is undoubtedly true, that whatever a man loves, his love may be resolved into his loving what he loves. — If by self-love is meant nothing else but a man’s loving what is grateful or pleasing to him, and being averse to what is disagreeable, this is calling that self-love, which is only a general capacity of loving or hating; or a capacity of being either pleased or displeased; which is the same thing as a man’s having a faculty of will. For if nothing could be either pleasing or displeasing, agreeable or disagreeable, to a man, then he could incline to nothing, and will nothing. But if he is capable of having inclination, will and choice, then what he inclines to, and chooses, is grateful to him, whatever that be; whether it be his own private good, the good of his neighbors, or the glory of God. And so far as it is grateful or pleasing to him, so far it is a part of his pleasure, good, or happiness.

But if this be what is meant by self-love, there is an impropriety and absurdity even in the putting of the question, Whether all our love, or our love to each particular object of our love, does not arise from self-love? For that would be the same as to inquire, Whether the reason why our love is fixed on such and such particular objects, is not, that we have a capacity of loving some things? This may be a general reason why men love or hate any thing at all and therein differ from stones and trees, which love nothing, and hate nothing. But it can never be a reason why men's love is placed on such and such objects. That a man in general love, and is pleased with happiness, or has a capacity of enjoying happiness, cannot be the reason why such and such things become his happiness: as for instance, why the good of his neighbor, or the happiness and glory of God, is grateful and pleasing to him, and so becomes a part of his happiness.

Or if what they mean, who say that all love comes from self-love, be not, that our loving such and such particular persons and things arises from our love to happiness in general, but from a love to our own happiness, which consists in these objects, so, the reason why we love benevolence to our friends, or neighbors, is, because we love our happiness, consisting in their happiness, which we take pleasure in: — still the notion is absurd. For here the effect is made the cause of that of which it is the effect: our happiness, consisting in the happiness of the person beloved, is made the cause of our love to that person. Whereas the truth plainly is, that our love to the person is the cause of our delighting or being happy in his happiness. How comes our happiness to consist in the happiness of such as we love, but by our hearts being first united to them in affection, so that we as it were look on them as ourselves, and so on their happiness as our own? Men who have benevolence to others have pleasure when they see others' happiness, because seeing their happiness gratifies some inclination that was in their hearts before. They before inclined to their happiness; which was by benevolence or good-will; and therefore, when they see their happiness, their inclination is suited, and they are pleased. But the being of inclinations and appetites is prior to any pleasure in gratifying them appetites.

**2.** Self-love, as the phrase is used in common speech most commonly signifies a man's regard to his confined private self, or love to himself with respect to his private interest.



By private interest I mean that which most immediately consists in those pleasures, or pains, that are personal. For there is a comfort, and a grief, that some have in others' pleasures, or pains; which are in other originally, but are derived to them, or in some measure become theirs, by virtue of a benevolent union of heart with others. And there are other pleasures and pains that are originally our own, and not what we have by such a participation with others. Which consist in perceptions agreeable, or contrary, to certain personal inclinations implanted in our nature; such as the sensitive appetites and aversions. Such also is the disposition or the determination of the mind to be pleased with external beauty, and with all inferior, secondary beauty consisting in uniformity, proportion, etc. whether in things external or internal, and to dislike the contrary deformity. Such also is the natural disposition in men to be pleased in a perception of their being the objects of the honor and love of others, and displeased with others' hatred and contempt. For pleasures and uneasiness of this kind are doubtless as much owing to an immediate determination of the mind by a fixed law of our nature, as any of the pleasures or pains of external sense. And these pleasures are properly of the private and personal kind; being not by any participation of the happiness or sorrow of others, through benevolence. It is evidently mere self-love that appears in this disposition. It is easy to see, that a man's love to himself will make him love, love to himself, and hate hatred to himself. And as God has constituted our nature, self-love is exercised in no one disposition more than in this. Men, probably, are capable of much more pleasure and pain through this determination of the mind, than by any other personal inclination or aversion whatsoever.

Though perhaps we do not so very often see instances of extreme suffering by this means, as by some others, yet we often see evidences of men's dreading the contempt of others more than death and by such instances may conceive something what men would suffer, if, universally hated and despised; and may reasonably infer something of the greatness of the misery, that would arise under a sense of universal abhorrence, in a great view of intelligent being in general, or in a clear view of the Deity, as incomprehensibly and immensely great, so that all other beings are as nothing and vanity, — together with a sense of his immediate continual presence, and an infinite concern with him and dependence upon him; —

and living constantly in the midst of most clear and strong evidences and manifestations of his hatred and contempt. These things may be sufficient to explain what I mean by private interest; in regard In which self-love, most properly so called, is immediately exercised.

And here I would observe, that if we take self-love in this sense, so love to some other may, truly be the effect of self-love; i. e. according to the common method and order which is maintained in the laws of nature. For no created thing has power to produce an effect any otherwise than by virtue of the laws of nature. Thus, that a man should love those who are of his party, and who are warmly engaged on his side, and promote his interest, is this natural consequence of a private self-love. Indeed there is no metaphysical necessity, in the nature of things, that because a man loves himself, and regards his own interest, he therefore should love those that love him, and promote his interest, i. e. to suppose it to be otherwise implies no contradiction. It will not follow from any absolute metaphysical necessity, that because bodies have solidity, cohesion, and gravitation towards the center of the earth, therefore a weight suspended on the beam of a balance should have greater power to counterbalance a weight on the other side, when at a distance from the fulcrum, than when, it is near. It implies no contradiction that it should be otherwise; but only as it contradicts that beautiful proportion and harmony, which the Author of nature observes in the laws of nature he has established.

Neither is there any absolute necessity, that because there is an internal mutual attraction of the parts of the earth, or any other sphere, whereby the whole becomes one solid coherent body, therefore other bodies that are around it, should also be attracted by it, and those that are nearest, be attracted most. But according to the order and proportion generally observed in the laws of nature one of these effects is connected with the other, so that it is justly looked upon as the same power of attraction in the globe of the earth, which draws bodies about the earth towards its center, with that which attracts the parts of the earth themselves one to another; only exerted under different circumstances. By a like order of nature, a man's love to those that love him, is no more than a certain expression effect of self-love. No other principle is needful in order to the effect, if nothing intervenes to countervail the natural tendency of self-love. Therefore there is no more true virtue in a man thus loving his friends

merely from self-love, than there is in self-love itself, the principle from whence it proceeds. So, a man being disposed to hate those that hate him, or to resent injuries done him arises from self-love, in like manner as loving those that, love us, and being thankful for kindness shown us.

But it is said by some, that it is apparent there is some other principle concerned in exciting the passions of gratitude and anger besides self-love, viz. moral sense, or sense of moral beauty and deformity, determining the minds of all mankind to approve of, and be pleased with virtue and to disapprove of vice, and behold it with discipline, and that their seeing or supposing this moral beauty or deformity, in the kindness of a benefactor, or opposition of all adversary, is the occasion of these affections of gratitude or anger. Otherwise, why are not these affections excited in us towards inanimate things that do us good or hurt? Why do not we experience gratitude to a garden, or fruitful field? And why are we not angry with a tempest, or blasting mildew, or an overflowing stream? We are very differently affected towards those that do us good from the virtue of generosity, or hurt us from the vice of envy and malice, than towards things that hurt or help us, which are destitute of reason and will. Concerning this, I would make several remarks.

**1.** Those who thus argue, that gratitude and anger cannot proceed from self-love, might argue in the same way, and with equal reason, that neither can these affections arise from love to others: which is contrary to their own scheme. They say, that the reason why we are affected with gratitude and anger towards men, rather than things without life, is moral sense: which they say is the effect of that principle of benevolence or love to others, or love to the public, which is naturally in the hearts of all mankind. But now I might say, according to their own way of arguing, gratitude and anger cannot arise from love to others, or love to the public, at any sense of mind that is the fruit of public affection. For how differently are we affected towards those that do good or hurt to the public from understanding and will, and public motive from what we are towards such inanimate things as the sun and the clouds, that do good to the public, by enlightening and enlivening beams and refreshing showers; or mildew, and an overflowing stream, that does hurt to the public, by destroying the fruits of the earth! Yea, if such a kind of argument be good, it will prove that gratitude and anger cannot arise from the united influence

of self-love, and public love, or moral sense arising from public affection. For, if so, why are we not affected towards inanimate things, that are beneficial or injurious both to us and the public, in the same manner as to them that are profitable or hurtful to both on choice and design, and from benevolence or malice?

**2.** On the supposition, that men love those who love them, and are angry with those who hate them, from the natural influence of self-love; it is not at all strange that the Author of nature, who observes order, uniformity, and harmony in establishing its laws, should so order, that it should be natural for self-love to cause the mind to be affected differently towards exceedingly different objects and that it should cause our heart to extend itself in one manner towards inanimate things, which gratify self love, without sense or will, and in another manner towards beings which we look upon as having understanding and will, like ourselves, and exerting these faculties in our favor, and promoting our interest from love to us. No wonder, seeing we love ourselves, that it should be natural to us to extend something of that same kind of love which we have for ourselves, to them who are the same kind of beings as ourselves, and comply with the inclinations of our self-love, by expressing the same sort of love towards us.

**3.** If we should allow that to be universal, that in gratitude and anger there is the exercise of some kind of moral sense — as it is granted there is something that may be so called — all the moral sense that its essential to those affections, is a sense of DESERT; which is to be referred to that sense of justice, before spoken of, consisting in an apprehension of that secondary kind of beauty that lies in uniformity and proportion, which solves all the difficulty in the objection. Others' love and kindness to us, or their ill-will and injuriousness, appear to us to deserve our love or our resentment. Or, in other words, it seems to us no other than just, that as they love us and do us good, we also should love them and do them good. And so it seems just, that when others' hearts oppose us, and they from their hearts do us hurt, our hearts should oppose them, and that we should desire themselves may suffer in like manner as we have suffered, i. e. there appears to us to be a natural agreement, proportion, and adjustment between these things, which is indeed a kind of moral sense, or sense of beauty in moral things. But, as was before shown, it is a moral sense of a

secondary kind, and is entirely different from a sense or relish of the original essential beauty of true virtue, and may be without any principle of true virtue in the heart.

Therefore, doubtless, it is a great mistake in any to suppose, that the moral sense which appears and is exercised in a sense of desert, is the same thing as a love of virtue, or a disposition and determination of mind to be pleased with true virtuous beauty, consisting in public benevolence. Which may be further confirmed, if it be considered, that even with respect to a sense of justice or desert, consisting in uniformity, and agreement between others' actions, towards us, and our actions towards them, in a way of well-doing, or of ill-doing, it is not absolutely necessary to the being of these passions of gratitude and anger, that there should be any notion of justice in them, in any public or general view of things: as will appear by what shall be next observed.

**4.** Those authors who hold, that the moral sense which is natural to all mankind, consists in a natural relish of the beauty of virtue, and so arises from a principle of true virtue implanted by nature in the hearts of all, hold that true virtue consists in public benevolence. Therefore if the affections of gratitude and anger necessarily imply such a moral sense as they suppose, then these affections imply some delight in the public good, and an aversion of the mind to public evil. And if so, then every time a man feels anger for opposition, or gratitude for any devour, there must be at least a supposition of a tendency to public injury in that opposition, and a tendency to public benefit in the favor that excites his gratitude. But how far is this from being true!

For instance; a ship's crew enter into a conspiracy against the master, to murder him, and run away with the ship, and turn pirates: but before they bring their matters to ripeness for execution, one of them repents, and opens the whole design; whereupon the rest are apprehended and brought to justice. The crew are enraged with him that has betrayed them, and earnestly seek opportunity to revenge themselves upon him. And for an instance of gratitude, a gang of robbers that have long infested the neighboring country, have a particular house whither they resort, and where they meet from time to time, to divide their booty, and hold their consultations for carrying on their pernicious designs.

The magistrates and officers of the country, after many fruitless endeavors to discover their secret place of resort, at length are well-informed where it is, and are prepared with sufficient force to surprise them, and seize them all, at the place of rendezvous, at an hour appointed, when they understand they will all be there. A little before the arrival of the appointed hour, while the officers with their bands are approaching, some person is so kind to these robbers, as to give them notice of their danger, so as just to give them opportunity to escape. They are thankful to him, and give him a handful of money for his kindness. Now, in such instances, I think it is plain that there is no supposition of a public injury, in that which is the occasion of their anger; yea, they, know the contrary. Nor is there any supposition of public good in that which excites their gratitude, neither has public benevolence, or moral sense, consisting in a determination to approve of what is for the public good, any influence at all in the affair. And though there be some affection, besides a sense of uniformity and proportion, that has influence in such anger and gratitude, it is not public affection or benevolence, but private affection yea, that affection which is to the highest degree private, consisting in a man's love of his own person.

**5.** The passion of anger, in particular, seems to have been unluckily chosen as a medium to prove a sense and determination to delight in virtue, consisting in benevolence natural to all mankind. For if that moral sense which is exercised in anger, were that which arose from a benevolent temper of heart, being no other than a sense of relish of the beauty of benevolence, one would think, a disposition to anger should increase, at least in some proportion, as a man had more of a sweet, benign, and benevolent temper: which seems contrary to experience, which shows that the less men have of benevolence, and the more they have of a contrary temper, the more are they disposed to anger and deep resentment of injuries.

And though gratitude be that which many speak of as a certain noble principle of virtue, which God has implanted in the hearts of all mankind; and though it be true there is a gratitude that is truly virtuous; and the want of gratitude, or an ungrateful temper, is truly vicious and argues an abominable depravity of heart; yet I think, what has been observed may serve to convince such as impartially consider it, not only that not all

anger, or hating those which hate us, but also that not all gratitude or loving those which love us, arises from a truly virtuous benevolence of heart.

Another sort of affections, which may be properly referred to self-love, as its source, and which might be expected to be the fruit of it, according to the general analogy of nature's laws, is that of affections to such as are near to us by the ties of nature. Such are those of whose beings we have been the occasion, in whom we have a very peculiar propriety, and whose circumstances, even from the beginning of their existence, many ways lead them to a high esteem of us, and to treat us with great dependence, submission, and compliance. These the constitution of the world makes to be united in interest, and accordingly to act as one, in innumerable affairs, with a communion in each other's affections, desires, cares, friendships, enmities, and pursuits. As to the opinion of those who ascribe the natural affection there is between parents and children to a particular instinct of nature, I shall take notice of it afterwards. And as men may love persons and thing from self-love, so may their love to qualities and characters arise from the same source. Some represent this, as though we need of a great degree of metaphysical refining to make it out, that men approve of others from self-love, whom they hear of at a distance, or read of in history, or see represented on the stage, from whom they expect no profit or advantage. But perhaps it is not considered, that what we approve of in the first place is the character; and from the character we approve the person. And is it a strange thing, that men should from self-love like a temper or character, which, in its nature and tendency, falls in with the nature and tendency of self-love, and which we know by experience and self-evidence, without metaphysical refining, in the general tends to men's pleasure and benefit? And on the contrary, is it strange that any should dislike what they see tends to men's pain and misery?

Is there need of a great degree of subtlety and abstraction, to make it out, that a child, who has heard and seen much of what is calculated strongly to fix an idea of the pernicious, deadly nature of the rattlesnake, should have an aversion to that species from self-love; so as to have a degree of this aversion and disgust excited by seeing even the picture of that animal? And that from the same self-love it should be pleased with a lively representation of some pleasant fruit of which it has often tasted the

sweetness? Or, with the image of some bird, which it has always been told is innocent, and with whose pleasant singing it has often been entertained? Yet the child neither fears being bitten by the picture of the snake, nor expects to eat of the painted fruit, or to hear the figure of the bird sing.

I suppose none will think it difficult to allow, that such an approbation or disgust of a child may be accounted for from its natural delight in the pleasures of taste and hearing, and its aversion to pain and death, through self-love, together with the habitual connection of these agreeable or terrible ideas with the form and qualities of these objects, the ideas of which are impressed on the mind of the child by their images.

And where is the difficulty of allowing, that a person may hate the general character of a spiteful and malicious man, for the like reason as he hates the general nature of a serpent; knowing, from reason, instruction, and experience, that malice in men is pernicious to mankind, as well as spite or poison in a serpent! And if a man may from self-love disapprove the vices of malice, envy, and others of that sort, which naturally tend to the hurt of mankind, why may he not from the same principle approve the contrary virtues of meekness, peaceableness, benevolence, charity, generosity, justice, and the social virtues in general; which, he as easily and clearly knows, naturally tend to the good of mankind? — It is undoubtedly true, that some have a love to these virtues from a higher principle. But yet I think it as certainly true, that there is generally in mankind a sort of approbation of them, which arises from self-love.

Besides what has been already said, the same thing further appears from this; that men commonly are most affected towards, and most highly approve, those virtues which agree with their interest most, according to their various condition in life. We see that persons of low condition are especially enamored with a condescending, accessible, affable temper in the great; not only in those whose condescension has been exercised towards themselves but they will be peculiarly taken with such a character when they have accounts of it from others, or when they meet with it in history, or even in romance. The poor will most highly approve and commend liberality. The weaker sex, who especially need assistance and protection will peculiarly esteem and applaud fortitude and generosity in



those of the other sex, of whom they read or hear, or which they have represented to them on a stage.

I think it plain from what has been observed, that as men may approve, and be disposed to commend, a benevolent temper from self-love; so the higher the degree of benevolence is, the more may they approve of it. This will account for some kind of approbation, From this principle, even of love to enemies, viz. as a man loving his enemies is an evidence of a high degree of benevolence of temper; the degree of it appearing from the obstacles it overcomes. And it may be here observed, that the consideration of the tendency and influence of self-love may show, how men in general may approve of justice from another ground, besides that approbation of the secondary beauty there is in uniformity and proportion, which is natural to all. Men, from their infancy, see the necessity of it, not only that it is necessary for others, or for human society; but they find the necessity of it for themselves, in instances that continually occur, which tends to prejudice them in its favor, and to fix an habitual approbation of it from self-love.

Again that forementioned approbation of justice and desert, arising from a sense of the beauty of natural agreement and proportion, will have a kind of reflex and indirect influence to cause men to approve benevolence, and disapprove malice; as men see that he who hates and injures others deserves to be hated and punished, and that he who is benevolent and loves others, and does them good, deserves himself also to be loved and rewarded by others, as they see the natural congruity or agreement, and mutual adaptedness, of these things. And having always seen this, malevolence becomes habitually connected in the mind with the idea of being hated and punished, which is disagreeable to self-love; and the idea of benevolence is habitually connected and associated with the idea of being loved and rewarded by others, which is grateful to self-love. And by virtue of this association of ideas, benevolence itself becomes grateful, and the contrary displeasing.

Some vices may become in a degree odious by the influence of self-love, through an habitual connection of ideas of contempt with it; contempt being what self-love abhors. So it may often be with drunkenness, gluttony, sottishness, cowardice, sloth, niggardliness. The idea of

contempt becomes associated with the idea of such vices, both because we are used to observe, that these things are commonly objects of contempt, and also find, that they excite contempt in ourselves. Some of them appear marks of littleness, i. e. of small abilities, and weakness of mind, and insufficiency for any considerable effects among mankind. By others, men's influence is contracted into a narrow sphere, and by such means persons become of less importance, and more insignificant. And things of little importance are naturally little accounted of. And some of these ill qualities are such as mankind find it their interest to treat with contempt, as they are very hurtful to human society. — There are no particular moral virtues whatsoever, but what in some or other of these ways, and most of them in several, come to have some kind of approbation from self-love, without the influence of a truly virtuous principle; nor any particular vices, but what, by the same means, meet with some disapprobation.

This kind of approbation and dislike, through the joint influence of self-love and association of ideas, is in many vastly heightened by education. This is the means of a strong, close, and almost irrefragable association, in innumerable instances of ideas, which have no connection any other way than by education; and is the means of greatly strengthening that association, or connection, which persons are led into by other means: as any one would be convinced, perhaps more effectually than in most other ways, if they had opportunity of any considerable acquaintance with American savages and their children.

## CHAPTER 5

### *Of natural conscience, and the moral sense.*

THERE is yet another disposition or principle, of threat importance, natural to mankind; which, if we consider the consistence and harmony of nature's laws, may also be looked upon as, in some sort, arising from self-love, or self-union; and that is, a disposition in man to be uneasy in a consciousness of being inconsistent with himself, and as it were against himself in his own actions. This appears particularly in the inclination of the mind to be uneasy in the consciousness of doing that to others, which he should be angry with them for doing to him, if they were in his case,

and he in theirs; or of forbearing to do that to them, which he would be displeased with them for neglecting to do to him.

I have observed, from time to time, that in pure love to others, i. e. love not arise from self-love there is an union of the heart with others, a kind of enlargement at of the mind, whereby it so extends itself as to take others into a man's self: and therefore it implies a disposition to feel, to desire, and to act as though others revere one with ourselves. So, self-love implies an inclination to feel and act as one with ourselves; which naturally renders a set sensible inconsistency with ourselves, and self-opposition in what we ourselves choose and do, to be uneasy to the mind: which will cause uneasiness of mind to be the consequence of a malevolent and unjust behavior towards others, and a kind of disapprobation of acts of this nature, and an approbation of the contrary. To do that to another, which we should be angry with him for doing to us, and to hate a person for doing that to us, which we should incline to and insist on doing to him, if we were exactly in the same case, is to disagree with ourselves, and contradict ourselves. It would be for ourselves both to choose and adhere to, and yet to refuse and utterly reject, the very same thing. No wonder this is contrary to nature. No wonder, that such a self-opposition, and inward ever with a man's self, naturally begets uneasiness, and raises disturbance in his mind.

Thus approving: of actions, because we therein act as in agreement with ourselves; and thus disapproving, and being uneasy in the consciousness of disagreeing with ourselves, in what we do, is quite a different thing from approving or disapproving actions because in them we are united with being in general: which is loving or hating actions from a sense of the primary beauty of true virtue, and of the odiousness of sin. The former of these principles is private, the latter is public, and truly benevolent in the highest sense. The former — an inclination to agree with ourselves — is a natural principle: but the latter — an agreement or union of heart to the great system, and to God the head of it, who is all and all in it — is a divine principle.

In that uneasiness now mentioned, consists very much of that inward trouble men have from reflections of conscience: and when they are free from this uneasiness, and are conscious to themselves, that in what they

have acted towards others, they have done the same which they should have expected from them in the same case, then they have what is called peace of conscience, with respect to these actions. And there is also an approbation of conscience respecting the conduct of others towards ourselves. As when we are blamed, condemned, or punished by them, and are conscious to ourselves that if we were in their case, and they in ours, we should in like manner blame, condemn, and punish them. And thus men's consciences may justify God's anger and condemnation. When they have the ideas of God's greatness, their relation to him, the benefits they have received from him, the manifestations he has 'made of his will to them, etc. strongly impressed on their minds, a consciousness is excited within them of those resentments, which would be occasioned in themselves by an injurious treatment in any wise parallel.

There certainly is such a consciousness as this oftentimes within men, implied in the thoughts and views of the mind, of which, perhaps on reflection, they could hardly give an account. Unless men's consciences are greatly stupified, it is naturally and necessarily suggested and habitually, spontaneously, instantaneously and, as it were, insensibly, arises in the mind. And the more so for this reason, that we have no other way to conceive of any thing which other persons act or suffer, but by recalling and exciting the ideas of what we ourselves are conscious we have found in our own minds; and by putting the ideas which we obtain by this means in the place of another; or, as it were, substituting ourselves in their place. Thus we have no conception, what understanding, perception, love, pleasure pain, or desire are in others, but by putting ourselves as it were in their stead, or transferring the ideas we obtain of such things in our own minds by consciousness into the: place; making such an alteration, as to degree and circumstances, as what we observe of them requires. It is thus in all morel shines that we conceive of in others, and indeed in every thing we conceive of, belonging to others, more than shape, size, complexion, situation, and motion of their bodies. And this is the only way that we come to be capable of having ideas of any perception or act even of the Godhead. We never could have any notion what understanding or volition love or hatred are, either in created spirits or in God, if we had never experienced what understanding and volition love and hatred, are in our own minds. Knowing what they are by consciousness, we can deny limits,

and remove changeableness and other imperfections, and ascribe them to God.

But though men in thinking of others do as it were put themselves in their place, they do it so habitually, instantaneously and without set purpose, that they can scarce give any account of it, and many would think it strange if they were told of it. In all a man's thoughts of another person, in whatever he apprehends of his moral conduct to others or to himself, if it be in loving or hating him, approving or condemning him, rewarding or punishing him, he necessarily, as it were, puts himself in his stead, and therefore the more naturally, easily, and quietly sees whether he, being in his place, should approve or condemn, be angry or pleased as he is. Natural conscience consists in these two things.

**1.** In that disposition to approve or disapprove the moral treatment which passes between us and others, from a determination of the mind to be easy or uneasy, in a consciousness of our being consistent or inconsistent with ourselves. Hereby we have a disposition to approve our own treatment of another, when we are conscious to ourselves that we treat him so as we should expect to be treated by him, were he in our case and we in his, and to disapprove of our own treatment of another, when we are conscious that we should be displeased with the like treatment from him, if we were in his case. So we in our consciences approve of another's treatment of us, if we are conscious to ourselves, that if we were in his case, and he in ours, we should think; it just to treat him as he treats us; and disapprove his treatment of us, when we are conscious that we should think it unjust, if we were in his case. Thus men's consciences approve or disapprove the sentence of their judge, by which they are acquitted or condemned. But this is not all that is in natural conscience. Besides this approving or disapproving from uneasiness as being inconsistent with ourselves, there is another think that must precede it, and be the foundation of it. As for instance, when my conscience disapproves my own treatment of another, being conscious to myself that were I in his case, I should be displeased and angry with him for so treating me the question might be asked, What would be the ground of that supposed disapprobation, displeasure, and anger, which I am conscious would be in me in that case? Therefore,

2. The other thing which belongs to the approbation or disapprobation of natural conscience, is the sense of desert which was spoken of before; consisting, as was observed, in a natural agreement, proportion, and harmony, between malevolence or injury, and resentment and punishment or between loving and being loved, between showing kindness and being rewarded, etc. Both these kinds of approving or disapproving, concur in the approbation or disapprobation of conscience: the one founded on the other thus, when a man's conscience disapproves of his treatment of his neighbor, in the first place, he is conscious that if he were in his neighbor's stead, he should resent such treatment from a sense of justice, or from a sense of uniformity and equality between such treatment, and resentment, and punishment; as before explained. And then, in the next place, he perceives, that therefore he is not consistent with himself, in doing what he himself should resent in that case, and hence disapproves it, as being naturally averse to opposition to himself.

Approbation and disapprobation of conscience, in the sense now explained, will extend to all virtue and vice, to every thing whatsoever that is morally good or evil, in a mind which does not confine its view to a private sphere, but will take things in general into its consideration, and is free from speculative error. For, as all virtue or moral good may be resolved into love to others, either God or creatures; so, men easily see the uniformity and natural agreement there is between loving others, and being accepted and favored by others. And all vice, sin, or moral evil summarily consisting in the want of this love to others, or benevolence; so, men easily see the natural agreement there is between hating and doing ill to others, and being hated by them, and suffering ill from them, or from him that acts for all, and has the care of the whole system. And as this sense of equality and natural agreement extends to all moral good and evil; so, this lays a foundation of an equal extent with the other kind of approbation and disapprobation which is grounded upon it, arising from an aversion to self-inconsistence and opposition. For in all cases of benevolence, or the contrary, towards others, we are capable of putting ourselves in the place of others, and are naturally led to do it; and so of being conscious to ourselves, how we should like or dislike such treatment from others. Thus natural conscience, if the understanding be properly enlightened, and

stupifying prejudices are removed, concurs with the law of God, is of equal extent with it, and joins its voice with it in every article.

And thus, in particular, we may see in what respect this natural conscience extends to true virtue, consisting in union of heart to being in general, and supreme love to God. For, although it sees not, or rather does not taste, its primary and essential beauty, i. e. it tastes no sweetness in benevolence to being in general, simply considered, for nothing but general benevolence itself can do that, yet, this natural conscience, common to mankind, may approve of it from that uniformity, equality, and justice, which there is in it; and the demerit which is seen in the contrary, consisting in the natural agreement between the contrary, and being hated of being in general. Men, by natural conscience, may see the justice, or natural agreement, there is in yielding all to God, as we receive all from him; and the justice there is in being his that made us, and willingly so, which is the same as being dependent on his will, and conformed to it in the master of our being; as we are for our being itself and in the conformity of our will to his, on whose will we are universally and most perfectly dependent. There is also justice in our supreme love to God; a natural agreement in our having a supreme respect to him who exercises infinite goodness to us, and from whom we receive all well-being. Besides, disagreement and discord appears worse to natural sense in things nearly related, and of great importance: and therefore it must appear very ill, as it respects the infinite Being, and that infinitely great relation which there is between the Creator and his creatures. And it is easy to conceive how natural conscience should see the desert of punishment, in the contrary of true virtue, viz. opposition and enmity to being in general. For, this is only to see the natural agreement there is between opposing being in general, and being opposed by being in general; with a consciousness how, if we were infinitely great, we should expect to be regarded according to our greatness, and should proportionately resent contempt, This natural conscience, if well-informed, will approve of true virtue, and will disapprove and condemn the want of it, and opposition to it; and yet with out seeing the true beauty of it. Yea, if men's consciences were fully enlightened, if they were delivered from being confined to a private sphere, and brought to view, and consider things in general, and delivered from being stupified by sensual objects and appetites, as they will be at the day of judgment, they would

approve nothing but true virtue, nothing but general benevolence, and those affections and actions that are consistent with it, and subordinate to it. For they must see, that consent to being in general, and supreme respect to the Being of beings, is most just; and that every thing which is inconsistent with it, and interferes with it, or flows from the want of it, is unjust, and deserves the opposition of universal existence.

Thus has God established and ordered that this principle of natural conscience, which, though it implies no such thing as actual benevolence to bring in general, nor any delight in such a principle, simply considered, and so implies no truly spiritual sense or virtuous taste, yet should approve and condemn the same things that are approved and condemned by a spiritual sense or virtuous taste. And that moral sense which is natural to mankind, so far as it is disinterest, and not founded in association of ideas, is the same with this natural conscience.

The sense of moral good and evil, and that disposition to approve virtue, and disapprove vice, which men have by natural conscience, is that moral sense so much insisted on in the writings of many of late. A misunderstanding of this, seems to have misled those moralists who have insisted on a disinterested moral sense, universal in the world of mankind, as an evidence of a disposition to true virtue, consisting in a benevolent temper, naturally implanted in the minds of all men. Some of the arguments used by these writers indeed prove that there is a moral sense or taste, universal among men, distinct from what arises from self-love. Though I humbly conceive, there is some confusion in their discourses on the subject, and not a proper distinction observed in the instances of men's approbation of virtue, which they produce. Some of which are not to their purpose, being instances of that approbation of virtue which arises from self-love. But other instances prove, that there is a moral taste, or sense of moral good and evil, natural to all, which do not properly arise from self-love. Yet I conceive there are no instances of this kind which may not be referred to natural conscience, and particularly to that which I have observed to be primary in the approbation of natural conscience, viz. a sense of desert, and approbation of that natural agreement there is, in manner and measure, in justice. But I think it is plain from what has been said, that neither this, nor any thing else wherein consists the sense of moral good and evil, which there is in natural conscience, is of the nature of



a truly virtuous taste, or determination of mind to relish and delight in the essential beauty of true virtue, arising from a virtuous benevolence of heart.

But it further appears from this; if the approbation of conscience were the same with the approbation of the inclination of the heart, or the natural disposition and determination of the mind to love and be pleased with virtue, then approbation and condemnation of conscience would always be in proportion to the virtuous temper of the mind; or rather, the degree would be just the same. In that person who had a high degree of a virtuous temper, therefore, the testimony of conscience in favor of virtue would be equally full: But he who had but little, would have as little a degree of the testimony of conscience for virtue, and against vice. But I think the case is evidently otherwise. Some men, through the strength of vice in their hearts, will go on and sin against clearer light and stronger convictions of conscience than others. If conscience, approving duty and disapproving sin, were the same thing as the exercise of a virtuous principle of the heart, in loving duty and hating sin, then remorse of conscience will be the same thing as repentance, and just in the same degree as the sinner feels remorse of conscience for sin, in the same degree is the heart fumed from the love of sin to the hatred of it, inasmuch as they are the very same thing.

Christians have the greatest reason to believe, from the Scriptures, that in the future day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, when sinners shall be called to answer before their judge, and all their wickedness, in all its aggravations, brought forth, and clearly manifested in the perfect light of that day, and God will reprove them, and set their sins in order before them, their consciences will be greatly awakened and convinced, their mouths will be stopped, all stupidity of conscience will be at an end, and conscience will have its full exercise, and therefore their consciences will approve the dreadful sentence of the judge against them; and seeing that they have deserved so great a punishment will join with the judge in condemning them. And this according to the notion I am opposing, would be the same thing as their being brought to the fullest repentance; their hearts being perfectly changed to hate sin and love holiness; and virtue or holiness of heart in them will be brought to the most full and perfect exercise. But how much otherwise have we reason to suppose it will then be! Then the sin and wickedness of their heart will

come to its highest dominion and completest exercise, they shall be wholly left of God, and given up to their wickedness, even as the devils are! When God has done waiting on sinners, and his Spirit done striving with them, he will not restrain their wickedness, as he does now. But sin shall then rage in their hearts, as a fire no longer restrained or kept under. It is proper for a judge when he condemns a criminal, to endeavor so to set his guilt before him as to convince his conscience of the justice of the sentence. This the Almighty will do effectually, and do to perfection, so as most thoroughly to awaken and convince the conscience. But if natural conscience, and the disposition of the heart to be pleased with virtue, were the same, then at the same time that the conscience was brought to its perfect exercise, the heart would be made perfectly holy, or, would have the exercise of true virtue and holiness in perfect benevolence of temper. But instead of this, their wickedness will then be brought to perfection and wicked men will become very devils, and accordingly will be sent away as cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

But supposing natural conscience to be what has been described, all these difficulties and absurdities are wholly avoided. Sinners when they see the greatness of the Being in contempt of whom they have lived with rebellion and opposition, and have clearly set before them their obligations to him, as their Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, etc. together with the degree in which they have acted as enemies to him, may have a clear sense of the desert of their sin, consisting in the natural agreement there is between such contempt and opposition of such a Being, and his despising and opposing them, between their Being, and acting as so great enemies to such a God, and their suffering the dreadful consequences of his being and acting as their great enemy, and their begin conscious within themselves of the degree of angel, which would naturally arise in their own hearts in such a case, if they were in the place and state of their judge. In older to these things, there is no need of a virtuous benevolent temper, relishing and delighting in benevolence, and loathing the contrary. The conscience may see the natural agreement between opposing and being opposed, between hating and being hated, without abhorring, malevolence from a benevolent temper of mind, or without loving God from a view of the beauty of his holiness. These things have no necessary dependence one on the other.

## CHAPTER 6

Of particular instincts of nature, which in some respects resemble virtue.

THERE are various dispositions and inclinations natural to men, which depend on particular laws of nature, determining their minds to certain affections and actions towards particular objects; which laws seem to be established chiefly for the preservation of mankind, and their comfortably subsisting in the world. These dispositions may be called instincts.

Some of these instincts respect only ourselves personally; such are many of our natural appetites and aversions. Some of them are more social, and extend to others: such are the mutual inclinations between the sexes, etc. — Some of these dispositions are more external and sensitive: such are those that relate to meat and drink, and the more sensitive inclinations of the sexes towards each other. Others are more internal and mental: consisting in affections which mankind naturally exercise towards some of their fellow-creatures, and in some cases towards men in general. Some of these may be called kind affections, as having something in them of benevolence, or a resemblance of it: and others are of an angry appearance, such as the passion of jealousy between the sexes, especially in the male towards the female.

It is only the former of these two last mentioned sorts that it is to my purpose to consider in this place, viz. those natural instincts which have the appearance of benevolence, and so in some respects resemble virtue. These I shall therefore consider; and shall endeavor to show, that none of them can be of the nature of true virtue.

That kind affection which is exercised one towards another in natural relation, particularly the love of parents to their children, called natural affection, is by many referred to instinct, I have already considered this sort of love as an affection that arises from self-love: and in that view, have shown it cannot be of the nature of true virtue.

But if any think, that natural affection is more properly to be referred to a particular instinct of nature than to self-love, as its cause, I shall not think it a point worthy of any controversy or dispute. In my opinion hath are

true; viz. that natural affection is owing to natural instinct, and also that it arises from self-love. It may be said to arise from instinct, as it depends on a law of nature. But yet it may be truly reckoned as an affection arising from self-love; because, though it arises from a law of nature, yet that is such a law as according to the order and harmony every where observed among the laws of nature, is connected with and follows from self-love; as was shown before. However, it is not necessary to my present purpose to insist on this. For if natural affection to a man's children, or near relations, is an affection arising from a particular independent instinct of nature — which the Creator in his wisdom has implanted in men for the preservation and well-being of the world of mankind: yet it cannot be of the nature of true virtue. For it has been observed, and, I humbly conceive, proved before, (Chapter 11.) that if any being or beings have by natural instinct, or any other means, a determination of mind to benevolence, extending only to some particular persons or private system, however large that system may be — or however great a number of individuals it may contain) so long as it contains but an infinitely small part of universal existence and so bears no proportion to this great and universal system—such limited private benevolence, not arising from not being subordinate to, benevolence to being in general cannot have the nature of true virtue. However, it may not be amiss briefly to observe now, that it is evident to a demonstration, those affections cannot be of the nature of true virtue, from these two things.

**First**, That they do not arise from a principle of virtue. A principle of virtue, I think, is owned by the most considerable of late writers on morality to be general benevolence or public affection: and I think it has been proved to be union of heart to being simply considered which implies a disposition to benevolence to being in; general. Now, by the supposition, the affections we are speaking of do not arise from this principle, and that whether we suppose they arise from self-love, or from particular instincts: because either of those sources is diverse from a principle of general benevolence. And,

**Secondly**, These private affections, if they do not arise from general benevolence, and they are not connected with it in their first existence, have no tendency to produce it. This appears from what has been observed: for being not dependent on it, their detached and insubordinate

operation rather implies opposition to being in general, than general benevolence; as every one sees and owns with respect to self-love. And there are the very same reasons why any other private affection, confined to limits infinitely short of universal existence, should have that influence, as well as love that is confined to a single person. Now upon the whole, nothing can be plainer than that affections which do not arise from a virtuous principle, and have no tendency to true virtue, as their effect, cannot be of the nature of true virtue.

For the reasons which have been given, it is undeniably true, that if persons have a benevolent affection limited to a party, or to the nation in general, of which they are a part, or the public community to which they belong, though it be as large as the Roman empire was of old, yea, if them could be a cause determining a person to benevolence towards the whole world of mankind, or even all created sensible natures throughout the universe, exclusive of union of heart to general existence and of love to God — not derived from that temper of mind which disposes to a supreme regard to him, nor subordinate to such divine love — it cannot be of the nature of true virtue.

If what is called natural affection, arises from a particular natural instinct, much more indisputably does that mutual affection which naturally arises between the sexes. I agree with Hutchison and Hume in this, that there is a foundation laid in nature for kind affections between the sexes, diverse from all inclinations to sensitive pleasure and which do not properly arise from any such inclination. There is doubtless a disposition both to a mutual benevolence and mutual complacence, that are not naturally and necessarily connected with any sensitive desires. But yet it is manifest such affections as are limited to opposite sexes, are from a particular instinct thus directing and limiting them; and not arising from a principle of general benevolence; for this has no tendency to any such limitation. And though these affections do not properly arise from the sensitive desires which are between the sexes, yet they are implanted by the Author of nature chiefly for the same purpose, viz. the preservation or continuation of the world of mankind.

Hereby persons become willing to forsake father and mother, and all their natural relations in the families where they were born and brought up; for

the sake of a stated union with a companion of the other sex, in bearing and going through that series of labors, anxieties, and pains, requisite to the being, support, and education of a family of children, and partly also for the comfort of mankind as united in a marriage relation. But I suppose few, if any, will deny, that the peculiar natural dispositions there are to mutual affection between the sexes, arise from an instinct or particular law of nature. And therefore it is manifest, from what has been said already, that those natural dispositions cannot be of the nature of true virtue.

Another affection which is owing to a particular instinct, is that pity which is natural to mankind when they see others in great distress. It is acknowledged, that such affection is natural to mankind. But I think it evident, that the pity, which is general and natural, is owing to a particular instinct, and is not of the nature of true virtue. I am far from saying, that there is no such thing as a truly virtuous pity among mankind; or, that none is to be found which arises from that truly virtuous divine principle of general benevolence to sensitive beings. Yet at the same time I think, this is not the case with ALL pity, or with that disposition to pity which is natural to mankind in common. I think I may be bold to say, this does not arise from benevolence, nor is it properly called by that name.

If all that uneasiness on the sight of others' extreme distress, which we call pity, were properly of the nature of benevolence, then they who are the subjects of this passion, must needs be in a degree of uneasiness in being sensible of the total want of happiness, of all such as they would be disposed to pity in extreme distress. For that certainly is the most direct tendency and operation of benevolence or good will, to desire the happiness of its object. But now this is not the case universally, when men are disposed to exercise pity. There are many who would not be sensibly affected with any uneasiness to know that others were dead — yea men, who are not influenced by the consideration of a future state, but view death as only a cessation of all sensibility, and consequently an end of all happiness — who yet would have been moved with pity towards the same persons, if they had seen them under some very extreme anguish. Some would be moved with pity by seeing a brute-creature under extreme and long torments, who yet suffer no uneasiness in knowing that many thousands of them every day cease to live, and so have an end put to all their pleasure. It is the nature of true benevolence to desire and rejoice in

the prosperity and pleasure of its object; and that, in some proportion to its degree of prevalence. But persons may greatly pity those that are in extreme pain, whose positive pleasure they may still be very indifferent about. In this case, a man may be much moved and affected with uneasiness, who yet would be affected with no sensible joy in seeing signs of the same person's enjoyment of very high degrees of pleasure.

Yea, pity may not only be without benevolence but man consist with true malevolence, or with such ill will as shall cause men not only not to desire the positive happiness of another, but even to desire his calamity. They may pity such an one when his calamity goes beyond their hatred. A man may have true malevolence towards another, desiring no positive good for him, but evil; and yet his hatred not be infinite, but only to a certain degree. And when he sees the person whom he thus hates in misery far beyond his ill will, he may then pity him: because then the natural instinct begins to operate. For malevolence will not overcome the natural instinct, inclining to pity others in extreme, any further than it goes, or to the limits of the degree of misery it wishes to its object. Men may pity others under exquisite torment, when yet they would have been grieved if they had seen their prosperity. And some have such a grudge against another, that they would be far from uneasy at their very death, nay, would even be glad of it. And when this is the case, it is manifest that their heart is void of benevolence towards such persons, and under the power of malevolence. Yet at the same time, they are capable of pitying even these very persons, if they should see them under a degree of misery very much disproportioned to their ill will.

These things may convince us, that natural pity is of a nature very different from true virtue, and not arising from a disposition of heart to general benevolence, but is owing to a particular instinct, which the Creator has implanted, chiefly for the preservation of mankind, though not exclusive of their well being. The giving of this instinct is the fruit of God's mercy, and an instance of his love to the world of mankind, and an evidence, that though the world be so sinful, it is not God's design to make it a world of punishment, and therefore has many ways made a merciful provision of relief in extreme calamities. The natural exercises of pity extend beyond those with whom we are nearly connected, especially in cases of great calamity; because, commonly in such cases, men stand in

need of the help of others besides their near friends, and because commonly those calamities which are extreme, without relief, tend to their destruction. This may be given as the reason why men are so made by the Author of nature, that they have no instinct inclining as much to rejoice at the sight of others' great prosperity and pleasure, as to be grieved at their extreme calamity, viz. because they do not stand in equal necessity of such an instinct as that in order to their preservation. But if pure benevolence were the source of natural pity, doubtless it would operate to as great a degree in congratulation, in cases of others' great prosperity, as in compassion towards them in great misery.

The instincts which in some respects resemble a virtuous benevolence, are agreeable to the state that God designed mankind for here, where he intends their preservation and comfortable subsistence. But in the world of punishment — where the state of the wicked inhabitants will be exceeding different, and God will have none of these merciful designs to answer — we have great reason to think, there will be no such thing as a disposition to pity, in any case; as also no natural affection toward near relations, and no mutual affection between opposite sexes.

To conclude, natural instinct, disposing men to pity others in misery, is also a source of a kind of abhorrence in men of some vices, as cruelty and oppression; and so of a sort of approbation of the contrary virtues, humanity, mercy, etc. which aversion and approbation, however, so far as they arise from this cause only, are not from a principle of true virtue.



## CHAPTER. 7

*The reasons why those things that have been mentioned, which have not the essence at virtue, have yet by many been mistaken for true virtue.*

THE first reason maybe this, that although they have not the specific and distinguishing nature and essence of virtue, yet they have something that belong to the general nature of virtue. The general nature of true virtue is love. It is expressed both in love of benevolence and complacence; but primarily in benevolence to persons and beings, and consequently and secondarily in complacence in virtue, as has been shown. There is something of the general nature of virtue in those natural affections and principles that have been mentioned, in both those respects.

In many of these natural affections there appears the tendency and effect of benevolence, in part. Others have truly a sort of private benevolence, but which in several respects falls short of the extent of true virtuous benevolence, both in its nature and object. Pity to others in distress, though not properly of the nature of love, as has been demonstrated, yet has partly the same influence and effect with benevolence. One effect of true benevolence is for persons to be uneasy when the objects of it are in distress, and to desire their relief. And natural pity has the same effect.

Natural gratitude, though not properly called love — because persons may be moved with a degree of gratitude towards others on certain occasions for whom they have no real and proper friendship; as in the instance of Saul towards David, once and again, after David's sparing his life, when he had so fair opportunity to kill him-yet has the like operation and effect with friendship, in part, for a season, and with regard to so much of the welfare of its object, as appears a deserved requital of kindness received. And in other instances, it may have a more general and abiding influence, so as more properly to be called by the name of love. So that many times man, from natural gratitude, do really with a sort of benevolence, love those who love them. From this, together with some other natural principles, men may love their near friends, their own party, their country, etc. The natural disposition there is to mutual affection between the sexes,

often operates by what may properly be called love. There is oftentimes truly a kind both of benevolence and complacence. As there also is between parents and children.

Thus, these things have something of the general nature of virtue. What they are essentially defective in, is, that they are private in their nature; they do not arise from any temper of benevolence to being in general, nor have they a tendency to any such effect in their operation. But yet agreeing with virtue in its general nature, they are beautiful within their own private sphere, i. e. they appear beautiful if we confine our views to that private system, and while we shut out all other things to which they stand related from our consideration. If that private system contained the sum of universal existence, their benevolence would have true beauty; or, in other words, would be beautiful, all things considered; but now it is not so. These private systems are so far from containing the sum of universal being, or comprehending all existence to which we stand related, that it contains but an infinitely small part of it. The reason why men are so ready to take these private affections for true virtue, is the narrowness of their views and above all, that they are so ready to leave the Divine Being out of their view, and to neglect him in their consideration, or to regard him in their thoughts, as though he did not properly belong to the system of real existence, but was a kind of shadowy, imaginary being. And though most men allow that there is a God, yet, in their ordinary view of things, his being is not apt to come into the account, and to have the influence and effect of real existence as it is with other beings which they see, and are conversant with, by their external senses. In their views of beauty and deformity, and in their inward sensations of displicence and approbation, it is not natural to them to view the Deity as part of the system, and as the head of it, in comparison of whom all other things are to be viewed with corresponding impressions.

Yea, we are apt through the narrowness of our views in judging of the beauty of affections and actions, to limit our consideration to only a small part of the created system. When private affections extend themselves to a considerable number, we are ready to look upon them as truly virtuous, and accordingly to applaud them highly. Thus it is with respect to a man's love to a large party, or a country. For though his private system contains but a small part even of the world of mankind, yet, being a considerable

number, they — through the contracted limits of his mind, and the narrowness of his views — are ready to engross his sight, and to seem as if they were all. Hence, among the Romans, love to their country was the highest virtue; though this affection of theirs, so much extolled, was employed as it were for the destruction of the rest of mankind. The larger the number is, to which that private affection extends, the more apt men are, through the narrowness of their sight, to mistake it for true virtue because then the private system appears to have more of the image of the universal.

And this is the reason why self-love is not mistaken for true virtue. For though there be something of the general nature of virtue in it, as love and good will, yet the object is so private, the limits so narrow, that it by no means engrosses the view, unless it be of the person himself, who through the greatness of his pride may imagine himself as it were all. The minds of men are large enough to take in a vastly greater extent. And though self-love is far from being useless in the world, yea, it is exceeding necessary to society; yet every body sees that if it be not subordinate to, and regulated by, another more extensive principle, it may make a man a common enemy to the general system. And this is as true of any other private affection, notwithstanding its extent may be to a system that contains millions of individuals. And though probate systems bear no greater proportion to the whom of universal existence, than one alone; yet, they bear a greater proportion to the view and comprehension of men's minds, and are more apt to be regarded as if they were all, or at least as some resemblance of the universal system.

Thus I have observed how many of these natural principles resemble virtue in its, primary operation, which is benevolence. Many of them also have a resemblance of it in its secondary operation, which is its approbation of and complacence in virtue itself. Several kinds of approbation of virtue, are not of the nature of a truly virtuous approbation, consisting in a sense and relish of the essential beauty of virtue. As particularly, the approbation of conscience, from a sense of the inferior and secondary beauty which there is in virtue, consisting in uniformity; an from a sense of desert, consisting in a sense of the natural and of loving and being beloved, showing kindness and receiving kindness. So, from the same principle, there is a disapprobation of vice, from a

natural opposition to deformity and disproportion, and a sense of evil desert, or the natural agreement there is between hating and being hated, opposing and being opposed, etc. together with a painful sensation naturally arising from a sense of self-opposition and inconsistency. Approbation of conscience is the more readily mistaken for a truly virtuous approbation, because by the wise constitution of the great Governor of the world, when conscience is well informed, and thoroughly awakened, it agrees with him fully and exactly, as to the object approved, though not as to the ground and reason of approving. It approves all virtue, and condemns all vice. It approves true virtue, and indeed approves nothing that is against it, or that falls short of it; as was shown before. Natural conscience is implanted in all mankind, to be as it were in God's stead, as an internal judge or rule, whereby to distinguish right and wrong.

It has also been observed, how that virtue, consisting in benevolence, is approved; and vice, consisting in ill will, is disliked; from the influence of self-love, together with the association of ideas. In the same manner, men dislike those qualities in things without life or reason, with which they have always connected the ideas of hurtfulness, malignancy, perniciousness, but approve those things with which they habitually connect the ideas of profit, pleasantness, etc. This approbation of virtue, and dislike of vice, is easily mistaken for true virtue, not only because those things are approved by it that have the nature of virtue and the things disliked have the nature of vice, but because here is a great resemblance of virtuous approbation it being complacence from love, the difference only lying in this, that it is not from love to being in general, but from self-love.

There is also, as before shown, a liking of some virtues, and a dislike of some vices, from the influence of the natural instinct of pity. This we are apt to mistake for the exercise of true virtue on many accounts. Here is not only a kind of complacence, and the objects of complacence have the nature of virtue, and the virtues themselves are very amiable, such as humanity, mercy, tenderness of heart, etc. and the contrary very odious; but besides, the approbation is not merely from self-love, but from compassion, an affection that respects others, and resembles benevolence, as before explained.

Another reason why the things mentioned are mistaken for true virtue, is, that there is indeed a true negative moral goodness in them. By a negative moral goodness, I mean the negation or absence of true moral evil. They have this negative moral goodness, because being without them would be an evidence of a much greater moral evil. Thus the exercise of natural conscience in such and such degrees, wherein appears such a measure of sensibility, though it be not of the nature of real positive virtue, or true moral goodness, yet has a negative moral goodness, because in the present state of shines, it is an evidence of the absence of that higher degree of wickedness, which causes great insensibility, or stupidity of conscience. For sin is not only against a spiritual and divine sense of virtue, but is also against the dictates of that moral sense which is in natural conscience. No wonder, that this sense, being long opposed and often conquered, grows weaker. All sin has its source from selfishness or from self-love, not subordinate to a regard to being in general. And natural conscience chiefly consists in a sense of desert, or the natural agreement between sin and misery. But if self were indeed all, and so more considerable than all the world besides, there would be no ill desert in a man regarding himself above all, and making all other interests give place to private interest. And no wonder that men, by long acting from the selfish principle, and by being habituated to treat themselves as if they were all, increase in pride, and come to look on themselves as all, and so to lose entirely the sense of ill desert in their making all other interests give place to their own. And no wonder that any, by often repeating acts of sin without punishment, or visible appearance of approaching punishment, have less and less present sense of the connection of sin with punishment.

That sense which an awakened conscience has of the desert of sin, consists chiefly in a sense of its desert of resentment from the Deity, the fountain and trend of universal existence. But no wonder that, by a long continued worldly and sensual life, men more and more lose all sense of the Deity, who is a spiritual and invisible Being. The mind being long involved in, and engrossed by, sensitive objects, becomes sensual in all its operations, and excludes all views and impressions of spiritual objects, and is unfit for their contemplation. Thus conscience and general benevolence, are entirely different principles, and thus a sense of conscience differs from the holy complacency of a benevolent and truly virtuous heart. Yet wickedness may

by long habitual exercise greatly diminish a sense of conscience. So that there may be negative moral goodness, in sensibility of conscience, as it may be an argument of the absence of that higher degree of wickedness, which causeth stupidity of conscience.

So with respect to natural gratitude, though there may be no virtue merely in loving them that love us, yet the contrary may be an evidence of a great degree of depravity, as it may argue a higher degree of selfishness, so that a man is come to look upon himself as all, and others as nothing, and so their respect and kindness as nothing. Thus an increase of pride diminishes gratitude. So doth sensuality, or the increase of sensual appetites, which, coming more and more under the power and impression of sensible objects, tends by degrees to make the mind insensible to any thing else. Those appetites take up the whole soul and, through habit and custom, the water is all drawn out of other channels, in which it naturally flows, and is all carried as it were into one channel.

In like manner, natural affection, and natural pity though not of the nature of virtue, may be diminished greatly by the increase of pride and sensuality, and, as the consequence of this, be habitually disposed to envy, malice, etc. These lusts, when they prevail to a high degree, may overcome and diminish the exercise of those natural principles; even as they often overcome and diminish common prudence in a man, who seeks his own private interest in point of health, wealth, or honor, and yet no one will think it proves that a man being cunning in seeking his own personal and temporal interest, has any thing of the nature and essence of true virtue.

Another reason why these natural principles and affections are mistaken for true virtue, is, that in several respects they have the same effect which true virtue tends to; especially in these two ways:

- 1.** The present state of the world is so constituted by the wisdom and goodness of its supreme Ruler, that these natural principles, for the most part, tend to the good of mankind. So do natural pity, gratitude, parental affection, etc. Herein they agree with the tendency of general benevolence, which seeks and tends to the general good. But this is no proof that these natural principles have the nature of true virtue. For self-love is exceeding

useful and necessary; and so are the natural appetites of hunger, thirst, etc. Yet, nobody will assert that thee have the nature of true virtue.

**2.** These principles have a like effect with true virtue in this respect, that they tend several ways to restrain vice, and prevent many acts of wickedness. So natural affection, love to our party, or to particular friends, tends to, keep us from acts of injustice towards these persons; which would be real wickedness. Pity preserves from cruelty, which would be real and great moral evil. Natural conscience tends to restrain sin in general. But this cannot prove these principles themselves to be of the nature of true virtue. For so is this present state ordered by a merciful God, that even self-love often restrains from acts of true wickedness; and not only so, but puts men upon seeking true virtue; yet is not itself true virtue, but is the source of all the wickedness that is in the world.

Another reason why these inferior affections, especially some of them, are accounted virtuous, is, that there are affections of the same denomination which are truly virtuous. Thus, for instance, there is a truly virtuous pity, or a compassion to others, under affliction or misery, from general benevolence. Pure benevolence would be sufficient to excite pity to another in calamity, if there here no particular instinct or any other principle determining the mind thereto. It Is easy to see how benevolence, which seeks another's good, should cause us to desire his deliverance from evil. And this is a source of pity far more extensive than the other. It excites compassion in cases that are overlooked by natural instinct; and even in those cases to which instinct extends, it mixes its influence with the natural principle, and guides and regulates its operations. And when this is the case, the pity which is exercised, may be called a virtuous compassion. So there is a virtuous gratitude; or a gratitude that arises not only from self-love but from a superior principle of disinterested general benevolence. As, when we receive kindness from such as we love already, we are more disposed to gratitude, and disposed to greater degrees of it, than when the mind is destitute of any such friendly prepossession. Therefore, when the superior principle of virtuous love has a governing hand, and regulates the affair, it may be called a virtuous gratitude. There is also a virtuous love of justice arising from pure benevolence to being in general, as that naturally and necessarily inclines the heart, that every particular being should have such a share of benevolence as is

proportioned to its dignity, consisting in the degree of its being, and the degree of its virtue. And thus it is easy to see, how there may be a virtuous sense of desert different from what is natural and common, and a virtuous conscientiousness, or a sanctified conscience. And as, when natural affections have their operations mixed with the influence of virtuous benevolence, and are directed and determined thereby, they may be called virtuous, so there may be a virtuous love of parents to children, and between other near relatives: a virtuous love of our town, or country, or nation. Yea, and a virtuous love between the sexes, as there may be the influence of virtue mingled with instinct; and virtue may govern with regard to the particular manner of its operation, and may guide it to such ends as are agreeable to the great purposes of true virtue.

Genuine virtue prevents that increase of the habits of pride and sensuality, which tend to diminish the exercises of the useful and necessary principles of nature. And a principle of general benevolence softens and sweetens the mind, makes it more susceptible of the proper influence of the gentler natural instincts, directs every one into its proper channel, determines the exercise to the proper manner and measure, and guides all to the best purposes.



## CHAPTER 8

*In what respects virtue or moral good founded in sentiment; and how far it is founded in the reason and nature of things.*

VIRTUE is a certain kind of beautiful nature, form or quality. That form or quality is called beautiful, which appears in itself agreeable or comely, or the view of which is immediately pleasant to the mind. I say, agreeable in itself, and immediately pleasant to distinguish it from things which in themselves are not so, but either indifferent or disagreeable; which yet appear eligible, and agreeable indirectly, for something else with which they are connected. Such indirect agreeableness, or eligibleness in shines not for themselves, but for something else, is not beauty. But when a form or quality appears lovely, pleasing, and delightful in itself; then It is called beautiful; and this agreeableness or gratefulness of the idea is BEAUTY.

It is evident, that the way we come by the idea of beauty, is by immediate sensation of the gratefulness of the idea called beautiful; and not by finding out by argumentation any consequences, or other things with which it stands connected; any more than tasting the sweetness of honey, or perceiving the harmony of a tune, is by argumentation on connexions and consequences. The manner of being affected with the immediate presence of the beautiful idea, depends not on any reasonings about the idea, after we have it, before we can find out whether it be beautiful or not, but on the frame of our minds, whereby they are so made, that such an idea, as soon as we have it, is grateful, or appears beautiful.

Therefore, if this be all that is meant by them who affirm that virtue is founded in sentiment, and not in reason, that they who see the beauty of true virtue do not perceive it by argumentation on its connexions and consequences, but by the frame of their own minds, or a certain spiritual sense given them of God — whereby they immediately perceive pleasure in the presence of the idea of true virtue in their minds, or are directly gratified in the view or contemplation of this object — this is certainly true. But if thereby be meant, that the frame of mind, or inward sense given them by God, whereby the mind is disposed to delight in the idea of true virtue, is given arbitrarily, so that if he had pleased he might have

given a contrary sense and determination of mind, which would have agreed as well with the necessary nature of things, this I think is not true.

Virtue, as I have observed, consists in the cordial consent or union of being to being in general. And that frame of mind, whereby it is disposed to relish, and be pleased with the view of this, is benevolence, or union of heart, to being in general, or it is an universally benevolent frame of mind. Because, he whose temper is to love being in general, must therein have a disposition to approve and be pleased with love to being in general. Therefore, now the question is, whether God, in giving this temper to a created mind, acts so arbitrarily, that there is nothing in the necessary nature of things to hinder, but that a contrary temper might have agreed or consisted as well with that nature of things as this?

And in the first place, to assert this would be a plain absurdity, and contrary to the very supposition. For here it is supposed, that virtue in its very essence consists in agreement or consent of being to being. Now certainly agreement itself to being in general must necessarily agree better with general existence, than opposition and contrariety to it.

I observe, secondly, that God in giving to the creature such a temper of mind, gives that which is agreeable to what is by absolute necessity his own temper and nature. For, as observed, God himself is in effect being in general and without all doubt it is in itself necessary, that God should agree with himself be united with himself, or love himself: and therefore, when he gives the same temper to his creatures, this is more agreeable to his necessary nature, than the opposite temper: yea, the latter would be infinitely contrary to his nature.

Let it be noted thirdly, that by this temper only can created beings be united to and agree with one another. This appears, because it consists in consent and union to being in general; which implies agreement and union with every particular being, except in such cases wherein union with them is by some means inconsistent with union to general existence. But certainly, if any particular created being were of so temper to oppose being in general, that would infer the most universal and greatest possible discord, not only of creatures with their Creator, but of created beings one with another.

Fourthly, There is no other temper but this, whereby a man can agree with himself or be without self-inconsistence, i. e. without having some inclinations and relishes repugnant to others, and that for these reasons. Every being that has understanding and will necessarily loves happiness. For, to suppose any being not to love happiness would be to suppose he did not love what was agreeable to him which is a contradiction: or at least would imply, that nothing was agreeable or eligible to him, which is the same as to say that he has no such thing as choice, or any faculty of will. So that every being who has a faculty of will must of necessity have inclination to happiness. And therefore, if he be consistent with himself, and has not some inclinations repugnant to others, he must approve of those inclinations whereby being desire the happiness of being in general, and must be against a disposition to the misery of being in general: because otherwise he would approve of opposition to his own happiness. For if a temper inclined to the misery of being in general prevailed universally it is apparent, it would tend to universal misery. But he that loves a tendency to universal misery, in effect loves a tendency to his own misery: and as he necessarily hates his own misery he has then one inclination repugnant to another. And besides, it necessarily follows from self-love, that men love to be loved by others; because in this others love agrees with their own love. But if men loved hatred to being in general, they would in effect love the hatred of themselves, and so would be inconsistent with themselves, having one natural inclination contrary to another.

These things may help us to understand why that spiritual and divine sense, by which those who are truly virtuous and holy perceive the excellency of true virtue, is in the sacred Scriptures called by the name of light, knowledge, understanding, &c. If this divine sense were a thing arbitrarily given, without any foundation in the nature of things, it would not properly be called by such names. For if there were no correspondence, or agreement, in such a sense with the nature of things, any more than there would have been in a contrary sense, the idea we obtain by this spiritual sense could in no respect be said to be a knowledge or perception of any thing besides what was in our own minds. for this idea would be no representation of any thing without. But since it is agreeable, in the respects above mentioned, to the nature of things, and especially since it is the representation of the moral perfection and

excellency of the Divine Being; hereby we have a perception of that morel excellency, of which we could have no true idea without it. And hereby pursues have that true knowledge of God, which greatly enlightens the mind in the knowledge of divine things in general, and which, as might be shown, if it were necessary to the main purpose of this discourse, in many respects, assists persons to a right understanding of things in general; viz. to see the nature and truth of them, in their proper evidence. Whereas, the want of this spiritual sense, and the prevalence of those dispositions which are contrary to it, tends to darken and distract the mind, and dreadfully to delude and confound men's understandings.

Nor can that moral scenic, common to mankind, which here is in natural conscience, be truly said to be no more than a sentiment arbitrarily given by the Creator, without any relation to the necessary nature of things: but rather this is established in agreement with the nature of things; so established, as no sense of mind that can be supposed of a contrary nature and tendency could be. This will appear by these two things:

**1.** This moral sense — if the understanding be well informed, exercised at liberty, and in an extensive manner, without being restrained to a private sphere — approves the very same things which a spiritual and divine sense approves, and those things only, though not on the same grounds, nor with the same kind of approbation. Therefore, as that divine sense is agreeable to the necessary nature of things, as already shown so this inferior moral sense, being so far correspondent to that, must also so far agree with the nature of things.

**2.** It has been shown that this moral sense consists in approving the uniformity and natural agreement there is between one thing and another. So that, by the supposition it is agreeable to the nature of things. For therein it consists, viz. a disposition of mind to consent to, or like, the agreement of the nature of things, or the agreement of the nature and form of one thing, with another. And certainly, such a temper of mind is more agreeable to the nature of things than an opposite temper.

The use of language is to express our SENTIMENTS, or ideas, to each other, so that those terms by which things of a moral nature are signified, express those moral sentiments which are common to mankind. Therefore, that MORAL SENSE which is in natural conscience chiefly governs the use of

language, and is the mind's rule of language in these matters. It is indeed the Federal natural rule which God has given to all men, whereby to judge of moral good and evil. By such words, right and wrong, good and evil, when used in a moral sense, is meant in common speech, that which deserves praise or blame, respect or resentment; and mankind in general have a sense of desert, by this natural moral sense.

Therefore, here is a question which may deserve to be considered: seeing sentiment is the rule of language, as to what is called good and evil, unworthy and unworthy; and it is apparent that sentiment, at least as to many particulars, is different, in different persons, especially in different nations — that being thought to deserve praise by one, which by others is thought to be worthy of blame — how therefore can virtue and vice be any other than arbitrary; not at all determined by the nature of things, but by the sentiment of men with relation to the nature of things?

In order to the answering of this question with clearness, it may be divided into two: viz. Whether men's sentiments of moral good and evil are casual and accidental? And, whether their way of using words in what they call good and evil, is not arbitrary, without respect to any common sentiment conformed to the nature of things?

As to the first, I would observe, that the general disposition or sense of mind, exercised in a sense of desert of esteem or resentment, may be the same in all: though as to particular objects and occasions with regard to which it is exercised, it may be very various in different men, or bodies of men, through the partiality or error that may attend the view or attention of the mind. In all, a notion of desert of love or resentment, may consist in the same thing, in general — a suitableness, or natural uniformity and agreement, between the affections and acts of the agent, and the I affections and treatment of others some way concern — and yet occasions and object, through a variety of apprehensions about them, and the various manner in which they are viewed, by reason of the partial attention of the mind, I may be extremely various. Besides, example, custom education, and association, may contribute to this, in ways innumerable. But it is needless to enlarge here, since what has been said by others, Mr. Hutchison in particular, may abundantly show, that the differences which are to be found among different persons and nations, concerning moral

good and evil, are not inconsistent with a general moral sense, common to all mankind.

Nor, secondly, is the use of the words, good and evil, right and wrong, when used in a moral sense, altogether unfixed and arbitrary, according to the variety of notions, opinions, and views, that occasion the forementioned variety of sentiment. For though the signification of words is determined by particular use, yet that which governs in the use of terms, is general or common use. And mankind, in what they would signify by terms, are obliged to aim at a consistent use: because it is easily found that the end of language, which is to be a common medium of manifesting ideas and sentiments, cannot be obtained any other way than by a consistent use of words; both that men should be consistent with themselves, and one with another, in the use of them. But men cannot call any thing right or wrong, worthy or ill-deserving, consistently, any other way than by calling things so, which truly deserve praise or blame, i. e. things, wherein all things considered there is most uniformity in connecting with them praise or blame. There is no other way in which they can use these terms consistently with themselves. Thus if thieves or traitors may be angry with informers that bring them to justice, and call their behavior by odious names; yet herein they are inconsistent with themselves, because, when they put themselves in the place of those who have injured them, they approve the same things they condemn. And therefore, such are capable of being convinced, that they apply these odious terms in an abusive manner. So, a nation that prosecutes an ambitious design of universal empire, by subduing other nations with fire and sword, may affix terms, that signify the highest degrees of virtue, to the conduct of such as show the most engaged, stable, resolute spirit in this affair, and do most of this bloody work. But yet they are capable of being convinced, that they use these terms inconsistently, and abuse language in it, and so having their mouths stopped. And not only will men use such words inconsistently with themselves, but also with one another, by using them any otherwise than to signify true merit or ill deserving, as before explained. For there is no way else wherein men have any notion of good or ill desert, in which mankind in general can agree. Mankind in general seem to suppose some general standard, or foundation in nature, for an universal consistence in the use of the terms whereby they express moral good and evil, which

none can depart from but through error and mistake. This is evidently supposed in all their disputes about right and wrong; and in all endeavors used to prove that any thing is either good or evil, in a moral sense.

THE  
GREAT CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE  
OF  
ORIGINAL SIN  
DEFENDED;  
EVIDENCES OF ITS TRUTH PRODUCED,  
ARGUMENTS TO THE CONTRARY ANSWERED,  
*Containing, in Particular,*  
A REPLY TO THE OBJECTIONS OF  
DR. JOHN TAYLOR,  
IN HIS BOOK, ENTITLED,  
*“The Scripture-Doctrine of Original Sin Proposed to Free  
and Candid Examination, etc.”*  
ADVERTISEMENT,

CONTAINING A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THIS BOOK AND ITS  
AUTHOR, BY THE FIRST EDITOR.

THE Reverend Author of the following piece, was removed by death before its publication. But, ere his decrease, the copy was finished and brought to the press, and a number of sheets passed his own review. They



who were acquainted with the author, or know his just character, and have any taste for the serious theme, will want nothing to be said in recommendation of the ensuing tract, but only that Mr. Edwards wrote it.

Several valuable pieces on this subject have lately been published! upon the same side of the question. But he had no notice of so much as the very first of them, till he had wholly concluded what he had in view: nor has it been thought, that any thing already printed should supersede this work; being designed on a more extensive plan — comprising a variety; of arguments, and answers to many objections, that fell not in the way of the other worthy writers — and the whole done with a care of familiar method and language, as well as clear reasoning, accommodated very much to common capacities. It must be a sensible pleasure to every friend of truth, that so masterly a hand undertook a reply to Dr. Taylor; notwithstanding the various answers already given him, troth at home and abroad.

Since it has been thought unfit, that this posthumous book should go unattended with a respectful memorial of the author, it is hoped, the reader will candidly accept the following:

As he lived cheerfully resigned in all things to the will of Heaven, so he died, or rather, as the Scripture emphatically expresses it, in relation to the saint in Christ Jesus. he fell asleep, without the least appearance of pain, and with great calm of mind. Indeed, when he first perceived the symptoms upon him to be mortal, he is said to have been a little perplexed for a while, about the meaning of this mysterious conduct of Providence, in calling him out from his beloved privacy, to a public scene of action and influence, and then so suddenly, just upon his entrance into it, translating him from thence, in such a way, by mortality! However, he quickly got believing and composing views of the wisdom and goodness of God in this-surprising event: and readily yielded to the sovereign disposal of Heaven, with the most placid submission. Amidst the joy of faith, he departed this world, to go and see Jesus, whom his soul loved; to be with him, to behold his glory, and rejoice in his kingdom.

In person, he was tall of stature, and of a slender make. There was something extremely delicate in his constitution; which always obliged him to observe the exactest rules of temperance, and every method of cautious and prudent living. By such means he was helped to go through incessant

labors, and to bear up under much study, which, Solomon observes, is a weariness to the flesh. Perhaps never was a man more constantly retired from the world; giving himself to reading, and contemplation. And a wonder it was, that his feeble frame could subsist under such fatigues, daily repeated find so long continued. Yet upon occasion of some remark upon it by a friend, which was only a few months before his death, he told him, "He did not find but he was then as well able to bear the closest study, as he was thirty years before; and could go through the exercises of the pulpit with as little weariness or difficulty." In his youth he appeared healthy, and with a good degree of vivacity, but was never robust. In middle life, he Appeared very much emaciated (I had almost said, mortified) by severe studies, and intense applications of thought. Hence his voice was a little languid, and too low for a large assembly; though much relieved and advantaged by a proper emphasis, just cadence, well-placed pauses, and great distinctness in pronunciation.

He had a piercing eye, the truest index of the mind. His aspect and mine had a mixture of severity and pleasantry. He had a natural turn for gravity and sedateness; ever contemplative and in conversation usually reserved, but always observant of a genuine decorum in his deportment; free from sullen supercilious, and contemptuous airs, and without any appearance of ostentation, levity, or vanity. As to imagination, he had enough of it for a great and good man: but the gaities of a luxuriant fancy, so captivating to many, were what he neither affected himself, nor was much delighted with in others. He had a natural steadiness of temper, and fortitude of mind which being sanctified by the Spirit of God, was ever of vast advantage to him, to carry trim through difficult services, and support him under trying afflictions in the course of his life. Personal injuries he bore with a becoming meekness and patience, and a disposition to forgiveness. The humility, modesty, and serenity of his behavior, much endeared him to his acquaintance and made him appear amiable in the eyes of such as had the privilege of conversing with him. He was a true and faithful friend and showed much of a disinterested benevolence to his neighbor. The several relations sustained by him, he adorned with an exemplary conduct, and was solicitous to fill every station with its proper duty. He kept up an extensive correspondence, with ministers and others, in various parts, and his letters always confined some significant and valuable communications.

In his private walk, as a Christian, he appeared an example of truly rational, consistent, uniform religion and virtue: a shining instance of the power and efficacy, of that holy faith, to which he was so firmly attached, and of which he was so strenuous a defender. He exhibited much of spirituality, and a heavenly bent of soul. In him one saw the loveliest appearance, a rare assemblage of christian graces, united with the richest gifts, and mutually subserving and recommending one another.

As a scholar; his intellectual furniture exceeded what is common, considering the disadvantages we labor under in this remote corner of the world. He very early discovered a genius above the ordinary size; which gradually ripened and expanded, by daily exertion and application. He was remarkable for the penetration and extent of his understanding, for his powers of criticism and accurate distinction, quickness of thought, solidity of judgment, and force of reasoning; which made him an acute and strong disputant. By nature he was formed for a logician, and a metaphysician; but by speculation, observation, and converse, greatly improved. He had a good insight into the whole circle of liberal arts and sciences; possessed a very valuable stock of classic learning, philosophy, mathematics, history, chronology, etc. By the blessing of God on his indefatigable studiousness, to the last, he was constantly treasuring up useful knowledge, both human and divine.

Thus he appears uncommonly accomplished for the arduous and momentous province to which he was finally called. And had Heaven indulged us with the continuance of his precious life, we have reason to think, he would have graced his new station, and been a signal blessing to the college, and therein extensively served his generation, according to the will of God.

After all, it must be owned, divinity was his favourite study; and the ministry, his most delightful employment. Among the luminaries of the church, in these American regions, he was justly reputed a star of the first magnitude thoroughly versed in all the branches of theology, didactic, polemic, casuistic, experimental, and practical. In point of divine knowledge and skill, he had few equals, and perhaps no superior, at least in these parts. On the maturest examination of the different schemes of principles, obtaining in the world, and on comparing them with the sacred

Scriptures, the oracles of God and the great standard of truth, he was a Protestant and a Calvinist in judgment, adhering to the main articles of the reformed religion with an unshaken firmness, and with a fervent zeal, but tempered with charity and candour, and governed by discretion. He seemed as little as most men under the bias of education, or the influence of bigotry. As to practical and vital Christianity, no man appeared to have a better acquaintance with its nature and importance, or to understand true religion, and feel its power, more than he, which made him an excellently fit guide to inquiring souls, and qualified him to guard them against all false religion. His internal sense of the intercourse between God and souls, being brought by him to the severe test of reason and revelation, preserved him, both in sentiment and conduct, from the least tincture of enthusiasm. The accomplished divine enters deep into his character.

As a preacher, he was judicious, solid, and instructive. Seldom was he known to bring controversy into the pulpit; or to handle any subject in the nicer modes and forms of scholastic dissertation. His sermons, in general, seemed to vary exceedingly from his controversial compositions. In his preaching, usually, all was plain, familiar, sententious, practical, and very distant from any affectation of appearing the great man, or displaying his extraordinary abilities as a scholar. But still he ever preserved the character of a skillful and thorough divine. The common themes of his ministry were the most weighty and profitable; and especially, the great truths of the gospel of Christ, in which he himself lived by faith. His method in preaching was, first to apply to the understanding and judgment, laboring to enlighten and convince them, and then to persuade the will, engage the affections, and excite the active powers of the soul. His language was with propriety and purity, but with a noble negligence; nothing ornamented. Florid diction was not the beauty he preferred. His talents were of a superior kind. He regarded thoughts, rather than words. Precision of sentiment and clearness of expression are the principal characteristics of his pulpit style. Neither quick nor slow of speech, there was a certain pathos in his utterance, and such skill of address, as seldom failed to draw the attention, warm the hearts, and stimulate the consciences of the auditory. He studied to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. And he was one who gave himself to prayer, as well as to the ministry of the word.

Agreeably it pleased God to put great honor upon him, by crowning his labors with surprising successes, in the conversion of sinners, and the edification of saints, to the advancement of the kingdom and glory of God our Savior Jesus Christ.

As a writer, Mr. Edwards distinguished himself in controversy, to which he was called on a variety of occasions. Here the superiority of his genius eminently appeared. He knew to arrange his ideas in an exact method: and close application of mind, with the uncommon strength of his intellectual powers, enabled him in a manner to exhaust every subject he took under consideration. He diligently employed the latter part of his life in defending Christianity, both in its doctrinal and practical views, against the errors of the times. Besides his excellent writings in behalf of the power of godliness, which some years ago happily prevailed in many parts of the British America, he made a noble stand against enthusiasm and false religion, when it threatened to spread, by his incomparable treatise upon religious affections. And more lately in opposition to Pelagian, Arminian, and other false principles, he published a very elaborate Treatise upon the Liberty of the human Will. A volume, that has procured him the elogy of eminent divines abroad Several professors of divinity in the Dutch universities very lately sent him their thanks, for the assistance he had given them in their inquiry into some controverted points; having carried his own further than any author they had ever seen. And now this volume of his, on the great Christian doctrine of original sin, is presented to public view; which, though studiously adapted to lower capacities, yet carries in it the evident traces of his great genius, and seems with superior force of argument to have entirely baffled the opponent.

His writings will perpetuate his memory, and make his name blossom in the dust. The blessing of Heaven attending the perusal of them, will make them effectually conducive to the glory of God, and the good of souls; which will brighten the author's crown, and add to his joy, in the day of future retribution.

## THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE following Discourse is intended, not merely as an answer to any particular book written against the doctrine of Original Sin, but as a general defense of that great important doctrine. Nevertheless, I have in this defense taken notices of the main things said against this doctrine, by such of the more noted opposers of it as I have had opportunity to read: particularly those two late writers, Dr. Turnbull and Dr. Taylor, of Norwich; but especially the latter, in what he has published in those two books of his, the first entitled, *The Scripture-Doctrine of Original Sin proposed to free and candid Examination*, the other, his *Key to the Apostolic Writing, with a Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistle to the Romans*. I have closely attended to Dr. Taylor's Piece on Original Sin, in all its parts, and have endeavored that no one thing there said, of any consequence in this controversy, should pass unnoticed, or that any thing which has the appearance of an argument, in opposition to this doctrine, should be left unanswered. I look on the doctrine as of great importance, which every body will doubtless own it is, if it be true. For, if the case be such indeed, that all mankind are by nature in a state of total ruin, both with respect to the moral evil of which they are the subjects, and the afflictive evil to which they are exposed, the one as the consequence and punishment of the other; then, doubtless, the great salvation by CHRIST stands in direct relation to this ruin, as the remedy to the disease; and the whole gospel, or doctrine of salvation, must suppose it, and all real belief, or true notion of that gospel, must be built upon it. Therefore, as I think the doctrine is most certainly true and important, I hope, my attempting a vindication of it, will be candidly interpreted; and that what I have done towards its defense, will be impartially considered, by all that will give themselves the trouble to read the ensuing discourse: in which it is designed to examine every thing material throughout the Doctor's whole book, and many things in that other book, containing his *Key and Exposition on Romans*; as also many things written in opposition to this doctrine by some other modern authors. Moreover, my discourse being not only intended for an answer to Dr. Taylor, and other opposers of the doctrine of original sin, but for a general defense of that doctrine; producing the evidence of the truth of the doctrine, as well as answering objections made

against it, I hope this attempt of mine will not be thought needless, nor be altogether useless, notwithstanding other publications on the subject.

I would also hope that the extensiveness of the plan of the following treatise will excuse the length of it. And that when it is considered how much was absolutely requisite to the full executing of a design formed on such a plan; how much has been written against the doctrine of original sin, and with what plausibility; how strong the preludes of many are in favor of what is said in opposition to this doctrine — and that it cannot be expected, any thing short of a full consideration of almost every argument advanced by the main opposers, especially by this late and specious writer, Dr. Taylor, will satisfy many readers — how much must unavoidably be said in order to a full handling of the arguments in defense of the doctrine, and how important the doctrine must be, if true; I trust, the length of the following discourse will not be thought to exceed what the case really required. However, this must be left to the judgment of the intelligent and candid reader.

*Stockbridge, May 26, 1757.*

**THE**

**GREAT CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE**

**OF**

**ORIGINAL SIN DEFENDED.**

**PART 1**

*Wherein Are Considered Some Evidences of Original Sin From Facts and Events, as Founded by Observation and Experience, Together With Representations and Testimonies of Holy Scripture, and the Confession and Assertion of Opposes.*

**CHAPTER 1.**

*The Evidence of Original Sin From What Appears in Fact of the Sinfulness of Mankind.*

**SECTION 1**

*All mankind constantly, in all ages without fail in any one instance, run into that moral evil, which is in effect their own utter and eternal perdition in a total privation of GOD'S favor, and suffering of his vengeance and wrath.*

BY Original Sin, as the phrase has been most commonly used by divines, is meant the innate sinful depravity of the heart. But get when the doctrine of original sin is spoken of, it is vulgarly understood in that latitude, which includes not only the depravity of nature, but the imputation of Adam's first sin, or, in other words, the liableness or exposedness of Adam's Posterity, in the divine judgment, to partake of the punishment of that sin.



So far as I know, most of those who have held one of these, have maintained the other, and most of those who have opposed one, have opposed the other; both are opposed by the author chiefly attended to in the following discourse, in his book against original sin: and it may perhaps appear in our future consideration of the subject, that they are closely connected; that the arguments which prove the one establish the other, and that there are no more difficulties attending the allowing of one, than the other.

I shall, in the first place, consider this doctrine more especially with regard to the corruption of nature, and as we treat of this, the other will naturally come into consideration, in the prosecution of the discourse, as connected with it. As all moral qualities, all principles either of virtue or vice, lie in the disposition of the heart, I shall consider whether we have evidence, that the heart of man is naturally of a corrupt and evil disposition. This is strenuously denied by many late writers, who are enemies to the doctrine of original sin, and particularly by Dr. Taylor.

The way we come by the idea of any such shine as disposition or tendency, is by observing what is constant or general in event, especially under a great variety of circumstances, and above all, when the effect or event continues the same through great and various opposition, much and manifold force and means used to the contrary not prevailing to hinder the effect. I do not know, that such a prevalence of effects is denied to be an evidence of prevailing tendency in causes and agents; or that it is expressly denied by the opposers of the doctrine of original sin, that if, in the course of events, it universally or generally proves that mankind are actually corrupt, this would be an evidence of a prior corrupt propensity in the world of mankind; whatever may be said by some, which, if taken with its plain consequences, may set in to imply a denial of this; which may be considered afterwards. But by many the fact is denied, that is, it is denied, that corruption and moral evil are commonly prevalent in the world: on the contrary, it is insisted on, that good preponderates, and that virtue has the ascendant.

To this purpose, Dr. Turnbull says, “With regard to the prevalence of vice in the world, men are apt to let their imagination run out upon all the robberies, piracies, murders, perjuries, frauds, massacres, assassinations

they have either heard of, or read in history thence concluding all mankind to be very wicked. As if a court of justice were a proper place to make an estimate of the morals of mankind, or an hospital of the healthfulness of a climate. But ought they not to consider, that the member of honest citizens and farmers far surpasses that of all sorts of criminals in any state, and that the innocent and kind actions of even criminals themselves surpass their crimes in numbers that it is the reality of crimes, in comparison of innocent or good actions, which engages our attention to them, and makes them to be recorded in history, while honest, generous domestic actions are overlooked, only because they are so common? as one great danger, or one month's sickness, shall become a frequently repeated story during a long life of health and safety. — Let not the vices of mankind be multiplied or magnified. Let us make a fair estimate of human life, and set over against the shocking, the astonishing instances of barbarity and wickedness that have been perpetrated in any age, not only the exceeding generous and brave actions with which history shines, but the prevailing innocency, goodnature, industry, felicity, and cheerfulness of the greater part of mankind at all times, and we shall not find reason to cry out, as objectors against Providence do on this occasion; that all men are vastly corrupt, and that there is hardly any such thing as virtue in the world. Upon a fair computation, the fact does indeed come out, that very great villages have been very uncommon in all ages, and looked upon as monstrous, so general is the sense and esteem of virtue.” — It seems to be with a like view that Dr. Taylor says, “We must not take the measure of our health and enjoyments from a lazaret-house, nor of our understanding from Bedlam, nor of our morals from a gaol.” (P. 77. S.)

With respect to the propriety and pertinence of such a representation of things, and its force as to the consequence designed, hope we shall be better able to judge, and in some measure to determine, whether the natural disposition of the hearts of mankind be corrupt or not, when the things which follow have been considered. But for the greater clearness, it may be proper here to premise one consideration, that is of great Importance in this controversy, and is very much overlooked by the opposers of the doctrine of original sin in their disputing against it.

That it is to be looked upon as the true tendency of the innate disposition of man's heart, which appears to be its tendency, when we consider things

as they are in themselves, or in their own nature, without the interposition of divine grace. Thus, that state of man's nature, that disposition of the mind, is to be looked upon as evil and pernicious, which, as it is in itself, tends to extremely pernicious consequences, and would certainly end therein, were it not that the free mercy and kindness of God interposes to prevent that issue. It would be very strange if any should argue, that there is no evil tendency in the case, because the mere favor and compassion of the Most High may step in and oppose the tendency, and prevent the sad effect. Particularly, if there be any thing in the nature of man, whereby he has an universal unfailing tendency to that moral evil, which, according to the real nature and true demerit of things, as they are in themselves, implies his utter ruin, that must be looked upon as an evil tendency or propensity, however divine grace may interpose, to save him from deserted ruin, and to overrule things to an issue contrary to that which they tend to of themselves. Grace is sovereign, exercised according to the good pleasure of God, bringing good out of evil. The effect of it belongs not to the nature of things themselves, that otherwise have an ill tendency, any more than the remedy belongs to the disease; but is something altogether independent on it, introduced to oppose the natural tendency, and rever. the course of things. But the event to which things tend, according to their own demerit, and according to divine justice, is the event to which they tend in their own nature as Dr. T's own words fully imply, (Pref. to Par. on Romans p. 131.) "God alone (says he) can declare whether he will pardon or punish the ungodliness and unrighteousness of mankind, which is in ITS OWN NATURE punishable." Nothing is more precisely according to the truth of things, than divine justice: it weighs things in an even balance, it views and estimates things no otherwise than they are truly in their own nature. Therefore undoubtedly that which implies a tendency to ruin, according to the estimate of divine justice, does indeed imply such a tendency in its own nature.

And then it must be remembered, that it is a moral depravity we are speaking of; and therefore when we are considering whether such depravity do not appear by a tendency to a bad effect or issue, it is a moral tendency to such an issue, that is the thing to be taken into the account. A moral tendency or influence is by desert. Then may it be said, man's nature or state is attended with a pernicious or destructive

tendency, in a moral sense, when it tends to that which deserves misery and destruction. And therefore it equally shows the moral depravity of the nature of mankind in their present state, whether that nature be universally attended with an effectual tendency to destructive vengeance actually executed, or to their deserving misery and ruin, or their just exposed, to destruction, however that fatal consequence may be prevented by grace or whatever the actual event be.

One thing more is to be observed here, that the topic mainly insisted on by the opposers of the doctrine of original sin's is the justice of God, both in their objections against the imputation of Adam's sin, and also against its being so ordered, that men should come into the world with a corrupt and ruined nature, without having merited the displeasure of their Creator by any personal fault. But the latter is not repugnant to God's Justice, if men actually are born into the world with a tendency to sin, and to misery and ruin for their sin, which actually will be the consequence unless mere grace steps in and prevents it. If this be allowed, the argument from justice is given up: For it is to suppose, that their liableness to misery and ruin comes in a way of justice; otherwise there would be no need of the interposition of divine grace to save them. Justice alone would be sufficient security, if exercised, without grace. It is all one in this dispute about what is just and righteous, whether men are born in a miserable state, by a tendency to ruin, which actually follows, and that justly, or whether they are born in such a state as tends to a desert of ruin, which might justly follow, and would actually follow, did not grace prevent. For the controversy is not, That grace will do, but what justice misfit do.

I have been the more particular on this head, because it enervates many of the reasonings and conclusions by which Dr. T. makes out his scheme, in which he argues from that state which mankind are in lay divine grace, yea, which he himself supposes to be by divine grace; and yet not making any allowance for this, he from hence draws conclusions against what others suppose of the deplorable and ruined state mankind are in by the fall. Some of his arguments and conclusions to this effect, in order to be made good, must depend on such a supposition as this; — that God's dispensations of grace, are rectification's or amendments of his foregoing constitutions and proceedings, which were merely legal; as though the dispensations of grace, which succeed those of mere law, implied an

acknowledgment, that the preceding legal constitution would be unjust, if left as it was, or at least very hard dealing with mankind; and that the other were of the nature of a satisfaction to his creatures, for former injuries, or hard treatment. So that, put together the injury with the satisfaction, the legal and injurious dispensation, taken with the following good dispensation, which our author calls grace, and the unfairness or improper severity of the former amended by the goodness of the latter, both together made up one righteous dispensation.

The reader is desired to bear in mind what I have said concerning the interposition of divine grace not altering the nature of things, as they are in themselves. Accordingly, when I speak of such and such an evil tendency of things, belonging to the present nature and state of mankind, understand me to mean their tendency at they are in themselves, abstracted from any consideration of that remedy the sovereign and infinite grace of God has provided. — Having premised these things, I now assert, that mankind are all naturally in such a state, as is attended, without fail, with this consequence or issue; that **THEY UNIVERSALLY RUN THEMSELVES INTO THAT WHICH IS, IN EFFECT, THEIR OWN UTTER ETERNAL PERDITION**, as being finally accursed of God, and the subjects of his remediless wrath through sin. — From which I infer, that the natural state of the mind of man is attended with a propensity of nature, which is prevalent and effectual, to such an issue; and that therefore their nature is corrupt and depraved with a moral depravity, that amounts to and implies their utter undoing.

Here I would first consider the truth of the proposition; and then would show the certainty of the consequence which I infer from it. If both can be clearly and certainly proved, then I trust, none will deny but that the doctrine of original depravity is evident, and so the falseness of Dr. T.'s scheme demonstrated; the greatest part of whose book, called the, *Scripture Doctrine out Original Sin*, etc. is against the doctrine of innate depravity. In p. 107. S. he speaks of the conveyance of a corrupt and sinful nature to Adam's posterity as the grand point to be proved by the maintainers of the doctrine of original sin.

In order to demonstrate what is asserted in the proposition laid down, there is need only that these two things should be made manifest: ore is

this fact, that all mankind come into the world in such a state, as without fail comes to this issue, namely, the universal commission of sin; or that every one who comes to act in the world as a moral agent, is, in a greater or less degree, guilty of sin. The other is, that all sin deserves and exposes to utter and eternal destruction, unto God's wrath and curse; and would end in it, were it not for the interposition of divine grace to prevent the effect. Both which can be abundantly demonstrated to be agreeable to the word of God, and to Dr. T's own doctrine.

That every one of mankind, at least such as are capable of acting as moral agents, are guilty of sin, (not now taking it for granted that they come guilty into the world,) is most clearly and abundantly evident from the Holy Scriptures:

“If any man sin against thee, for there is no man that sinneth not.”  
(~~1086~~ 1 Kings 8:46)

~~2070~~ Ecclesiastes 7:20. “There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not.” ~~890~~ Job 9:2, 3. “I know it is so of a truth, (i. e. as Bildad had just before said, that God would not cast away a perfect man, etc.) but how should man he just with God? If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.” To the like purpose,

“Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.” (~~880~~ Psalm 143:2)

So the words of the apostle, (in which he has apparent reference to those of the Psalmist,) ~~880~~ Romans 3:19, 20. That every mouth may be stopped, and All the world become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law they shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” So, ~~880~~ Galatians 2:16. ~~800~~ 1 John 1:7-10. “If we walk in the light, the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” In this and innumerable other places, confession and repentance of sin are spoken of as duties proper for ALL; as also prayer to God for pardon of sin also forgiveness of those that injure us, from that motive, that we hope to be forging of God. Universal

guilt of sin might also be demonstrated from the appointment, and the declared use and end of the ancient sacrifices; and also from the ransom, which every one that was numbered in level, was directed to pay, to make atonement for his soul. (<sup>Q11</sup>Exodus 30:11-16.) All are represented, not only as being sinful, but as having great and manifold iniquity. (<sup>Q12</sup>Job 9:2, 3. <sup>Q13</sup>James 3:1, 2.)

There are many scriptures which both declare the universal sinfulness of mankind, and also that all sin deserves and justly exposes to everlasting destruction, under the wrath and curse of God; and so demonstrate both parts of the proposition I have laid down. To which purpose that passage in <sup>Q14</sup>Galatians 3:10. is exceeding full: “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.” How manifestly is it implied in the apostle’s meaning here, that there is no man but what fails in some instances of doing all things that are written in the book of the law, and therefore as many as have their dependence on their fulfilling the law, are under that curse which is pronounced on them that fail of it. And hence the apostle infers in the next verse, “that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God:” as he had said before in the preceding chapter, verse 16. “By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” The apostle shows us he understands, that by this place which he cites from Deuteronomy, “the Scripture hath concluded, or shut up, all under sin.” (<sup>Q15</sup>Galatians 3:22.) So that here we are plainly taught, both that every one of mankind is a sinner, and that every sinner is under the curse of God.

To the like purpose is <sup>Q16</sup>Romans 4:4. also <sup>Q17</sup>2 Corinthians 3:6, 7, 9. where the law is called “the letter that kills, the ministration of death, and the ministration of condemnation.” The wrath, condemnation, and death, which is threatened in the law to all its transgressors, is final perdition, the second death, eternal ruin; as is very plain, and indeed is confessed. And this punishment which the law threatens for every sin, is a just punishment; being what every sin truly deserves; God’s law being a righteous law, and the sentence of it a righteous sentence.

All these things are what Dr. Taylor himself confesses and asserts. He says, that the law of God requires perfect obedience. (Note on <sup>Q18</sup>Romans

7:6. p. 308.) “God can never require imperfect obedience, or by his holy law allow us to be guilty of any one sin, how small soever. And if the law, as a rule of duty, were in any respect abolished, then we might in some respects transgress the law, and yet not be guilty of sin. The moral law, or law of nature, is the truth, everlasting, unchangeable; and therefore, as such, can never be abrogated. On the contrary, our Lord Jesus Christ has promulgated it anew under the gospel, fuller and clearer than it was in the mosaical constitution, or any where else: — having added to its precepts the sanction of his own divine authority.” And many things which he says imply, that all mankind do in some degree transgress the law. In p. 228. speaking of what may be gathered from Romans 7 and 8 he says, “We are very apt, in a world full of temptation, to be deceived, and drawn into sin by bodily appetites, etc. And the case of those who are under a law threatening death to every sin, must be quite deplorable, if they have no relief from the mercy of the lawgiver”

But this is very fully declarer in what he says in his note on ~~ROM~~ Romans 5:20. p. 297. His words are as follows: “Indeed as a rule of action prescribing our duty, it (the law) always was and always must be a rule ordained for obtaining life; but not as a rule of justification, not as it subjects to death for every transgression. For if it ~~COULD~~ in its utmost rigour have given us life, then, as the apostle argues, it would have been against the promises of God. For if there had been a law, in the strict and rigorous sense of law, ~~WHICH COULD HAVE MADE us LIVE~~, verily justification should have been by the law. But he supposes, no such law was ever given: and therefore there is need and room enough for the promises of grace; or as he argues, ~~ROM~~ Galatians 2:21. it would have frustrated, or rendered useless, the grace of God. For if justification came by the law, then truly Christ is dead in vain, then he died to accomplish what was, or ~~MIGHT HAVE BEEN~~, ~~EFFECTED~~ by law itself without his death. Certainly the law was not brought in among the Jews to be a rule of justification, or to recover them out of a state of death, and to procure life by their sinless obedience to it: For in this, as well as in another respect, it was ~~WEAK~~; not in itself, but through the ~~WEAKNESS~~ of our flesh, ~~ROM~~ Romans 8:3. The law, I conceive, is not a dispensation suitable to the infirmity of the human nature in our present state; or it cloth not seem congruous to the goodness of God to afford us no other way of salvation,



but by LAW; WHICH IF WE ONCE TRANSGRESS, WE ARE RUINED FOR EVER. FOB WHO THEN, FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD, COULD BE SAVED?"

How clear and express are these things, that no one of mankind, from the beginning of the world, can ever be justified by law, because every one transgresses it!

And here also we see, Dr. T. declares, that by the law men are sentenced to everlasting ruin for one transgression. To the like purpose he often expresses himself. So p. 207. "The law requireth the most extensive obedience, discovering sin in all its branches. — It gives sin a deadly force, subjecting every transgression to the penalty of death; and yet supplieth neither help nor hope to the sinner, but leaving him under the power of sin and sentence of death." In p. 213. he speaks of the law as extending to lust and irregular desires, and to every branch and principle of sin; and even to its latent principles, and minutes! branches; again (Note on ~~ROM~~ Romans 7:6. p. 308.) to every sin, have small soever. And when he speaks of the law subjecting every transgression to the penalty of death, he means eternal death, as he from time to time explains the matter. In p. 212. he speaks of the law in the condemning power of it, at; binding us in everlasting chains. In p. 120. S. he lays, that death which is the wages of sin, is the second death; and this, p. 18. he explains of final perdition. In his Key, p. 107. 296. he says, "The curse of the law subjected men for every transgression to eternal death." So in Note on ~~ROM~~ Romans 5:20. p. 291. "The law of Moses subjected those who were under it to death, meaning by death, eternal death." These are his words.

He also supposes, that this sentence of the law, thus subjecting men for every, even the least, sin, and every minutest branch and latent principle of sin, to so dreadful a punishment, is just and righteous, agreeable to truth and the nature of things, or to the natural and proper demerits of sin. In this he is very full. Thus in p. 186. P. "It was sin (says he) which subjected us to death by the law, JUSTLY threatening sin with death. Which law was given us, that sin might appear; might be set forth IN ITS PROPER COLOURS, when we saw It subjected us to death by a law PERFECTLY HOLY, JUST, and GOOD; that sin by the commandment, by the law, might be represented WHAT IT REALLY IS, an exceeding great and deadly evil." So

in note on <sup>415</sup>Romans 5:20. p. 299. "The law or ministration of death, As it subjects to death for every transgression, is still of use to show the NATURAL AND PROPER DEMERIT OF SIN." Ibid. p. 292. "The language of the law, dying thou shalt die, is to be understood of the demerit of the transgression, that which it deserves." Ibid. p. 298. "The law was added, saith Mr. Locke on the place, because the Israelites, the posterity of Abraham, were transgressors as well as other men, to show them their sins, and the punishment and death, which in STRICT JUSTICE they incurred by them. And this appears to be a true comment on <sup>416</sup>Romans 7:13. — Sin, by virtue of the law, subjected you to death for this end, that sin, working death in us, by that which is holy, just, and good, PERFECTLY CONSONANT TO EVERLASTING TRUTH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS. — Consequently even sin is in strict justice deserving of wrath and punishment, and the law in its rigour was given to the Jews, to set home this awful truth upon their consciences, to show them the evil and pernicious NATURE of sin, and that being conscious they had broke the LAW of God, this might convince them of the great need they had of the FAVOR of the lawgiver, and oblige them, by faith in his GOODNESS, to fly to his MERCY, for pardon and salvation."

If the law be holy, just, and good, a constitution perfectly agreeable to Modes holiness, justice, and goodness; then he might have put it exactly in execution, agreeably to all these his perfections. Our author himself says, p. 133. S. "How that constitution, which establishes a law, the making of which is inconsistent with the justice and goodness of God, and the executing of it inconsistent with his holiness, can be a righteous constitution, I confess, is quite beyond my comprehension."

Now the reader is left to judge, whether it be not most plainly and fully agreeable to Dr. T.'s own doctrine, that there never was any one person from the beginning of the world, *vitro* came to act in the world as a moral agent, and that it world as a moral agent, and that it is not to be hoped there ever will be any, but what is a sinner or transgressor of the law of God; and that therefore this proves to be the issue and event of things, with respect to all mankind in all ages, that, by the natural and proper demerit of their own sinfulness, and in the judgment of the law of God, which is perfectly constant to truth, and exhibits things in their true colors, they are the proper subjects of the curse of God, eternal death, and

everlasting ruin; which must be the actual consequence, unless the grace or favor of the lawgiver interpose, and mercy prevail for their pardon and salvation. The reader has seen also how agreeable this is to the doctrine of the Holy Scripture. If so, and if the interposition of divine grace alters not the nature of things as they are in themselves, and that it does not in the least affect the state of the controversy we are upon — concerning the true nature and tendency of the state in which mankind come into the world — whether grace prevents the fatal effect or no, I trust, none will deny, that the proposition laid down, is fully proved, as agreeable to the word of God, and Dr. T.'s own words, viz. That mankind are all naturally in such a state, as is attended, without fail, with this consequence or issue that they universally are the subjects of that guilt and sinfulness, which is, in ejects their utter and eternal ruin, being cast wholly out of the favor of God, and subjected to everlasting wrath and curse.

## SECTION 2

*It follows from the proposition roved in the foregoing, section that all mankind are under the influence of a prevailing effectual tendency in their nature, to that sin and wickedness, which implies their utter and eternal ruins.*

THE proposition laid down being proved, the consequence of it remains to be made out, viz. That the mind of man has a natural tendency or propensity to that event, which has been shown universally and infallibly to take place; and that this is a corrupt or depraved propensity. — I shall here consider the former part of this consequence, namely, Whether such an universal, constant, indelible event is truly a proof of any tendency or propensity to that event; leaving the evil and corrupt nature of such a propensity to be considered afterwards.

If any should say, they do not think that its being a thing universal and infallible in event, that mankind commit some sin, is a proof of a prevailing tendency to sin; because they do good, and perhaps more good than evil: Let them remember, that the question at present is not, HOW much sin there is a tendency to; but whether there be a prevailing propensity to that issue, which it is allowed all men do actually come to — that all fail of keeping the law perfectly-whether there be not a tendency to such


imperfection of obedience, as always without fail comes to pass to that degree of sinfulness, at least, which all fall into and so to that utter ruin, which that sinfulness implies and infers. Whether an effectual propensity to this be worth the name of depravity, because the good that may be supposed to balance it, shall be considered by and by. If all mankind in all nations and ages, were at least one day in their lives deprived of the use of their reason, and raving mad; or that all, even every individual person, once cut their own throats, or put out their own eyes; it might be an evidence of some tendency in the nature or natural state of mankind to such an event; though they might exercise reason many more days than they were distracted, and were kind to and tender of themselves oftener than they mortally and cruelly wounded themselves.

To determine whether the unfailing constancy of the above-named event be an evidence of tendency, let it be considered, What can be meant by tendency, but a prevailing liableness or exposedness to such or such an event? Wherein consists the notion of any such shine, but some stated prevalence or preponderation in the nature or state of causes or occasions, that is followed try, and so proves to be effectual to, a stated prevalence or commonness of any particular kind of effect? Or something in the permanent state of things, concerned in bringing a certain sort of event to pass, which is a foundation for the constancy, or strongly prevailing probability, of such an event? If we mean this by tendency, (and I know not what else can be meant by it, but this; or something like,) then it is manifest, that where we see a stated prevalence of any effect there is a tendency to that effect in the nature and State of its causes. A common and steady effect shows, that there is somewhere a preponderation, a prevailing exposedness or liableness in the state of things, to what comes so steadily to pass. The natural dictate of reason shows, that where there is an effect, there is a cause, and a cause sufficient for the effect; because, if it were not sufficient, it would not be effectual; and that therefore, where there is a stated prevalence of the effect, there is a stated prevalence in the cause. A steady effect argues a steady cause. We obtain a notion of tendency, no other way than by observation: and we can observe nothing but events: and it is the commonness or constancy of events, that gives us a notion of tendency in all cases. Thus we judge of tendencies in the natural world. Thus we judge of the tendencies or propensities of nature in

minerals, vegetables, animals, rational and irrational creatures. A notion of a stated tendency, or fixed propensity, is not obtained by observing only a single event. A stated preponderation in the cause or occasion, is argued only by a stated prevalence of the effect. If a die be once thrown, and it falls can a particular side, we do not argue from hence, that that side is the heaviest; but if it be thrown without skill or care, many thousands or millions of times, and it constantly falls on the same side, we have not the least doubt in our minds, but that there is something of propensity in the ease, by superior weight of that side, or in some other respect. How ridiculous would he make himself, who should earnestly dispute against any tendency in the state of things to cold in the winter, or heat in the summer or should stand to it, that although it often happened that water quenched fire, yet there was no tendency in it to such an effect!

In the case we are upon, human nature, as existing in such an immense diversity of persons and circumstances, and never failing in any one instance of coming to that issue — that sinfulness, which implies extreme misery and eternal ruin — is as the die often cast. For it alters not the case in the least, as to the evidence of tendency whether the subject of the constant event be an individual, or a nature and kind. Thus, if there be a succession of trees of the same sort, proceeding one from another, from the beginning of the world, growing in all countries, soils, and climates all bearing ill fruit; it as much proves the nature and tendency of the kind, as if it were only one individual tree, that had remained from the beginning of the world often transplanted into different soils, and had continued to bear only bad fruit. So, if there were a particular family, which, from generation to generation, and through every remove to innumerable different countries, and places of abode, all died of a consumption, or all man distracted, or all murdered themselves, it would be as much an evidence of the tendency of something in the nature or constitution of that race, as it would be of the tendency of something in the nature or state of an individual, if some one person had lived all that time, and some remarkable event had often appeared in which he had been the agent or subject of from year to year, and from age to age, continual and without fail.

Thus a propensity, attending the present nature or natural state of mankind, eternally to ruin themselves by sin, may certainly be inferred from apparent and acknowledged Act. — And I would now observe

further, that not only does this follow from facts acknowledged by Dr. T but the things he asserts, and the expressions which he uses, plainly imply that all mankind have such a propensity; yea, one of the highest kind, a propensity that is invincible or a tendency which really amounts to a fixed, constant, unfailing necessity. There is a plain confession of a propensity or proneness to sin, p. 143. — “Man, who drinketh in iniquity like water; who is attended with so many sensual appetites, and so APT to indulge them.” — And again, p. 228. “WE ARE VERY APT, in a world full of temptation, to be deceived, and drawn into sin by bodily appetites.” — If we are very apt or prone to be drawn into sin by bodily appetites, and sinfully to indulge them, and very apt or prone to yield to temptation to sin, then we are prime to sin; for to yield to temptation to sin is sinful. — In the same page he shows, that on this account, and its consequences, the case of those who are under a law, threatened death for every sin, must be quite deplorable, if they have no relief from the mercy of the lawgiver. Which implies, that their case is hopeless; as to an escape from death, the punishment at sin, by any other means than God’s mercy. And that implies such an aptness to yield to temptation and renders it hopeless that any of mankind should wholly avoid it. But he speaks of it elsewhere, over and over, as truly impossible, or what cannot be, as in the words before cited in the last section, from his note on  Romans 5:20. where he repeatedly speaks of the law, which subjects us to death for every transgression, as what CANNOT GIVE LIFE and states, that if God offered us no other way of salvation, no man from the beginning If the world COULD be saved. In the same place he cites with approbation Mr. Locke’s words, in which, speaking of the Israelites, he says, “All endeavors after righteousness was LOST LABOUR, since any one slip forfeited life, and it was IMPOSSIBLE for them to expect ought but death.” Our author speaks of it as impossible for the law requiring sinless obedience to give life, not that the law was weak in itself; hut through the weakness of our flesh. Therefore he says, he conceives the law not to be a dispensation suitable to the infirmity of the human nature in its present state. These things amount to a full confession, that the proneness in men to sin, and to a demerit of and just exposedness to eternal ruin, is universally invincible, or, which is the same thing, amounts to invincible necessity which surely is the highest kind of tendency, or propensity . and that not the less, for his laying this propensity to our infirmity or

weakness, which may seem to intimate some defect, rather than any thing positive: and it is agreeable to the sentiments of the best diving, that all sin originally comes from a DEFECTIVE or PRIVATLVE cause. But sin does not cease to be sin, justly exposing to eternal ruin, (as implied in Dr. T.'s own words,) for arising from infirmity or defect; nor does an invincible propensity to sin cease to be a propensity to such demerit of eternal ruin, because the proneness arises from such a cause.

It is manifest, that this tendency, which has been proved, does not consist in any particular external circumstances that persons are in, peculiarly influencing their minds, but is inherent, and is seated in that nature which is common to all mankind, which they carry with them wherever they go, and still remains the same, however circumstances may differ. For it is implied in what has been proved, and shown to be confessed, that the same event comes to pass in all circumstances. In God's sight no man living can be justified, but all are sinners, and exposed to condemnation. This is true of persons of all constitutions, capacities, conditions, manners, opinions, and education's; in all countries, climates, nations, and ages; and through all the mighty changes and revolutions, which have come to pass in the habitable world.

We have the same evidence, that the propensity in this case lies in the nature of the subject — and does not arise from any particular circumstances — as we have in any case whatsoever; which is only by the effects appearing to be the same in all changes of time and place, and under all varieties of circumstances. It is in this way only we judge, that any propensities, which we observe in mankind, are seated in their nature, in all other cases. It is thus we judge of the mutual propensity betwixt the sexes, or of the dispositions which are exercised in any of the natural passions or appetites, that they truly belong to the nature of man; because they are observed in mankind in general, through all countries, nations, and ages, and in all conditions.

If any should say, Though it be evident that there is a tendency in the state of things to this general event — that all mankind should fail of perfect obedience, and should sin, and incur a demerit of eternal ruin; and also that this tendency does not lie in any distinguishing circumstances of any particular people, person, or age — yet it may not lie in mans nature,

but in the general constitution and frame of this world. Though the nature of man may be good, without any evil propensity inherent in it; yet the nature and universal state of this world may be full of so many and strong temptations, and of such powerful influence on such a creature as man, dwelling in so infirm a body, etc. that the result of the whole may be a strong and infallible tendency in such a state of things, to the sin and eternal ruin of every one of mankind.

To this I would reply, that such an evasion will not at all avail to the purpose of those whom I oppose in this controversy. It alters not the case as to this question, Whether man, in his present state, is depraved and ruined by propensities to sin. If any creature be of such a nature that it proves evil in its proper place, or in the situation which God has assigned it in the universe, it is of an evil nature. That part of the system is not good, which is not good in its place in the system; and these inherent qualities of that part of the system, which are not good but corrupt, in that place, are justly looked upon as evil inherent qualities. That propensity is truly esteemed to belong to the nature of any being, or to be inherent in it, that is the necessary consequence of its nature, considered together with its proper situation in the universal system of existence, whether that propensity be good or bad. It is the nature of a stone to be heavy; but yet, if it were placed, as it might be, at a distance from this world, it would have no such quality. But being a stone, is of such a nature, that it will have this quality or tendency, in its proper place, in this world, where God has made it, it is properly looked upon as a propensity belonging to its nature. And if it be a good propensity here, in its proper place, then it is a good quality of its nature, but if it be contrariwise, it is an evil natural quality. So, if mankind are of such a nature, that they have an universal effectual tendency to sin and ruin in this world where God has made and placed them, this is to be looked upon as a pernicious tendency belonging to their nature. There is perhaps, scarce any such thing, in beings not independent and self-existent, as any power or tendency, but what has some dependence on other beings, with which they stand connected in the universal system of existence. Propensities are no propensities, any otherwise, than as taken with their objects. Thus it is with the tendencies observed in natural bodies, such as gravity, magnetism, electricity, etc And



thus it is with the propensities observed in the various kinds of animals; and thus it is with most of the propensities in created spirits.

It may further be observed, that it is exactly the same thing, as to the controversy concerning an agreeableness with God's moral perfection's of such a disposal of things — that man should come into the world in a depraved and ruined state, by a propensity to sin and ruin — whether God has so ordered it, that this propensity should lie in his nature considered alone, or with relation to its situation in the universe, and its connexion with other parts of the system to which the Creator has united it, which is as much of God's ordering, as man's nature itself, most simply considered.

Dr. T. (p. 188, 189.) speaking of the attempt of some to solve the difficulty of God being the author of our nature, and yet that our nature is polluted, by suppose that God makes the soul pure, but unites it to a polluted body, (or a body so made, as tends to pollute the soul,) he cries out of it as weak and insufficient, and too gross to be admitted: For, says he, who infused the soul into the body? And if it is polluted by being infused into the body, who is the author and cause of its pollution? And who created the body? etc. — But is not the case just the same, as to those who suppose that God made the soul pure, and places it in a polluted world, or a world tending, by its natural state in which it is made, to pollute the soul, or to have such an influence upon it, that it shall without fail be polluted with sin, and eternally ruined? Here may not I also cry out, on as good grounds as Dr. T. — Who placed the soul here in this world? And if the world be polluted, or so constituted as naturally and infallibly to pollute the soul with sin, who is the cause of this pollution! And, who created the world?

Though in the place now cited, Dr. T. so insists upon it, that God must be answerable for the pollution of the soul, if he has infused or put the soul into a body that tends to pollute it, yet this is the very thing which he himself supposes to be fact, with respect to the soul being created by God, in such a body, and in such a world where he says, "We are apt, in a world full of temptation, to be drawn into sin by bodily appetites." And if so, according to his way of reasoning, God must be the author and cause of this aptness to be drawn into sin. Again, p. 143. we have these words,

“Who drinketh in iniquity like water? Who is attended with so many sensual appetites, and so apt to indulge them?” In these words our author in effect says the individual things that he exclaims against as so gross, viz. The tendency of the body, as God has made it, to pollute the soul, which he has infused into it. These sensual appetites, which incline the soul, or make it apt, to a sinful indulgence, are either from the body which God hath made, or otherwise a proneness to sinful indulgence is immediately and originally seated in the soul itself, which will not mend the matter.

I would lastly observe, that our author insists upon it, p. 42. S. That this lower world, in its present state, “Is as it was, when, upon a review, God pronounced it, and all its furniture, very good. — And that the present form and furniture of the earth is full of God’s riches, mercy, and goodness, and of the most evident tokens of his love and bounty to the inhabitants.” If so, there can be no room for evading the evidences from fact, of the universal infallible tendency of man’s nature to sin and eternal perdition, since, on the supposition, the tendency to this issue does not lie in the general constitution and frame of this world, which God hath made to be the habitation of mankind.

### SECTION 3

*That propensity, which has been proved to be in the nature of all mankind, must be a very evil, depraved, and pernicious propensity; making it manifest, that the soul of man, as it is by nature, is in a corrupt, fallen, and ruined state; which is the other part of the consequence, drawn from the proposition laid down in the first section.*

THE question to be considered, in order to determine whether man’s nature be depraved and ruined, is not, Whether he is inclined to perform as many good deeds as bad ones But, to which of these two he preponderates, in the frame of his heart, and the state of his nature, a state of innocence and righteousness, and favor with God or a state of sin, guiltiness, and abhorrence in the sight of God? — Persevering sinless righteousness, or else the guilt of sin, is the alternative, on the decision of which depends — according to the nature and truth of things, as they are in themselves, and according to the rule of right and of perfect justice — man being approved

and accepted of his Maker, and eternally blessed as good; or ho being rejected, and cursed as bad. And therefore the determination of the tendency of man's heart and nature, with respect to these terms, is that which is to be looked at, in order to determine whether his nature is good or evil, pure or corrupt, sound or ruined. If such be man's nature, and the state of his heart, that he has an infallibly effectual propensity to the latter of those terms; then it is wholly impertinent to talk of the innocent and kind actions, even of criminals themselves, surpassing their crimes in numbers, and of the prevailing innocence, good nature, industry, felicity; and cheerfulness of the greater part of mankind. Let never so many thousands or millions of acts of honesty, good nature, etc. be supposed; Yet, by the supposition, there is an unfailing propensity to such moral evil, as in a dreadful consequences infinitely outweighs all effects or consequences of any supposed good. Surely that tendency, which, in effect, is an infallible tendency to eternal destruction, is an infinitely dreadful and pernicious tendency: and that nature and frame of mind, which implies such a tendency, must be an infinitely dreadful and pernicious frame of mind. It would be much more absurd to suppose, that such a state of; nature is not bad, under a notion of men doing more honest and kind things than evil ones; than to say, the state of that ship is good, for crossing, the Atlantic ocean, though such as cannot hold together through the voyage, but will infallibly founder and sink, under a notion that it may probably go great part of the way before it sinks, or that it will proceed and sail above water more hours than it will be in sinking: or, to pronounce that road a good road to go to such a place, the greater part of which is plain and safe, though some parts of it are dangerous, and is certainly fatal, to them that travel in it, or to call that a good propensity, which is an inflexible inclination to travel in such a way.

A propensity to that sin which brings God's eternal wrath and curse (which has been proved to belong to the nature of man) is evil, not only as it is calamitous and sorrowful, ending in great natural evil; but as it is odious and detestable, for by the supposition, it tends to that moral evil, by which the subject becomes odious in the sight of God, and liable, as such, to be condemned, and utterly rejected, and cursed by him. This also makes it evident, that the state which it has been proved mankind are in, is a corrupt state in a moral sense, that it is inconsistent with the fulfillment

of the law of God, which is the rule of moral rectitude and goodness. That tendency which is opposite to what the moral law requires, and prone to that which the moral law utterly forbids, and eternally condemns, is doubtless a corrupt tendency, in a moral sense.

So that this depravity is both odious, and also pernicious, fatal and destructive, in the highest sense; as inevitably tending to that which implies man's eternal ruin. It shows, that man, as he is by nature, is in a deplorable state, in the highest sense. And this proves that men do not come into the world perfectly innocent in the sight of God, and without any just exposedness to his displeasure. For the being by nature in a lost and ruined state, in the highest sense, is not consistent with being by nature in a state of devour with God.

But if any should still insist on a notion of men's good deeds exceeding their bad ones, and that, seeing the good more than countervails the evil, they cannot be properly denominated evil; all persons and things being most properly denominated from that which prevails, and has the ascendant in them; I would say further, That if there is in man's nature a tendency to guilt and ill desert, in a vast overbalance to virtue and merit; or a propensity to sin, the demerit of which is so great, that the value and merit of all the virtuous acts that ever he performs, are as nothing to it; then truly the nature of man may be said to be corrupt and evil.

That this is the true case, may be demonstrated by what is evident of the infinite heinousness of sin against God, from the nature of things. The heinousness of this must rise in some proportion to the obligation we are under to regard the Divine Being and that must be in some proportion to his worthiness; of regard; which doubtless is infinitely beyond the worthiness of any of our fellow-creatures. But the merit of our respect or obedience to God is not infinite. The merit of respect to any being does not increase, but is rather diminished, in proportion to the obligations we are under in strict justice to pay him that respect. There is no great merit in paying a debt we owe, and by the highest possible obligations in strict justice are obliged to pay; but there is great demerit in refusing to pay it. That on such accounts as these, there is an infinite demerit in all sin against God, which must therefore immensely outweigh all the merit which can be supposed to be in our virtue, I think, is capable of full demonstration; and

that the futility of the objections which some have made against the argument, might most plainly be demonstrated. But I shall omit a particular consideration of the evidence of this matter from the nature of things, as I study brevity, and lest any should cry out, metaphysics! as the manner of some is, when any argument is handled against a tenet they are fond of, with a close and exact consideration of the nature of things. And this is not so necessary in the present case, inasmuch as the point asserted — that he who commits any one sin, has guilt and ill desert so great, that the value and merit of all the good which it is possible he should do in his whole life, is as nothing to it — is not only evident by metaphysics, but is plainly demonstrated by what has been shown to be fact, with respect to God's own constitutions and dispensations towards mankind. Thus, whatever acts of virtue and obedience a man performs, yet if he trespasses in one point, is guilty of any the least sin, he — according to the law of God, and so according to the exact truth of things, and the proper demerit of sin — is exposed to be wholly cast out of favor with God, and subjected to his curse, to be utterly and eternally destroyed. This has been proved; and shown to be the doctrine which Dr. T. abundantly teaches.

But how can it be agreeable to the nature of things, and exactly consonant to everlasting truth and righteousness, thus to deal with a creature for the least sinful act, though he should perform ever so many thousands of honest and virtuous acts, to countervail the evil of that sin? Or how can it be agreeable to the exact truth and real demerit of things, thus wholly to cast off the deficient creature, without any regard to the merit of all his good deeds, unless that he in truth the case, that the value and merit of all those good actions, bear no proportion to the heinousness of the least sin? If it were not so, one would think, that however the offending person might have some proper punishment, yet seeing there is so much virtue to lay in the balance against the guilt, it would be agreeable to the nature of things, that he should find some favor, and not be altogether rejected, and made the subject of perfect and eternal destruction, and thus no account at all be made of all his virtue, so much as to procure him the least relief or hope. How can such a constitution represent sin in its proper colors, and according to its true nature and desert, (as Dr. T. says it does,) unless this be its true nature, that it is so bad, that even in the least instance it

perfectly swallows up all the value of the sinner's supposed good deeds, let them be ever so many. So that this matter is not left to our metaphysics, or philosophy; the great lawgiver, and infallible judge of the universe, has clearly decided it, in the revelation he has made of what is agreeable to exact truth, justice, and the nature of things, in his revealed law, or rule of righteousness.

He that in any respect or degree is a transgressor of God's law, is a wicked man, yea, wholly wicked in the eye of the law; all his goodness being esteemed nothing, having no account made of it, when taken together with his wickedness. And therefore, without any regard to his righteousness, he is, by the sentence of the law, and so by the voice of truth and justice, to be treated as worthy to be rejected, abhorred, and cursed for ever, and must be so, unless grace interpose, to cover his transgression. But men are really, in themselves, what they are in the eye of the law, and by the voice of strict equity and justice however they may be looked upon, and treated by infinite and unmerited mercy.

So that, on the whole, it appears, all mankind have an infallibly effectual propensity to that moral evil, which infinitely outweighs the value of all the good that can be in them; and have such a disposition of heart, that the certain consequence of it is, their being, in the eye of perfect truth and righteousness, wicked men. And I leave all to judge, whether such a disposition be not in the eye of truth a depraved disposition?

Agreeable to these things, the Scripture represents all mankind, not only as having guilt, but immense guilt, which they can have no merit or worthiness to countervail. Such is the representation we have in

~~1829~~ Matthew 18:21, to the end. There, on Peter's inquiring, How often his brother should trespass against him, and he forgive him, whether I until seven times? Christ replies, I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven; apparently meaning, that he should esteem no number of offenses too many, and no degree of injury it is possible our neighbor should be guilty of towards us too great, to be forgiven. For which this reason is given in the parable following, that if ever we obtain forgiveness and devour with God, he must pardon that guilt and injury towards his majesty, which is immensely greater than the greatest injuries that ever men are guilty of one towards another; yea, than the sum of all

their injuries put together, let them be ever so many, and ever so great; so that the latter would be but as an hundred pence to ten thousand talents, which immense debt we owe to God, and have nothing to pay; which implies, that we have no merit to countervail any part of our guilt. And this must be, because if all that may be called virtue in us, be compared with our ill desert, it is in the sight of God as nothing to it. The parable is not to represent Peter's case in particular, but that of all who then were, or ever should be, Christ's disciples; as appears by the conclusion of the discourse, (verse 35.) "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do, if ye, from your hearts, forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

Therefore how absurd must it be for Christians to object, against the depravity of man's nature, a greater number of innocent and kind actions, than of crimes; and to talk of a prevailing innocency, good nature, industry, and cheerfulness of the greater part of mankind! Infinitely more absurd, than it would be to insist, that the domestic of a prince was not a bad servant, because though sometimes he contemned and affronted his master to a great degree, Yet he did not spit in his master's face so often as he performed acts of service. More absurd, than it would be to affirm, that his spouse was a good wife to him, because, although she committed adultery, and that with the; slaves and scoundrels sometimes, yet she did not do this so often as she did the duties of a wife. These notions would be absurd, because the crimes are too heinous to be atoned for, by many honest actions of the servant or spouse of the prince, there beings vest disproportion between the merit of the one, and the ill desert of the other: but infinitely less, than that between the demerit of our offenses against God, and the value of our acts of obedience.

Thus I have gone through with my first argument; having shown the evidence of the truth of the proposition laid down at first, and proved its consequence. But there are many other things, that manifest a very corrupt tendency or disposition in man's nature, in his present state which I shalt take notice of in the following sections.

## SECTION 4

*The depravity of nature appears by a propensity in all to sin immediately, as soon at they are capable of it, and to sin continually*

*and progressively; and also by the remains of sin in the best of men.*

THE great depravity of man's nature appears, not only in that they universally commit sin, who spend any long time in the world, but in that men are naturally so prone to sin, that none ever fail of immediately transgressing God's law, and so of bringing infinite guilt on themselves, and exposing themselves to eternal perdition, as soon as they are capable of it.

The Scriptures are so very express upon it, that all mankind, all flesh, all the world, every man truing, are guilty of sin; that it must at least be understood, every one capable of active duty to God, or of sin against him. There are multitudes in the world, who have but very lately begun to exert their faculties; as moral agents; and so have but just entered on their state trial, as acting for themselves: many thousands constantly, who have not lived one month, or week, or day, since they have arrived at any period that can be assigned (for the commencement of their agency) from their birth to twenty years of age. Now — if there be not a strong propensity in men's nature to sin, that should, as it were hurry them on to speedy transgressions and if they have no guilt previous to their personal sinning — what should hinder, but that there might always be a great number, who have hitherto kept themselves free from sin, and have perfectly obeyed God's law, and so are righteous in his sight, with the righteousness of the law? And who, if they should be called out of the world without any longer trial, as great numbers die at all periods of life, would be justified by the deeds of the law? And how then can it be true, that in God's sight no man living can be justified, that no man can be just with God, and that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified, because by the law is the knowledge of sin? And what should hinder but that there may always be many in the world — who are capable subjects of instruction and counsel, and of prayer to God — for whom the calls of God's word to repentance, to seek pardon through the blood of Christ, and to forgive others their injuries because they need that God should forgive them, would not be proper; and for whom the Lord's prayer is not suitable, wherein Christ directs all his followers to pray, that God would forgive their sins, as they forgive those that trespass against them?



If there are any in the world — though but lately become capable of acting for themselves, as subjects of God's law — who are perfectly free from sin; such are most likely to be found among the children of Christian parents, who give them the most pious education, and set them the best examples. And therefore, such would never be so likely to be found in any part or age of the world, as in the primitive Christian church, in the first age of Christianity, (the age of the church's greatest purity,) so lone after Christianity had been established, that there had been time for great numbers of children to be born and educated by those primitive Christians. It was in that age, and in such a part of that age, that the apostle John wrote his first epistle to the Christians. But if there was then a number of them come to understanding, who were perfectly free from sin, why should he write as he does? ~~1~~ John 1:8, 9, 10. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and the truth is not in us."

Again, the reality and greatness of the depravity of man's nature appears in this, That he has a prevailing propensity to be continually sinning against God. What has been observed above, will clearly prove this. That same disposition of nature, which is an effectual propensity to immediate sin, amounts to a propensity to continual sin. For a being prone to continual sinning; is nothing! but a proneness to immediate sin continued. Such appears to be the tendency of nature to sin, that as soon as ever man is capable, it causes him immediately to sin, without any considerable time to pass without sin. And therefore, if the same propensity be continued undiminished, there will be an equal tendency to immediate sinning again, without any considerable time passing. And so the same will always be a disposition still immediately to sin, with as little time passing without sin afterwards, as at first. The only reason that can be given why sinning must be immediate at first, is that the disposition is so great that it will not suffer any considerable time to pass without sin: and therefore, the same disposition being continued in equal degree, without some new restraint, or contrary tendency, it will still equally tend to the same effect. And though it is true, the propensity may be diminished, or have restraints laid upon it, by the gracious disposals of Providence, or the merciful influences of

God's Spirit, yet this is not owing to nature. That strong propensity of nature, by which men are so prone to immediate sinning at first, has no tendency in itself to a diminution; but rather to an increase, as the continued exercise of an evil disposition, in repeated actual sins, tends to strengthen it more and more: agreeable to that observation of Dr. T.'s, p. 228. "We are apt to be drawn into sin by bodily appetites, and when once we are under the government of these appetites, it is at least exceeding difficult, if not impracticable, to recover ourselves, by the mere force of reason." The increase of strength of disposition in such a case, is as in a falling body, the strength of its tendency to descend is continually increased, so long as its motion is continued. Not only a constant commission of sin, but a constant increase in the habits and practice of wickedness, is the true tendency of man's depraved nature, if unrestrained by divine grace, as the true tendency of the nature of a heavy body, if obstacles are removed, is not only to fall with a continual motion, but with a constantly increasing motion. And we see, that increasing iniquity is actually the consequence of natural depravity, in most men, notwithstanding all the restraints they have. Dispositions to evil are commonly much stronger in adult persons, than in children, when they first begin to act in the world as rational creatures.

If sin be such a thing as Dr. T. himself represents it, p. 69. "a thing of an odious and destructive nature, the corruption and ruin of our nature, and infinitely hateful to God;" then such a propensity to continual and increasing sin, must be a very evil disposition. And if we may judge of the perniciousness of an inclination of nature, by the evil of the effect it naturally tends to, the propensity of man's stature must be evil indeed: for the soul being immortal, as Dr. T. acknowledges, p. 94. S. it will follow from what has been observed above, that man has a natural disposition to one of these two things, either to an increase of wickedness without end, or till wickedness comes to be so great, that the capacity of his nature will not allow it to be greater. This being what his wickedness will come to by its natural tendency, if divine grace does not prevent, it may as truly be said to be the effect which man's natural corruption tends to, as that an acorn in a proper soil, truly tends by its nature to become a great tree.

Again, That sin which is remaining in the hearts of the best men on earth, makes it evident, that man's nature is corrupt, as he comes into the world.

A remaining depravity of heart in the greatest saints, may be argued from the sins of most of those who are set forth in Scripture as the most eminent instances and examples of virtue and piety: and is also manifest from this, that the Scripture represents all God's children as standing in need of chastisement. <sup><2000></sup>Hebrews 12:6, 7, 8. "For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth; and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. — What son is he, whom the father chasteneth not? — If ye are without chastisement, then are ye bastards, and not sons." But this is directly and fully asserted in some places as in <sup><2000></sup>Ecclesiastes 7:20. "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Which is as much as to say, there is no man on earth, that is so just, as to have attained to such a degree of righteousness, as not to commit any sin. Yea, the apostle James speaks of all Christians as often sinning, or committing, many sins, even in that primitive age of the Christian church, an age distinguished from all others by eminent attainments in holiness: <sup><2000></sup>James 3:2. "In many things we all offend." And that there is pollution in the hearts of all antecedent to all means for purification, is very plainly declared in <sup><2000></sup>Proverbs 20:9. "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?"

According to Dr. T. men come into the world wholly free from sinful propensities. And if so, it appears from what has been already said, there would be nothing to hinder, but that many, without being better than they are by nature, might perfectly avoid the commission of sin. But much more might this be the case with men after they had, by care, diligence, and good practice, attained those positive habits of virtue, whereby they are at a much greater distance from sin, than they were naturally: — which this writer supposes to be the case with many good men. But since the Scripture teaches us, that the best men in the world do often commit sin, and have remaining pollution of heart, this makes it abundantly evident, that men, when they are no otherwise than they were by nature, without any of those virtuous attainments, have a sinful depravity; yea, must have great corruption of nature.

## SECTION 5

*The depravity of nature appears, in that the general consequence of the state and tendency of man's nature is a much greater degree of*

*sin, than righteousness; not only with respect to value and demerit, but matter and quantity.*

I HAVE before shown, that there is a propensity in man's nature to that sin, which in heinousness and ill desert immensely outweighs all the value and merit of any supposed good, that may be in him, or that he can do. I now proceed to say further, that such is man's nature, in his present state, that it tends to this lamentable effect, that there should at all times, through the course of his life, be at least much more sin, than righteousness; not only as to weight and value, but as to matter and measure; more disagreement of heart and practice from the law of God, and from the law of nature and reason, than agreement and conformity. The law of God is the rule of right, as Dr. T. Often calls it: It is the measure of virtue and sin: so much agreement as there is with this rule, so much is there of rectitude, righteousness, or true virtue, and no more; and so much disagreement as there is with this rule, so much sin is there. Having premised this, the following things may be here observed.

**I.** The degree of disagreement from this rule of right is to be determined, not only by the degree of distance from it in excess, but also in defect, or in other words, not only in positive transgression, or doing what is forbidden, but also in withholding what is required. The divine Lawgiver does as much prohibit the one as the other, and does as much charge the latter as a sinful breach of his law, exposing to his eternal wrath and curse, as the former. Thus at the day of judgment, as described <sup>151</sup>Matthew 25: The wicked are condemned as cursed, to everlasting fire, for their sin in defect and omission: I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat, etc. And the case is thus, not only when the defect is in word or behavior, but in the inward temper and exercise of the mind. <sup>152</sup>1 Corinthians 16 22. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." Dr. T. speaking of the sentence and punishment of the wicked, (<sup>153</sup>Matthew 25:41, 46.) says, p. 159. "It was manifestly for WANT of benevolence, love, and compassion to their fellow-creatures, that they were condemned." And elsewhere, as was observed before, he says, that the law of God extends to the latent principles at sin to forbid them, and to condemn to eternal destruction for them. And if so, it doubtless also extends to the inward principles of holiness, to requite them, and in like manner to condemn for the want of them.

**II.** The sum of our duty to God, required in his law, is LOVE; taking love in a large sense, for the true regard of our hearts to GOD, implying esteem, honor, benevolence gratitude, complacency, etc. This is not only very plain by the Scripture, but it is evident in itself. The sum of what the law of God requires, is doubtless obedience to that law: no law can require more than that it be obeyed. But it is manifest, that obedience is nothing, any otherwise than as a testimony of the respect of our hearts to God: without the heart, man's external acts are no more than the motions of the limbs of a wooden image; have no more of the nature of either sin or righteousness. It must therefore needs be, that love to God, the respect of the heart, must be the sum of the duty required in his law.

**III.** It therefore appears from the premises, that whosoever withholds more of that love or respect of heart from God, which his law requires, than he affords, has more sin than righteousness. Not only he that has less divine love, than passions and affections which are opposite, but also he that does not love God half so much as he ought, or has reason to do, has justly more wrong than right imputed to him, according to the law of God, and the law of reason; he has more irregularity than rectitude, with regard to the law of love. The sinful disrespect of his heart towards God, is greater than his respect to him.

But what considerate person is there, even among the more virtuous part of mankind, but would he ashamed to say, and profess before God or men, that he loves God half so much as he ought to do; or that he exercises one half of that esteem, honor, and gratitude towards God, which would be altogether becoming him; considering what God is, and what great manifestations he has made of his transcendent excellency and goodness, and what benefits he receives from him? And if few or none of the best of men can with reason and truth make even such a profession, how far from it must the generality of mankind be?

The chief and most fundamental of all the commands of the moral law, requires, us to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, and with all our souls, with all our strength, and all our mind: that is, plainly, with all that is within us, or to the utmost capacity of our nature. God is in himself worthy of infinitely greater love, than any creature can exercise towards him, love equal to his perfections, which are infinite. God loves himself

with no greater love than he is worthy of, when he loves himself infinitely; but we can give God no more than we have. Therefore, if we give him so much, if we love him to the utmost extent of the faculties of our nature, we are excused. But when what is proposed, is only that we should love him as much as our capacity will allow, all excuse of want at capacity ceases, and obligation takes hold of us; and we are doubtless obliged to love God to the utmost of what is possible for us, with such faculties, and such opportunities and advantages to know God, as we have. And it is evidently implied in this great commandment of the law, that our love to God should be so great, as to have the most absolute possession of all the soul, and the perfect government of all the principles and springs of action that are in our nature.

Though it is not easy, precisely to fix the limits of man's capacity, as to love to God; yet in general we may determine that his capacity of love is coextended with his capacity of knowledge: the exercise of the understanding opens the way for the exercise of the other faculty. Now, though we cannot have any proper positive understanding of God's infinite excellency, yet the capacity of the human understanding is very great, and may be extended far. It is needless to dispute, how far man's knowledge may be said to be strictly comprehensive of things that are very great, as of the extent of the expanse of the heavens, etc. The word comprehensive, seems to be ambiguous. But doubtless we are capable of some proper positive understanding of the greatness of these things, in comparison of other things that we know. We are capable of some clear understanding of the greatness or considerableness of a whole nation; or of the whole world of mankind, as vastly exceeding that of a particular person or family. We can positively understand, that the whole globe of the earth is vastly greater than a particular hill or mountain. And can have some good positive apprehension of the starry heavens as so greatly exceeding the globe of the earth, that the latter is as it were nothing to it. So the human faculties are capable of a real and clear understanding of the greatness, glory, and goodness of God, and of our dependence upon him, from the manifestations which God has made of himself to mankind, as being beyond all expression above that of the most excellent human friend, or earthly object. And so we are capable of esteem and love to God, which

shall be proportionable, much exceeding that which we have to any creature.

These things may help us to form some judgment, how vastly the generality of mankind fall below their duty, with respect to love to God, yea how far they are from coming half way to that height of love, which is agreeable to the rule of right. Surely if our esteem of God, desires after him, and delight in him, were such as become us, considering the things forementioned, they would exceed our regard to other things, as the heavens are high above the earth, and would swallow up all other affections like a deluge. But how far how exceeding far, are the generality of the world from any appearance of being influenced and governed by such a degree of divine love as this!

If we consider the love of God, with respect to one exercise of it, gratitude, how far indeed do the generality of mankind come short of the rule of right and reason in this! If we consider how various, innumerable, and vast the benefits we receive from God, how infinitely great and wonderful that grace, which is revealed and offered to them who live under the gospel — in that eternal salvation which is procured by God giving his only-begotten Son to die for sinners and also how unworthy we are all, deserving (as Dr. T. confesses) eternal perdition under God's wrath and curse — how great is the gratitude that would become us, who are the subjects of so many and great benefits. What grace is this towards poor sinful lost mankind, set before us in so affecting a manner, as in the extreme sufferings of the Son of God; who was carried through those pains by a love stronger than death, a love that conquered those mighty agonies, a love whose length and breadth, and depth and height, passes knowledge? But oh! what poor returns! — How little the gratitude! How low, how cold and inconstant, the affection in the best, compared with the obligation I And what then shall be said of the gratitude of the generality? Or rather, who can express the ingratitude?

If the greater part of them who are called Christians, were no enemies to Christ in heart and practice, were not governed by principles opposite to him and his gospel, but had some real love and gratitude; yet if their love falls vastly short of the obligation, or occasion given, they are guilty of shameful and odious ingratitude. As, when a man has been the subject of

some instance of transcendent generosity, whereby he has been relieved from the most extreme calamity, and brought into very opulent, honorable, and happy circumstances, by a benefactor of excellent character, and yet expresses no more gratitude on such an occasion, than would be requisite for some kindness comparatively infinitely small, he may justly fall under the imputation of vile unthankfulness, and of much more ingratitude than gratitude; though he may have no ill will to his benefactor, or no positive affection of mind contrary to thankfulness and benevolence. What is odious in him is his defect, whereby he falls so vastly below his duty.

Dr. Turnbull abundantly insists, that the forces of the affections naturally in man are well proportioned; and often puts a question to this purpose, — How man's nature could have been better constituted in this respect? flow the affections of his heart could have been better proportioned? — I will now mention one instance, out of many that might be mentioned. Man, if his heart were not depraved, might have had a disposition to gratitude to God for his goodness, in proportion to his disposition to anger towards men for their injuries. When I say, in proportion, I mean considering the greatness and number of favors and injuries, and the degree in which the one and the other are unmerited, and the benefit received by the former, and the damage sustained by the latter. Is there not an apparent and vast difference and inequality in the dispositions to these two kinds of affection, in the generality of both old and young, adult persons and little children? How ready is resentment for injuries received from men! And how easily is it raised in most, at least to an equality with the desert! And is it so with respect to gratitude for benefits received from God, in any degree of comparison? Dr. Turnbull pleads for the natural disposition to anger for injuries, as being good and useful: but surely gratitude to God, if we were inclined to it, would be at least as good and useful as the other.

How far the generality of mankind are from their duty, with respect to love to God, will further appear, if we consider that we are obliged not only to love him with a love of gratitude for benefits received, but true love to God primarily consists in a supreme regard to him for what he is in himself. The tendency of true virtue is to treat every thing as it is, and according to its nature. And if we regard the Most High according to the infinite dignity and glory of his nature, we shall esteem and love him with



all our heart and soul, and to the utmost of the capacity of our nature, on this account; and not primarily because he has promoted our interest. If God be infinitely excellent in himself, then he is infinitely lovely on that account; or in other words, infinitely worthy to be loved. And doubtless, if he be worthy to be loved for this, then he ought to be loved for it. And it is manifest, there can be no true love to him, if he be not loved for what he is in himself. For if we love him not for his own sake, but for something else, then our love is not terminated on him, but on something else, as its ultimate object. That is no true value for infinite worth, which implies no value for that worthiness in itself considered, but only on the account of something foreign. Our esteem of God is fundamentally defective, if it be not primarily for the excellency of his nature, which is the foundation of all that is valuable in him in any respect. If we love not God because he is what he is, but only because he is profitable to us, in truth we love him not at all: if we seem to love him, our love is not to him, but to something else.

And now I must leave it to every one to judge for himself, from his own opportunities or observation and information concerning mankind, how little there is of this disinterested love to God, this pure divine affection, in the world. How very little indeed in comparison of other affections altogether diverse, which perpetually urge, actuate, and govern mankind, and keep the world, through all nations and ages, in a continual agitation and commotion. This is an evidence of a horrid contempt of God. It would justly be esteemed a great instance of disrespect and contempt of a prince, if one of his subjects when he came into his house, should set him below his meanest slave. But in setting the infinite JEHOVAH below earthly objects and enjoyments, men degrade him below those things, between Which and him there is an infinitely greater distance, than between the highest earthly potentate and the most abject of mortals. Such a conduct as the generality of men are guilty of towards God, continually and through all ages, in innumerable respects, would be accounted the most vile contemptuous treatment of a fellow-creature, of distinguished dignity. Particularly men's treatment of the offers God makes of himself to them as their friend, their father. their God, and everlasting portion, their treatment of the exhibitions he has made of his unmeasurable love, and the boundless riches of his grace in Christ, attended with earnest repeated calls

counsels, expostulations, and entreaties, as also of the most dreadful threatenings of his eternal displeasure and vengeance.

Before I finish this section, it may be proper to say something in reply to an objection, some may be ready to make, against the force of this argument — that men do not come half-way to that degree of love to God which becomes them, and is their duty. The objection is this: That the argument seems to prove too much, in that it will prove, that even good men themselves have more sin than holiness, which also has been supposed. flat if this were true, it would follow, that sin is the prevalent principle even in good men, and that it is the principle which has the predominancy in the heart and practice of the truly pious, which is plainly contrary to the word of God.

I answer, If it be indeed so, that there is more sin, consisting in defect of required holiness, than there is of holiness, in good men in this world; yet it will not follow, that sin has the chief government of their heart and practice, for two reasons.

**1.** They may love God more than other things, and yet there may not be so much love, as there is want of due love; or in other words, they may love God more than the world, and therefore the love of God may be predominant, and yet may not love God near half so much as they ought to do. This need not be esteemed a paradox: A person may love a father, or some great friend and benefactor, of a very excellent character, more than some other object, a thousand times less worthy of his esteem and affection, and yet love him ten times less than he ought; and so be chargeable, all things considered, with a deficiency in respect and gratitude, that is very unbecoming and hateful. If love to God prevails above the love of other things, then virtue will prevail above evil affections, or positive principles of Sin, by which principles it is, that sin has a positive power and influence. For evil affections radically consist in inordinate love to other things besides God. and therefore, virtue prevailing beyond these, will have the governing influence. The predominance of the love of God in the hearts of good men, is more from the nature of the object loved, and the nature of the principle of true love, than the degree of the principle. The object is one of supreme loveliness, immensely above all other objects in worthiness of regard; and it is by such a transcendent excellency, that he

is God, and worthy to be regarded and adored as God: and he that truly loves God, loves him as God. True love acknowledges him to be divinely and supremely excellent; and must arise from some knowledge, sense, and conviction of his worthiness of supreme respect: and though the sense and view of it may be very imperfect, and the love that arises from it in like manner imperfect; yet if there be any realizing view of such divine excellency, it must cause the heart to respect God above all.

2. Another reason, why a principle of holiness maintains the dominion in the hearts of good men, is the nature of the covenant of grace, and the promises of that covenant, on which true Christian virtue relies, and which engage God's strength and assistance to be on its side, and to help it against its enemy, that it may not be overcome. The just live by faith. Holiness in the Christian, or his spiritual life, is maintained, as it has respect by faith to its author and finisher, and derives strength and efficacy from the divine fountain, and by this means overcomes. For, as the apostle says, This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith. It is our faith in him who has promised never to leave nor forsake his people; not to forsake the works of his own hands, nor suffer his people to be tempted above their ability; that his grace shall be sufficient for them, his strength be made perfect in weakness, and that where he has begun a good work he will carry it on to the day of Christ.

## SECTION 6

*The corruption of man's nature appears by its tendency, in its present State, to an extreme degree of folly and stupidity in matters of religion.*

IT appears, that man's nature is greatly depraved, by an apparent proneness to an exceeding stupidity and sottishness in those things wherein his duty and main interest are chiefly concerned. I shall instance in two things, use. men's proneness to idolatry; and a general, great disregard of eternal things, in them who live under the light of the gospel.

It is manifest, in the first instance, that man's nature in its present state is attended with a great propensity to forsake the acknowledgment and worship of the true God, and to fall into the most stupid idolatry. This has been sufficiently proved by known fact, on abundant trial: insomuch

as the world of mankind in general (excepting one small people, miraculously delivered and preserved) through all nations, in all parts of the world, ages after ages, continued without the knowledge and worship of the true God, and overwhelmed in gross idolatry, without the least appearance or prospect of its recovering itself from so great blindness, or returning from its brutish principles and customs, till delivered by divine grace.

In order to the most just arguing from fact, concerning the tendency of man's nature, as that is in itself, it should be inquired what the event has been, where nature has been left to itself, to operate according to its own tendency, with least opposition made to it by any thing supernatural; rather than in exempt places, where the infinite power and grace of God have interposed, and extraordinary means have been used to stem the current, and bring men to true religion and virtue. As to the means by which God's people of old, in the line of Abraham, were delivered and presented from idolatry, they were miraculous, and of mere grace. Notwithstanding which, they were often relapsing into the notions and ways of the heathen; and when they had backslidden, never were recovered, but by divine gracious interposition. And as to the means by which many gentile nations have been delivered since the days of the gospel, they are such as have been wholly owing to the most wonderful, miraculous, and infinite grace. God was under no obligation to bestow on the heathen world greater advantages than they had in the ages of their gross darkness; as appears by the fact, that God actually did not, for so long a time, bestow greater advantages.

Dr. T. himself observes, (Key, p. 1.) That in about four hundred years after the flood, the generality of mankind were fallen into idolatry. And thus it was every where through the world, excepting among that people that was saved and preserved by a constant series of miracles, through a variety of countries, nations, and climates, great enough — and through successive changes, revolutions, and ages, numerous enough — to be a sufficient trial of what mankind are prone to, if there be any such thing as a sufficient trial.

That men should forsake the true God for idols, is an evidence of the most astonishing folly and stupidity, by God's own testimony,

“Be astonished, ye heavens, at this, and be ye horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord: for my people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and have hewed out to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” (<sup>2412</sup>Jeremiah 2:12, 13)

And that mankind in general did thus, so soon after the flood, was from the evil propensity of their hearts, and because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge; as is evident by <sup>2413</sup>Romans 1:28. And the universality of the effect shows that the cause was universal, and not any thing belonging to the particular circumstances of one, or only some nations or ages, but something belonging to that nature, which is common to all nations, and which remains the same through all ages. And what other cause could this great effect possibly arise from, but a depraved disposition, natural to all mankind? It could not arise from want of a sufficient capacity or means of knowledge. This is in effect confessed on all hands. Dr. Turnbull (Chris. Philippians p. 21.) says: “The existence of one infinitely powerful, wise, and good mind, the Author, Creator, Upholder, and Governor of all things, is a truth that lies plain and obvious to all that will but think.” And (ibid. p. 245.) “Moral knowledge, which is the most important of all knowledge, may easily be acquired by all men.” And again, (ibid. p. 292.) “Every man by himself, if he would duly employ his mind in the contemplation of the works of God about him, or in the examination of his own frame, — might make very great progress in the knowledge of the wisdom and goodness of God. This all men, generally speaking, might do, with very little assistance; for they have all sufficient abilities for thus employing their minds, and have all sufficient time for it.” Mr. Locke says, (Hom. Und. p. 4:chapter 4:p. 242. edit. 11.) “Our own existence, and the sensible parts of the universe, offer the proofs of a Deity so clearly and cogently to our thoughts, that I deem it impossible for a considerate man to withstand them. For I judge it as certain and clear a truth, as can any where be delivered, that the invisible things of God are clearly seen from the creation of the world, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead.” And Dr. T. himself (in p. 78. says, “The light given to all ages and nations of the world, is sufficient for the knowledge and practice of their duty.” And (p. 111, 112.) citing those words of the apostle, <sup>2414</sup>Romans 2:14, 15. he says,

“This clearly supposes that the Gentiles, who were then in the world, might have done the things contained in the law by nature, or their natural power.” And in one of the next sentences he says, “The apostle, in ~~ROM~~ Romans 1:19, 20, 21 affirms that the Gentiles had light sufficient to have seen God’s eternal power and godhead, in the works of creation: and that the reason why they did not glorify him as God, was because they became vain in their imaginations, and had darkened their foolish heart; so that they were without excuse. And in his paraphrase on those verses in the 1st of Romans he speaks of the very heathens, that were without a written revelation, as having that clear and evident discovery of God’s being and perfections, that they are inexcusable in not glorifying him suitably to his excellent nature, and as the author of their being and enjoyments.” And (p. 146. S.) he says, “God affords every man sufficient light to know his duty.” If all ages and nations of the world have sufficient light for the knowledge of God, and their duty to him, then even such nations and ages, in which the most brutish ignorance and barbarity prevailed, had sufficient light, if they had but a disposition to improve it; and then much more those of the heathen, which were more knowing and polished and in ages wherein arts and learning had made greatest advances. But even in such nations and ages, there was no advance made towards true religion; as Dr. Winder observes, (Hist. of Knowl. vol. 2:p. 336.) in the following words; “The pagan religion degenerated into greater absurdity, the further it proceeded; and it prevailed in all its height of absurdity, when the pagan nations were polished to the height. Though they set out with die talents of reason, and had solid foundations of information to build upon, it in fact proved, that with all their strengthened faculties, and growing powers of reason, the edifice of religion rose in the most absurd deformities and disproportion’s, and gradually went on in the most irrational, disproportioned, incongruous systems, of which the most easy dictates of reason would have demonstrated the absurdity. They were contrary to all just calculations in more mathematics.” He observes, “that their grossest abominations first began in Egypt, where was an ostentation of the greatest progress in learning and science: and they never renounced clearly any of their abominations, or openly resumed to the worship of the one true God, the Creator of all things, and to the original, genuine sentiments of the highest and most venerable antiquity. The pagan religion continued in this deep

state of corruption to the last. The pagan philosophers, and inquisitive men made great improvements in many sciences, an even in morality itself, yet the inveterate absurdities of pagan idolatry returned without remedy. Every temple smoked with incense to the sun and moon, and of her inanimate material luminaries, and earthly elements, to Jupiter, Juno, Mars, and Venus, etc. the patrons and examples of almost every vice (Hecatombs bled on the altar) of a thousand gods, as mad superstition inspired. And this was not the disgrace of our ignorant untaught northern countries only; but even at Athens itself, the infamy reigned, and circulated through all Greece: and finally prevailed, amidst all their learning and politeness, under the Ptolemies in Egypt, and the Caesar's at Rome. Now if the knowledge of the pagan world, in religion, proceeded no further than this; if they retained all their deities, even the most absurd of them all; their deified beasts, and deified men, even to the last breath of pagan power: we may justly ascribe the great improvements in the world, on the subject of religion, to divine revelation, either vouchsafed in the beginning, when this knowledge was competently clear and copious; or at the death of paganism, when this light shone forth in its consummate lustre at the coming of Christ."

Dr. T. often speaks of the idolatry of the heathen world, as great wickedness, in which they were wholly inexcusable; and yet often speaks of their case as remediless, and of them as being dead in sin, and unable to recover themselves. If so, and yet, according to his own doctrine, every age, every nation, and every man, had sufficient light afforded, to know God, and their whole duty to him; then their inability to deliver themselves must be a moral inability, consisting in a desperate depravity, and most evil disposition of heart.

And if there had not been sufficient trial of the propensity of the hearts of mankind, through all those ages that passed from Abraham to Christ, the trial has been continued down to this day, in all those vast regions of the face of the earth, that have remained without any effects of the light of the gospel, and the dismal effect continues every where unvaried. How was it with that multitude of nations inhabiting South and North America? What appearance was there, when the Europeans first came hither, of their being recovered, or recovering, in any degree, from the grossest ignorance, delusions, and most stupid paganism? And how is it at this day, in those

parts of Africa and Asia, into which the light of the gospel has not penetrated?

This strong and universally prevalent disposition of mankind to idolatry, of which there has been such great trial, and so notorious and vast proof, in facts is a most glaring evidence of the exceeding depravity of the human nature, as it is a propensity, in the utmost degree, contrary to the highest end, the main business, and chief happiness of mankind — consisting in the knowledge, service and enjoyment of the living, God, the Creator and Governor of the world — in the highest decree contrary to that for which mainly God gave mankind more understanding than the beasts of the earth, and made them wiser than the fowls of heaven, which was, that they might be capable of the knowledge of God. It is also in the highest degree contrary to the first and greatest commandment of the moral law, That we should have no other god, before JEHOVAH, and that we should love and adore him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. The Scriptures are abundant in representing the idolatry of the heathen world, as their exceeding wickedness, and their most brutish stupidity. They who worship and trust in idols, are said themselves to be like the lifeless statues they worship, like mere senseless stocks and stones. (~~HEB~~ Psalm 115:4-8. and ~~HEB~~ 135:15-18.)

A second instance of the natural stupidity of mankind, is that great disregard of their own eternal interest, which appears so remarkably; so generally among them who live under the gospel.

Mr. Locke observes, (Romans Und. vol. 1:p. 207.) “Were the will determined by the views of good, as it appears in contemplation, greater or less to the understanding, it could never get loose from the infinite eternal joys of heaven, once proposed, and considered as possible; the eternal condition of a future state infinitely outweighing the expectation of riches or honor, or any other worldly pleasure, which we can propose to ourselves, though we should grant these the more probable to be obtained.” Again, (p. 228, 229.) “He that will not be so far a rational creature, as to reflect seriously upon infinite happiness and misery, must needs condemn himself, as not making that use of his understanding he should. The rewards and punishments of another life, which the Almighty has established, as the enforcements of his laws, are of weight enough to



determine the choice, against whatsoever pleasure or pain this life can show. When the eternal state is considered but in its bare possibility, which nobody can make any doubt of, he that will allow exquisite and endless happiness to be but the possible consequence of a good life here, and the contrary state the possible reward of a bad one, must own himself to judge very much amiss, if he does not conclude that a virtuous life; with the certain expectation of everlasting bliss, which may come, is to be preferred to a vicious one, with the fear of that dreadful state of misery, which it is very possible may overtake the guilty, or at least the terrible uncertain hope of annihilation. This is evidently so, though the virtuous life here had nothing but pain, and the vicious continual pleasure; which yet is for the most part quite otherwise, and wicked men have not much the odds to brag of, even in their present possession: nay, all things rightly considered have I think even the worst part here. But when infinite happiness is put in one scale, against infinite misery in the other; if the worst that comes to the pious man, if he mistakes, be the best that the wicked man can attain to, if he be in the right; who can, without madness, run the venture? Who in his wits would choose to come within a possibility of infinite misery? which if he miss, there is yet nothing to be got by that hazard: whereas, on the other side, the sober man ventures nothing, against infinite happiness to be got, if his expectation comes to pass.”

That disposition of mind which is a propensity to act contrary to reason, is a depraved disposition. It is not because the faculty of reason which God has given to mankind, is not sufficient fully to discover to them, that forty, sixty, or an hundred years, is as nothing in comparison of eternity — infinitely less than a second of time to an hundred years — that the greatest worldly prosperity is not treated with the most perfect disregard, in all cases where there is any degree of competition of earthly things, with salvation from exquisite, eternal misery, and the enjoyment of everlasting glory and felicity. But is it a matter of controversy, whether men in general show a strong disposition to act far otherwise, from their infancy, till death sensibly approaches? In things that concern their temporal interest, they easily discern the difference between things of a long and short continuance. It is no hard matter to convince men of the difference between being admitted to the accommodations and entertainment's of a

convenient, beautiful, well-furnished habitation, and to partake of the provisions and produce of a plentiful estate tot a day, or a night; and having all given them, and settled upon them, as their own, to possess as long as they live, and to be theirs and their heirs' for ever. There would be no need of preaching sermons, and spending strength and life, to convince them of the difference. Men know how to adjust things in their dealings and contracts one with another, according to the length of time in which anything agreed for is to be used or enjoyed. In temporal affairs they are sensible, that it concerns them to provide for future time, as well as for the present. Thus common prudence teaches them to take care in summer to lay up for winter; yea, to provide a fund, or an estate, whence they may be supplied for a long time to come. And not only so, but they are forward to spend and be spent, in order to provide for their children after they are dead; though it be guise uncertain, who shall enjoy what they lay up, after they have left the world. And if their children should have the comfort of it, as they desire, they will not partake with them in that comfort, or have any portion in any thing under the sun. In things which relate to men's temporal interest, they seem very sensible of the uncertainty of life, especially of the lives of others; and to make answerable provision for the security of their worldly interest, that no considerable part of it may rest only on so uncertain a foundation, as the life of a neighbor or friend. Common discretion leads them to take good care, that their outward possessions be well secured, by a good and firm title. In worldly concerns, men discern their opportunities, and are careful to improve them before they are past. The husbandman is careful to plough his ground, and sow his seed, in the proper season; otherwise he knows he cannot expect a crop; and when the harvest is come, he will not sleep away the time; for he knows, if he does so, the crop will soon be lost. How careful and eagle-eyed is the merchant to improve opportunities to enrich himself! How apt are men to be alarmed at the appearance of danger to their worldly estate, or any thing that remarkably threatens great damage to their outward interest! And how will they bestir themselves in such a case, if possible, to avoid the threatened calamity! In things purely secular, and not of a moral or spiritual nature, they easily receive conviction by past experience, when any thing, on repeated trial, proves unprofitable or prejudicial; and are ready to take warning by what they have found themselves, and also by the experience of their neighbors and forefathers.

But if we consider how men generally conduct themselves in things on which their well-being infinitely more depends, how vast is the diversity! In these things how cold, lifeless, and dilatory! With what difficulty are a few, out of multitudes, excited to any tolerable degree of care and diligence, by the innumerable means used, in order to make them wise for themselves! And when some vigilance and activity is excited, how apt is it to die away, like a mere force against a natural tendency! What need of a constant repetition of admonitions and counsels, to keep the heart from falling asleep! How many objections are made! How are difficulties magnified! And how soon is the mind discouraged! How many arguments, often renewed, variously and elaborately enforced, do men stand in need of, to convince them of things that are almost self-evident! As that things which are eternal, are infinitely more important than things temporal, and the like. And after all, how very few are convinced effectually, or in such a manner as to induce them to a practical preference of eternal things! How senseless are men of the necessity of Improving their time, as to their spiritual interest, and their welfare in another world! Though it be an endless futurity, and though it be their own personal, infinitely important good, that is to be cared for. Though men are so sensible of the uncertainty of their neighbors lives, when any considerable part of their own estates depends on the continuance of them, how stupidly senseless do they seem to be of the uncertainty of their own lives, when their preservation from immensely great, remediless, and endless misery, is risked by a present delay, through a dependence on future opportunity! What a dreadful venture will men carelessly and boldly run, repeat, and multiply, with regard to their eternal salvation; who yet are very careful to have every shine in a deed or bond, firm, and without a flaw! How negligent are they of their special advantages and opportunities for their soul's good! How hardly awakened by the most evident and moment dangers, threatening eternal destruction, yea, though put in mind of them, and much pains taken to point them forth, show them plainly, and fully to represent them, if possible to engage their attention! How are they like the horse, that boldly rushes into the battle! How hardly are men convinced by their own frequent and abundant experience, of the unsatisfactory nature of earthly things, and the instability of their own hearts in their good frames and intentions! And how hardly convinced by their own observation, and the experience of all past generations, of the uncertainty of life and its

enjoyments! <sup><19411></sup>Psalm 49:11, etc. “Their inward thought is that their houses shall continue for ever. — Nevertheless, man being in honor, abideth not; he is like the beasts that perish. This their way is their folly; yet their posterity approve their sayings. Like sheep are they laid in the grave.”

In these things, men who are prudent for their temporal interest, act as if they were bereft of reason: “They have eyes, and see not; ears, and hear not, neither do they understand: they are like the horse and mule, that have no understanding.” — <sup><2087></sup>Jeremiah 8:7. “The stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow, observe the time of their coming: but my people know not the judgment of the Lord.”

These things are often mentioned in Scripture, as evidences of extreme folly and stupidity, wherein men act as great enemies to themselves, as though they loved their own ruin; <sup><2083></sup>Proverbs 8:36. Laying wait for their own blood, <sup><2018></sup>Proverbs 1:18. And how can these things be accounted for, but by supposing a most wretched depravity of nature? Why otherwise should not men be as wise for themselves in spiritual and eternal things, as in temporal? All Christians will confess, that man’s faculty of reason was given him chiefly to enable him to understand the former, wherein his main interest and true happiness consist. This faculty would therefore undoubtedly be every way as fit for understanding them, as the latter, if not depraved. The reason why these are understood, and not the other, is not that such things as have been mentioned, belonging to men’s spiritual and eternal interest are more obscure and abstruse in their own nature. For instance, the difference between long and short, the need of providing for futurity, the importance of improving proper opportunities, and of having good security, and a sure foundation, in affairs wherein our interest is greatly concerned, etc. these things are as plain in themselves in religious, as in other matters. And we have far greater means to assist us to be wise for ourselves in eternal than in temporal things. We have the abundant instruction of perfect and infinite wisdom itself, to lead and conduct us in the paths of righteousness, so that we may not err. And the reasons of things are most clearly, variously, and abundantly set before us in the word of God, which is adapted to the faculties of mankind, lending greatly to enlighten and convince the mind: whereas, we have no such excellent

and perfect rules to instruct and direct us in things pertaining to our temporal interest, nor any thing to be compared to it.

If any should say, It is true, if men gave full credit to what they are told concerning eternal things? and these appeared to them as real and certain things, it would be an evidence of a sort of madness in them, that they no greater regard to them in practice: but there is reason to think, this is not the case; the things of another world being unseen, appear to men as things of a very doubtful nature, and amended with greet uncertainty — In answer, I would observe, agreeable to what has been cited from Mr. Locke, though eternal things were considered in their bare possibility, if men acted rationally, they would infinitely outweigh all temporal things in their influence on their hearts. And I would also observe, that to suppose eternal things not to be fully believed, at least by them who enjoy the light of the gospel, does not weaken, but rather strengthen, the argument for the depravity of nature. For the eternal world being what God had chiefly in view in the creation of men, this world was made wholly subordinate to the other, man's state here being only a state of probation, preparation, and progression, with respect to the future state. Eternal things are in effect their all, their whole concern; to understand and know which, it chiefly was, that they had understanding given them; therefore we may undoubtedly conclude, that if men have not respect to them as real and certain things, it cannot be for want of sufficient evidence of their truth: but it must be from a dreadful stupidity of mind, occasioning a sottish insensibility of their truth and importance when manifested by the clearest evidence.

## SECTION 7

*That man's nature is corrupt, appears, in that by far the greater part of mankind, in all ages, have been wicked men.*

THE depravity of man's nature appears, not only in its propensity to sin in some degree, which renders a man an evil or wicked man in the eye of the law, and strict justice, as was before shown; but it is so corrupt, that its depravity either shows that men are, or tends to make them to be, of such an evil character, as shall denominate them wicked men, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace.

This may be argued from several things which have been already observed: as from a tendency to continual sin; a tendency to much greater degrees of sin than righteousness, and from the general extreme stupidity of mankind. But yet the present state of man's nature, as implying, or tending to, a wicked character, may deserve to be more particularly considered, and directly proved. And in general, this appears, in that there have been so very few in the world, from age to age, ever since the world has stood, that have been of any other character.

It is abundantly evident in Scripture, and is what I suppose none that call themselves Christians will deny, that the whole world is divided into good and bad, and that all mankind at the day of judgment will either be approved as righteous, or condemned as wicked: either glorified, as children of the kingdom, or cast into a furnace of fire, as children of the wicked one.

I need not stand to show what things belong to the character of such as shall hereafter be accepted as righteous, according to the word of God. It may be sufficient for my present purposes to observe what Dr. T. himself speaks of, as belonging essentially to the character of such. In p. 203. he says, "This is infallibly the character of true Christians, and what is essential to such, that they have really mortified the flesh with its lusts; — they are dead to sin. and live no longer therein; the old man is crucified, and the body of sin destroyed: they yield themselves to God, as those that are alive from the dead, and their members as instruments of righteousness to God, and as servants of righteousness to holiness." — There is more to the like purpose in the two next pages. In p. 228. he says, "Whatsoever is evil and corrupt in us, we ought to condemn; not so, as it shall still remain in us, that we may always be condemning it, but that we may speedily reform, and be effectually delivered from it; otherwise certainly we do not come up to the character of the true disciples of Christ."

In p. 248. he says, "Unless God's favor be preferred before all other enjoyments whatsoever, unless there be a delight in the worship of God, and in converse with him, unless every appetite be brought into subjection to reason and truth, and unless there be a kind and benevolent disposition towards our fellow-creatures, how can the mind be fit to dwell with God, in his house and family, to do him service in his kingdom, and to promote

the happiness of any part of his creation.” — And in his Key, 286. p. 101, 102, etc. showing there, what it is to be a true Christian, he says, among other things, “That he is one who has such a sense and persuasion of the love of God in Christ, that he devotes his life to the honor and service of God, in hope of eternal glory. And that to the character of a true Christian, it is absolutely necessary, that he diligently study the things that are freely given him of God, viz. his election, regeneration, etc. that he may gain a just knowledge of those inestimable privileges, may taste that the Lord is gracious, and rejoice in the gospel-salvation, as his greatest happiness and glory. — It is necessary, that he work these blessings on his heart, till they become a vital principle, producing in him the love of God, engaging him to all cheerful obedience to his will, giving him a proper dignity and elevation of soul, raising him above the best and worst of this world, carrying his heart into heaven, and fixing his affections and regards upon his everlasting inheritance, and the crown of glory laid up for him there. Thus he is armed against all the temptations and trials resulting from any pleasure or pain, hopes or fears, gain or loss, in the present world. None of these things move him from a faithful discharge of any part of his duty, or from a firm attachment to truth and righteousness, neither counts he his very life dear to him, that he may do the will of God, and finish his course with joy. In a sense of the love of God in Christ, he maintains daily communion with God, by reading and meditating on his word. In a sense of his own infirmity, and the readiness of the divine favor to succor him, he daily addresses the throne of grace, for the renewal of spiritual strength, in assurance of obtaining it, through the one Mediator Christ Jesus. Enlightened and directed by the heavenly doctrine of the gospel,” etc.

Now I leave every one that has any degree of impartiality, to judge. whether there be not sufficient grounds to think, that it is but a very small part indeed, of the many myriads and millions which overspread this globe, who are of a character that in any wise answers these descriptions. However Dr. T. insists, that all nations, and every man on the face of the earth, have light and means sufficient to do the whole will of God, even they that live in the grossest darkness of paganism.

Dr. T. in answer to arguments of this kind, very impertinently from time to time objects, that we are no judges of the viciousness of men’s characters, nor are able to decide in what degree they are virtuous or

vicious. As though we could have no good grounds to judge, that any thing appertaining to the qualities or properties of the mind, which is invisible, is general or prevailing, among a multitude Or collective body, unless we can determine how it is with each individual. I think I have sufficient reason, from what I know and have heard of the American Indians, to judge, that there are not many good philosophers among them; though the thoughts of their hearts, and the ideas and knowledge they have in their minds, are things invisible; and though I have never seen so much as a thousandth part of the Indians; and with respect to most of them, should not be able to pronounce peremptorily concerning any one, that he was not very knowing in the nature of things, if all should singly pass before me. And Dr. T. himself seems to be sensible of the falseness of his own conclusions, that he so often urges against others; if we may judge by his practice, and the liberties he takes, in judging of a multitude himself. He, it seems, is sensible that a man may have good grounds to judge, that wickedness of character is general in a collective body; because he openly does it himself. (Key, p. 102). After declaring the things which belong to the character of a true Christian, he judges of the generality of Christians, that they have cast off these things, that they are a people that do err in their hearts, and have not known God's ways, p. 259. he judges that the generality of Christians are the most wicked of all mankind, when he thinks it will throw some disgrace on the opinion of such as he opposes. The like we have from time to time in other places, (as p. 168. p. 258. Key, p. 127, 128.)

But if men are not sufficient judges, whether there are few of the world of mankind but what are wicked, yet doubtless God is sufficient, and his judgment, often declared in his word, determines the matter. <sup><1073</sup> Matthew 7:13, 14. "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth to life, and few there be that find it." It is manifest, that here Christ is not only describing the state of things, as it was at that day, and does not mention the comparative smallness of the number of them that are saved, as a consequence of the peculiar perverseness of that people, and of that generation; but as a consequence of the general circumstances of the way to life, and the way to destruction, the broadness of the one, and the



narrowness of the other. In the straitness of the gate, etc. I suppose none will deny, that Christ has respect to the strictness of those rules, which he had insisted on in the preceding sermon, and which render the way to life very difficult. But certainly these amiable rules would not be difficult, were they not contrary to the natural inclinations of men's hearts; and they would not be contrary to those inclinations, were these not depraved. Consequently the wideness of the gate, and broadness of the way that leads to destruction, in consequence of which many go in thereat, must imply the agreeableness of this way to men's natural inclinations. The like reason is given by Christ, why few are saved. ~~100~~ Luke 13:23, 24. "Then laid one unto him, Lord, are there few saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." That there are generally but few good men in the world, even among them who have the most distinguishing and glorious advantages for it, is evident by that saying of our Lord, "Many are called, but few are chosen." And if there are but few among these, how few, how very few indeed, must persons of this character be, compared with the whole world of mankind! The exceeding smallness of the number of the saints, compared with the whole world, appears by the representations often made of them as distinguished from the world; in which they are spoken of as called and chosen out of the world, redeemed from the earth, redeemed from among men; as being those that are of God, while the whole world lieth in wickedness and the like.

And if we look into the Old Testament, we shall find the same testimony given.

**"Most men will proclaim every man his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (~~200~~ Proverbs 20:6)**

By the faithful man, as the phrase is used in Scripture, is intended much the same as a sincere, upright, or truly good man; as in ~~100~~ Psalm 12:1. and ~~100~~ 31:23. and ~~100~~ 101:6. and other places. Again, ~~200~~ Ecclesiastes 7:15-29. "I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to find out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness: and I find more bitter than death, the woman whose heart is snares, etc. Behold, this have I found, saith the preacher, counting one by one, to find out the account, which yet my soul seeketh,

but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found: but a woman among, all these have I not found. Lo, this only have I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.” Solomon here signifies, that when he set himself diligently to find out the account or proportion of true wisdom, or thorough uprightness among men, the result was, that he found it to be but as one to a thousand, etc. Dr. T. on this place, p. 184. says, “The wise man in the context, is inquiring into the corruption and depravity of mankind, of the men and women, THAT LIVED IN HIS TIME. As though what he said represented nothing of the state of thing) in the world in general, but only in his time. But does Dr. T. or any body else, suppose this only to be the design of that book, to represent the vanity and evil of the world in that time, and to show that all was vanity and vexation of spirit in Solomon’s day? That day truly, we have reason to think, was a day of the greatest smiles of Heaven on that nation, that ever had been on any nation from the foundation of the world. Not only does the subject and argument of the whole book show it to be otherwise; but also the declared design of the book in the first chapter; where the world is represented as very much the same, as to its vanity and evil, from age to age. It makes little or no progress, after all its revolutions and restless motions, labors, and pursuits like the sea, that has all the rivers constantly emptying themselves into it, from age to age, and yet is never the fuller. As to that place, ~~Amos~~ Proverbs 20:6. “A faithful man who can find?” there is no more reason to suppose that the wise man has respect only to his time, in these words, than in those immediately preceding, “Counsel in the heart of a man is like deep waters but a man of understanding will draw it out.” Or in the words next following, “The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.” Or in any other proverb in the whole book. And if it were so, that Solomon in these things meant only to describe his own times, it would not at all weaken the argument. For, if we observe the history of the Old Testament, there is reason to think there never was any time from Joshua to the captivity, wherein wickedness was more restrained, and virtue and religion more encouraged and promoted, than in David’s and Solomon’s times. And if there was so little true piety in that nation, the only people of God under heaven, even in their best times, what may we suppose, concerning the world in general, take one time with another?

Notwithstanding what some authors advance concerning the prevalence of virtue, honesty, good neighborhood, cheerfulness, etc. in the world; Solomon, whom we may Justly esteem as wise and just an observer of human nature, and the state of the world of mankind, as most in these days (besides, Christians ought to remember, that he wrote by divine inspiration) — judged the world to be so full of wickedness, that it was better never to be born, than to be born to live only in such a world.

“So I returned and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and behold, the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter: and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter. Wherefore, I praised the dead, which were already dead, more than the living, which are yet alive. Yea, better is he than both they, which hath not yet been; who hath not seen the evil work that is cane under the sun.”

(~~2001~~ Ecclesiastes 4:1-3)

Surely it will not be said that Solomon has only respect to his time here too, when he speaks of the oppressions of them that were in power; since he himself, and others appointed by him, and wholly under his control, were the men that were in power in that land, and in almost all the neighboring countries.

The same inspired writer says,

“The heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live; and after that they go to the dead.”

(~~2008~~ Ecclesiastes 9:3)

If these general expressions are to be understood only of some, and those the smaller part, when in general, truth, honesty, good-nature, etc. govern the world, why are such general expressions from time to time used? Why does not this wise and noble prince express himself in a more generous and benevolent strain, and say, wisdom is in the hearts of the sons of men while they live, etc. — instead of leaving in his writings so many sly, ill-natured suggestions which pour such contempt on human nature, and tend so much to excite mutual jealousy and malevolence, to taint the minds of mankind through all generations after him?

If we consider the various successive parts and periods of the duration of the world, it will, if possible, be yet more evident, that by far the greater part of mankind have in all ages, been of a wicked character. The short accounts we have of Adam and his family ate such as lead us to suppose, that the greater part of his posterity in his life-time, yea, in the former part of his life, were wicked. It appears, that his eldest son Cain, was a very wicked man, who slew his righteous brother Abel. And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years before Seth was born: and by that time, we may suppose, his posterity began to be considerably numerous: when he was born, his mother called his name Seth; for God, said the, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel. Which naturally suggestion to our thoughts, that of all her seed then existing, none were of any such note for religion and virtue, as that their parents could have any great comfort in them, or expectation from them, on that account. And by the brief history we have, it looks as if — however there might be some intervals of a revival of religion, yet — in the genera!, mankind grew more and more corrupt till the flood. It is signified that when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, wickedness prevailed exceedingly, ~~OR~~ Genesis 6:1, etc. And that before God appeared to Noah, to command him to build the ark, one hundred and twenty years before the flood, the world had long continued obstinate in great and general wickedness, and the disease was become inveterate. The expressions (verse 3, 5, 6.) suggest as much: “And the Lord said, my spirit shall not always strive with man. — And God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every imagination of the thought of his heart was evil, only evil continually; and It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.” And by that time, “all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth,” (v. 12.) And so Dr. T. himself observes, (p. 122.) “Mankind were universally debauched into lust, sensuality, rapine, and injustice.”

And with respect to the period after the flood, to the calling of Abraham; Dr. T. says, as already observed, that in about four hundred years after the flood, the generality of mankind were fallen into idolatry; which was before all they were dead who came out of the ark. And it cannot be thought, the world went suddenly into that general and extreme degree of corruption, but that they had been gradually growing more and more

corrupt; though it is true, it must be by very swift degrees — however soon we may suppose they began — to get to that pass in one age.

And as to the period from the calling of Abraham to the coming of Christ, Dr. T. justly observes as follows: (Key, 133.) “If we reckon from the call of Abraham to the coming of Christ, the Jewish dispensation continued one thousand nine hundred and twenty-one years; during which period, the other families and nations of the earth, not only lay out of God’s peculiar kingdom, but also lived in idolatry great ignorance, and wickedness.” And with regard to the Israelites, it is evident that wickedness was the generally prevailing character among them, from age to age. If we consider how it was with Jacob’s family, the behavior of Rœuben with his father’s concubine, the behavior of Judah with Tamar, the conduct of Jacob’s sons towards the Sherbemites, and the behavior of Joseph’s ten brethren in their cruel treatment of him; we cannot think, that the character of true piety belonged to many of them, according to Dr. T.’s own notion of such a character, though it be true, they might afterwards repent. And with respect to the time the children of Israel were in Egypt; the Scripture, speaking of them in general, or as a collective body open represents them as complying with the abominable idolatries of the country. And as to that generation which went out of Egypt, and wandered in the wilderness, they are abundantly represented as extremely and almost universally wicked, perverse, and children of divine wrath And after Joshua’s death, the Scripture is that wickedness was the prevailing character in the nation, from age to age. So it was till Samuel’s time. (~~1~~ Samuel 8:7, 8.) “They should not reign over them; according to all their works which they have done, since the day at I brought them out of Egypt, unto this day.” Yea, so it was till Jeremiah’s and Ezekiel’s time. (~~24~~ Jeremiah 32:30, 31.) “For the children of Israel, and the children of Judah, have only done evil before me from their youth; for the children of Israel have only provoked me to anger with the work of their hands, saith the Lord: for this city hath been to me a provocation of mine anger, and of my fury, from the day they built it, even unto the day.” (Compare chapter ~~24~~ 5:21, 23: and chapter ~~24~~ 7:25, 26, 27.) So ~~24~~ Ezekiel 2:3, 4. “I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation, that hath rebelled against me, they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day: for they are Impudent children, and stiff-hearted.” And it

appears by the discourse of Stephen, ~~(Acts 7.)~~ that this was generally the case with that nation, from their first rise, even to the days of the apostles. After this summary rehearsal of the instances of their perverseness from the very time of their selling Joseph into Egypt, he concludes, (verse 51-53.) “Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost. As your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which showed before of the coming of that just time, of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.”

Thus it appears, that wickedness was the generally prevailing character in all nations, till Christ came. And so also it appears to have been since his coming to this day. So in the age of apostles. There was a great number of persons of a truly pious character in the latter part of the apostolic age, when multitudes of converts had been made and Christianity was as yet in its primitive Purity; but what says the apostle John of the church of God at that time, as compared with the rest of the world?

“We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.” (~~(1 John 5:19)~~)

And after that Christianity came to prevail to that degree, that Christians had the upper hand in nations and civil communities, still the greater part of mankind remained in their old heathen state; which Dr. T. sneaks of as a state of great ignorance and wickedness. And besides, this is noted in all ecclesiastical history, that as the Christians gained in power and secular advantages, true piety declined, and corruption and wickedness prevailed among them. — And as to the state of the Christian world, since Christianity began to be established by human laws, wickedness for the most part has greatly prevailed; as is very notorious, and is implied in what Dr. T. himself says: In giving an account how the doctrine of original sin came to prevail among Christians, he observes, (p. 167. S.) “That the Christian religion was very early and grievously corrupted, by dreaming, ignorant, superstitious monks.” In p. 259: he says, “The generality of Christians have embraced this persuasion concerning original sin and the consequence has been, that the generally of Christians have been the most wicked, lewd, bloody, and treacherous of all mankind.”

Thus, a view of the several successive periods of the past duration of the world, from the beginning to this day, shows, that wickedness has ever been exceeding prevalent, and has had vastly the superiority in the world. And Dr. T. himself in effect owns, that it has been so ever since Adam first turned into the way of transgression. "It is certain (says he, p. 168.) the moral circumstances of mankind, since the time Adam first turned into the way of transgression, have been very different from a state of innocence. So far as we can judge from history, or what we know at present, the greatest part of mankind have been, and still are, very corrupt; though not equally so in every age and place." And lower in the same page, he speaks of Adam's posterity, as having sunk themselves into the most lamentable degrees of ignorance, superstition, idolatry, injustice, debauchery, etc.

These things clearly determine the point, concerning the tendency of man's nature to wickedness, if we may be allowed to proceed according to such rules and methods of reasoning, as are never denied or doubted to be good and sure, in experimental philosophy; or may reason from experience and facts, in that manner which common sense leads all mankind to in other cases. If experience and trial will evince any thing at all concerning the natural disposition of the human heart, one would think the experience of so many ages, as have elapsed since the beginning of the world, and the trial made by hundreds of different nations together, for so long a time, should be sufficient to convince all, that wickedness is agreeable to the nature of mankind in its present state.

Here, to strengthen the argument, if there were any need of it, I might observe, not only the extent and generality of the prevalence of wickedness in the world, but the height to which it has risen, and the degree in which it has reigned. Among innumerable things which confirm this, I shall now only observe, The degree in which mankind have from age to age been hurtful one to another. Many kinds of brute animals are esteemed very noxious and destructive, many of them very fierce, voracious, and many very poisonous, and the destroying of them has always been looked upon as a public benefit: but have not mankind been a thousand times as hurtful and destructive as any one of them, yea, as all the noxious beasts, birds, fishes, and reptiles in the earth, air, and water, put together, at least of all kinds of animals that are visible? And no

creature can be found any where so destructive of its own kind as man is. All others, for the most part, are harmless and peaceable, with regard to their own species. Where one wolf is destroyed by another wolf, one viper by another probably a thousand men are destroyed by those of their own species. Well therefore might our blessed Lord say when sending forth his disciples into the world, (~~and~~ Matthew 10:16, 17.) “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; — but, beware of men.” Why do I say wolves? I send you forth into the wide world of men, that are far more hurtful and pernicious, and of whom you had much more need to beware, than of wolves.

It would be strange indeed, that this should be the state of mankind, distinguished by reason, for that very end, that they might be capable of religion, which summarily consists in love, if men, as they come into the world, are in their nature innocent and harmless, undepraved, and perfectly free from all evil propensities.

## SECTION 8

*The nature depravity of mankind appears, in that there has been so little good effect of so manifold and great means, used to promote virtue in the world.*

THE evidence of the native corruption of mankind, appears much more glaring, when it is considered that the world has been so generally, so constantly, and so exceedingly corrupt, notwithstanding the saviors, great, and continual means that have been used to restrain men from sin and promote virtue and true religion among them.

Dr. T. supposes, that sorrow and death, which come on mankind in consequence of Adam’s sin, was brought on them in great favor, as a benevolent father, exercising an wholesome discipline towards his children, to restrain them from sin, by increasing the vanity of all earthly things, to abate their force to tempt and delude, to induce them to be moderate in gratifying the appetites of the body; to mortify pride and ambition, and that men might always and before their eyes a striking demonstration that sin is infinitely hateful to God, by a sight of that, than which nothing is more proper to give than the utmost abhorrence at iniquity, and to fix in their minds a sense of the dreadful consequences of sin. etc. etc. And in



general, that they do not come as punishments, but purely as means to keep men from vice, and to make them better. — If it be so, surely they are great means. Here is a mighty alteration: mankind, once so easy and happy, healthful, vigorous, and beautiful, rich in all the pleasant and abundant blessings of paradise, now turned out, destitute, weak, and decaying, into a wide barren world, yielding briers and thorns, instead of the delightful growth and sweet fruit of the garden of Eden, to wear out life in sorrow and toil, on the round cursed for his sake.; and at last, either through long and lingering decay, or severe pain and acute disease, to expire and turn into putrefaction and dust. If these are only used as medicines, to present and to cure the diseases of the mind, they are sharp medicines indeed; especially death; which, to use Hezekiah's representation, is as it were breaking all his bones. And, one would think, should be very effectual, if the subject had no depravity — no evil and contrary bias, to resist, and hinder a proper effect — especially in the old world, when the first occasion of this terrible alteration, this seventy of means, was fresh in memory. Adam continued alive near two-thirds of the time before the flood, so that a very great part of those who were alive till the flood, might have opportunity of seeing and conversing with him, and bearing from his mouth, not only an account of his fall, and the introduction of the awful consequences of it, but also of his first finding himself in existence in the new-created world, of the creation of Eve, and what passed between him and his Creator in paradise.

But what was the success of these great means, to restrain men from sin, and to induce them to virtue? Did they prove sufficient? — instead of this, the world soon grew exceeding corrupt, till, to use our author's own words, mankind were universal debauched into lust, sensuality, rapine, and injustice.

Then God used further means: he sent Noah, a preacher of righteousness, to warn the world of the universal destruction which would come upon them by a flood of waters, if they went on in sin. This warning he delivered with circumstances tending to strike their minds, and command their attention. He immediately went about building that vast structure, the ark, in which he must employ a great number of hands, and probably spent all he had in the world to save himself and his family. And under these uncommon means God waited upon them one hundred and twenty

years — But all to no effect. The whole world, for ought appears, continued obstinate, and absolutely incorrigible: so that nothing remained to be done with them, but utterly to destroy the inhabitants of the earth and to begin a new world, from that single family who had distinguished themselves by their virtue, that from them might be propagated a new and purer race. Accordingly this was done: and the inhabitants of this new world, Noah's posterity, had these new and extraordinary means to restrain sin, and excite to virtue, in addition to the toil, sorrow, and common mortality, which the world had been subjected to before, in consequence of Adam's sin, viz. that God had newsy testified his dreadful displeasure for sin, in destroying the many millions of mankind, all at one blow, old and young, men, women, and children, without pity on any for all the dismal shrieks and cries with which the world was filled. They themselves, the remaining family, were wonderfully distinguished by God's preserving goodness, that they might be a holy seed, being delivered from the corrupting examples of the old world; and being all the offspring of a living parent, whose pious instructions and counsels they had, to enforce these things upon them, to prevent sin, and engage them to their duty. These inhabitants of the new earth, must, for a long time have before their eyes many evident and striking effects of that universal destruction, to be a continual affecting admonition to them. And besides all this, God now shortened the life of man to about one half of what it used to be. The shortening man's life, Dr. T. says, (p. 68.) "Was that the wild range of ambition and lust might be brought into narrower bounds, and have less opportunity of doing mischief, and that death, being still nearer to our view, might be a more powerful motive to regard less the things of a transitory world, and to attend more to the rules of truth and wisdom.

And now let us observe the consequence. — These new and extraordinary means, in addition to the former, were so far from proving sufficient, that the new world degenerated, and became corrupt, by such swift degrees, that as Dr. T. observes, mankind in general were sunk into idolatry, in about four hundred years after the flood, and so in about fifty years after Noah's death, they became so wicked and brutish, as to forsake the true God, and turn to the worship of inanimate creatures.

When things were come to this dreadful pass, God was pleased, for a remedy, to introduce a new and wonderful dispensation — separating a

particular family, and people, from all the rest of the world, by a series of most astonishing miracles, done in the open view of the world; and fixing their dwelling, as it were, in the midst of the earth, between Asia, Europe, and Africa, and in the midst of those nations which were most considerable for power, knowledge, and arts — that might, in an extraordinary manner, dwell among that people, in visible tokens of his presence. There he manifested himself, and thence to the world, by a course of miraculous operations and effects, for many agrees; that the people might be holy to God, as a kingdom of priests, and might stand as a city on a hill, to be a light to the world. He also gradually shortened man's life, till it was brought to about one twelfth part of what it used to be before the flood, and so, according to Dr. T. greatly diminishing his temptations to sin, and increasing his excitements to holiness. — And now let us consider what the success of these means was, both as to the Gentile world, and the nation of Israel.

Dr. T. justly observes, (Key, p. 24-75.) “The Jewish dispensation had respect to the nations of the world, to spread the knowledge and obedience of God in the earth and was established for the benefit of all mankind.” — But how unsuccessful were these means, and all other means used with the heathen nations, so long as this dispensation lasted! Abraham was a person noted in all the principal nations then in the world, as in Egypt, and the eastern monarchies God made his name famous by his wonderful, distinguishing dispensations towards him, particularly by so miraculously subduing, before him and his trained servants, those armies of the four eastern kings This great work of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth, was greatly noticed by Melchizedeck, and one would think, should have been sufficient to awaken the attention of all the nations in that part of the world, and to lead them to the knowledge and worship of the only true God, especially if considered in conjunction with. that miraculous and most terrible destruction of Sodom and all the cities of the plain, for their wickedness, with Lot's miraculous deliverance, facts which doubtless in their day were much famed abroad in the world. But there is not the least appearance, in any accounts we have, of any considerable good effect. On the contrary, those nations which were most in the way of observing and being affected with these things, even the nations of Canaan, grew worse and worse, till their iniquity came to the full, in Joshua's time.

And the posterity of Lot, that saint so wonderfully distinguished, soon became some of the most gross idolaters, as they appear to have been in Moses time. (See <sup><0231></sup>Numbers 25.) Yea, and the far greater part even of Abraham's posterity, the children of Ishmael. Ziman, Juksham, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah, and Esau, soon forgot the true God, and fell off to heathenism.

Great things were done in the sight of the nations, tending to awaken them, and lead them to the knowledge and obedience of the true God, in Jacob's and Joseph's time; in that God did miraculously, by the hand of Joseph, preserve from perishing by famine, as it were the whole world; as appears by <sup><0125></sup>Genesis 12:56, 57. Agreeably to which, the name that Pharaoh gave to Joseph, Zaphnath Pauncah, as is said, in the Egyptian language, signifies savior of the world. But there does not appear to have been any good abiding effect of this; no, not so much as among the Egyptians, the chief of all the heathen nations at that day, who had these great works of Jehovah in their most immediate view. On the contrary, they grew worse and worse, and seem to be far more gross in their idolatries and ignorance of the true God, and every way more wicked, and ripe for ruin, when Moses was sent to Pharaoh, than they were in Joseph's time.

After this, in Moses and Joshua's time, the great God was pleased to manifest himself in a series of the most astonishing miracles, for about fifty years together, wrought in the most public manner, in Egypt, in the wilderness, and in Canaan, in the view as it were of the whole world; miracles by which the world was shaken, the whole frame of the visible creation, earth, seas, and rivers, the atmosphere, the clouds, sun, moon, and stars were affected; miracles, greatly tending to convince the nations of the world, of the vanity of their false gods, showing Jehovah to be infinitely above them, in the thing wherein they dealt most proudly, and exhibiting God's awful displeasure at the wickedness of the heathen world. And those things are expressly spoken of as one end of these great miracles. (<sup><0134></sup>Exodus 9:14. <sup><0142></sup>Numbers 14:21. <sup><0143></sup>Joshua 4:23 24.) However, no reformation followed but by the scripture account, the nations which had them most in view, were dreadfully hardened, stupidly refusing all conviction and reformation, and obstinately went on in opposition to the living God, to their own destruction.

After this, God from time to time very publicly manifested himself to the nations of the world, by wonderful works wrought in the time of the Judges, of a like tendency with those already mentioned. Particularly in so miraculously destroying, by the hand of Gideon, almost the whole of that vast army of the Midianites, Amalekites, and all the children of the east, consisting of about 135,000 men. (Judy. 7:18. and 8:10.) But no reformation followed this, or the other great works of God, wrought in the times of Deborah and Barak, Jephtha and Samson.

After these things, God used new, and in some respects, much greater means with the heathen world, to bring them to the knowledge and service of the true God, in the days of David and Solomon. He raised up David, a man after his own heart, a most fervent worshipper of the true God, and zealous hater of idols, and subdued before him almost all the nations between Egypt and Euphrates; often miraculously assisting him in his battles with his enemies. And he confirmed Solomon his son in the full and quiet possession of that great empire, for about forty years; and made him the wisest, richest, most magnificent, and every way the greatest monarch that ever had been in the world; and by far the most famous, and of greatest name among the nations, especially for his wisdom, and things concerning the name of his God; particularly the temple he built, which was exceeding magnificent, that it might be of fame and glory throughout all lands; <sup><1064></sup>1 Chronicles 22:5. And we are told, that there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth. (<sup><1064></sup>1 Kings 4:34. and <sup><1064></sup>10:24.) And the Scripture informs us, that these great things were done, that the nations in far countries might hear of God's great name, and of his out-stretched arm: that all the people of the earth might fear him, as well as his people Israel: and that all the people of the earth might know, that the Lord was God, and that there was none else. (<sup><1064></sup>1 Kings 8:41-43, 60.) But still there is no appearance of any considerable abiding effect, with regard to any one heathen nation.

After this, before the captivity in Babylon, many great things were done in the sight of the gentile nations, very much tending to enlighten, affect, and persuade them. As God destroying the army of the Ethiopians of a thousand thousand, before Asa; Elijah's and Elisha's miracles especially Elijah miraculously confounding Baal's prophets and worshippers; Elisha healing Naamun, the king of Syria's prime minister, and the miraculous

victories obtained, through Elisha's prayers, over the Syrians, Moabites, and Edomites; the miraculous destruction of the vast united army of the children of Moub, Ammon, and Edom, at Jehoshaphat's prayer. (2 Chronicles 20.) Jonah's preaching at Nineveh, together with the miracle of his deliverance from the whale's belly; which was published, and well attested, as a sign to confirm his preaching: but more especially that great work of God, in destroying Sennachib's army by an angel, for his contempt of the God of Israel, as if he had been no more than the gods of the heathen.

When all these things proved ineffectual, God took a new method with the heathen world, and used, in some respects, much greater means to convince and reclaim them, than ever before. In the first place, his people, the Jews, were removed to Babylon, the head and heart of the heathen world, (Chaldea having been very much the fountain of idolatry,) to carry thither the revelations which God had made of himself, contained in the sacred writings; and there to bear their testimony against idolatry; as some of them, particularly Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, did, in a very open manner before the king, and the greatest men of the empire, with such circumstances as made their testimony very famous in the world. And God confirmed it with great miracles; which were published through the empire, by order of its monarch, as the mighty works of the God of Israel, showing him to be above all gods: Daniel, that great prophet, at the same time being exalted to be governor of all the wise men of Babylon, and one of the chief officers of Nebuchadnezzar's court.

After this, God raised up Cyrus to destroy Babylon, for its obstinate contempt of the true God, and injuriousness towards his people; according to the prophecies of Isaiah, speaking of him by name, instructing him concerning the nature and dominion of the true God. (<sup>2340</sup>Isaiah 14.) Which prophecies were probably shown to him, whereby he was induced to publish his testimony concerning the God of Israel, as ONE GOD. (Ezra 1:2, 3.) Daniel, about the same time, being advanced to be prime minister of state in the new empire, erected under Darius, did in that place appear openly as a worshipper of the God of Israel and him alone, God confirming his testimony for him before the king and all the grandees of his kingdom, by preserving him in the den of lions; whereby Darius was Educated to publish to all people, nations, and languages that dwelt in all the

earth, his testimony, that the God of Israel was the living God, and stedifast for ever, etc.

When, after the destruction of Babylon, some of the Jews returned to their own land, multitudes never returned, but were dispersed abroad through many parts of the vast Persian empire; as appears by the book of Esther. And many of them afterwards, as good histories inform us, were removed into the more western parts of the world and so were dispersed as it were all over the heathen world, having the Holy Scriptures with them, and synagogues every where, for the worship of the true God. And so it continued to be, to the days of Christ and his apostles; as appears by the Acts of the Apostles. Thus that light, which God had given them, was carried abroad into all parts of the world: so that now they had far greater advantages to come to the knowledge of the truth, in matters of religion, if they had been disposed to improve their advantages.

And besides all these things, from about Cyrus's time learning and philosophy increased, and was carried to a great height. God raised up a number of men of prodigious genius, to instruct others, and improve their reason and understanding, in the nature of things: and philosophic knowledge having gone on to increase for several ages, seemed to begot to its height before Christ came, or about that time.

And now let it be considered what was the effect of all these things. — Instead of a reformation, or any appearance or prospect of it, the heathen world in general rather grew worse. As Dr. Winder observes, "The inveterate absurdities of pagan idolatry continued without remedy, and increased as arts and learning increased; and paganism prevailed in all its height of absurdity, when pagan nations were polished to the height, and in the most polite cities and countries; and thus continued to the last breath of pagan power." And so it was with respect to wickedness in general, as well as idolatry; as appears by what the apostle Paul observes in Romans 1:— Dr. T. speaking of the time when the gospel scheme was introduced, (Key, 289.) says, "The moral and religious state of the heathen was very deplorable, being generally sunk into great ignorance, gross idolatry, and abominable vice." Abominable vices prevailed, not only among the common people, but even among their philosophers themselves, yea, some of the chief of them, and of greatest genius; so Dr.

T. himself observes, as to that detestable vice of sodomy, which they commonly and openly allowed and practiced without shame. (See Dr. T.'s note on [Romans 1:27](#).)

Having thus considered the state of the heathen world, with regard to the effect of means used for its reformation, during the Jewish dispensation, from the first foundation of it in Abraham's time; let us now consider how it was with that people themselves, who were distinguished with the peculiar privileges of that dispensation. The means used with the heathen nations were great, but they were small, if compared with those used with the Israelites. The advantages by which that people were distinguished, are represented in Scripture as vastly above all parallel, in passages which Dr. T. takes notice of. (Key, 54.) And he reckons these privileges among those which he calls antecedent blessings, consisting in motives to virtue and obedience; and says, (Key, 66.) "That this was the very end and design of the dispensation of God's extraordinary favors to the Jews, viz. to engage them to duty and obedience, or that it was a scheme for promoting virtue, is clear beyond dispute, from every part of the Old Testament."

Nevertheless, the generality of that people, through all the successive periods of that dispensation, were men of a wicked character But it will be more abundantly manifest, how strong the natural bias to iniquity appeared to be among that people, by considering more particularly their condition from time to time.

Notwithstanding the great things God had done in the times of Abraham, If Isaac, and Jacob, to separate them and their posterity from the idolatrous world, that they might be a holy people to himself; yet in about two hundred years after Jacob's death, and in less than one hundred and fifty years after the death of Joseph, and while some were alive who had seen Joseph, the people had in a great measure lost the true religion, and were apace conforming to the heathen world. For a remedy, and the more effectually to alienate them from idols, and engage them to the god of their fathers, God appeared, in order to bring them out from among the Egyptians, and separate them from the heathen world, and to reveal himself in his glory and majesty, in so affecting and astonishing a manner, as tended most deeply and durably to impress their minds



that they might never forsake him any more. But so perverse were they, that they murmured even in the midst of the miracles that God wrought for them in Egypt, and murmured at the Red sea, in a few days after God had brought them out with such a mighty hand. When he had led them through the sea, they sang his praise, but forgot his works. Before they got to mount Sinai they openly manifested their perverseness from time to time, so that God says of them,

“How long refuse ye to keep my commandments, and my laws?”  
(~~Exodus~~ Exodus 16:28)

Afterwards they murmured again at Rephidim.

In about two months after they came out of Egypt, they came to mount Sinai, where God entered into a most solemn covenant with the people that they should be an holy people unto him, with such astonishing manifestations of his power, majesty, and holiness, as were altogether unparalleled. God puts the people in mind,

“For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from one side of heaven unto the other, whether there has been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it. Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? Or hath God assayed to take him a nation from the midst of another nation?”  
(~~Deuteronomy~~ Deuteronomy 4:32-34 )

etc. And these great things were in order to impress their minds with such a conviction and sense of divine truth, and their obligations, that they might never forget them, as god says,

“Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever.”  
(~~Exodus~~ Exodus 19:9.)

But what was the effect of all? It was not more than two or three months, before that people, under that very mountain, resumed to their old Egyptian idolatry, and were singing and dancing before a golden calf, which they had set up to worship. And after awful manifestations of God’s

displeasure for that sin, and so much done to bring them to repentance, and confirm them in obedience, it was but a few months before they came to that violence of spirit, in open rebellion against God, that with the utmost vehemence they declared their resolution to follow God no longer, but to make them a captain to return into Egypt. And thus they went on in perverse opposition to the Most High, from time to time repeating their open acts of rebellion, in the midst of continued astonishing miracles, till that generation was destroyed. And though the following generation seems to have been the best that ever was in Israel, yet notwithstanding their good example, and notwithstanding all the wonders of God's power and love to that people in Joshua's time, how soon did that people degenerate, and begin to forsake God and join with the heathen in their idolatries, till God by severe means, and by sending prophets and judges, extraordinarily influenced from above, reclaimed them! But when they were brought to some reformation by such means, they soon fell away again into the practice of idolatry; and so from one age to another; and nothing proved effectual for any abiding reformation.

After things had gone on thus for several hundred years, God used new methods with his people, in two respects: First, he raised up a great prophet, under whom a number of young men were trained up in schools, that from among them there might be a constant succession of great prophets in Israel, of such as God should choose; which seems to have been continued for more than five hundred years. Secondly, God raised up a great king, David, one eminent for wisdom, piety, and fortitude, to subdue all their heathen neighbors, who used to be such a snare to them; and to confirm, adorn, and perfect the institutions of his public worship; and by him to reveal more fully; the great salvation, and future glorious kingdom of the Messiah. And after him was raised up his son, Solomon, the wisest and greatest prince that ever was on earth, more fully to settle and establish those things which his father David had begun, concerning the public worship of God in Israel, and to build a glorious temple for the honor of JEHOVAH, and the institutions of his worship, and to instruct the neighbor nations in true wisdom and religion. But what was the success of these new and extraordinary means? If we take Dr. T. for our expositor of Scripture, the nation must be extremely corrupt in David's time, for he supposes he has respect to his own times, in those words, ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 14:2,

3. “The Lord looked down from heaven, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek god; they are all gone aside: they are together become filthy; there is none that doeth good; no, not one.” But, whether Dr. T. be in the right in this, or not yet if we consider what appeared in Israel, in Absalom’s and Sheba’s rebellion, we shall not see cause to think, that the greater part of the nation at that day were men of true wisdom and piety. As to Solomon’s time, Dr. T. supposes, as has been already observed, that Solomon speaks of his own times, when he says, he had found but one in a thousand that was a thoroughly upright man.

However, it appears, that all those great means used to promote and establish virtue and true religion, in Samuel’s, David’s, and Solomon’s times, were so far from having any general abiding good effect in Israel, that Solomon himself, with all his wisdom, and notwithstanding the unparalleled favors of God to him, had his mind corrupted, so as openly to tolerate idolatry in the land, and greatly to provoke God against him. And as soon as he was dead, ten tribes of the twelve forsook the true worship of God, and instead of it, openly established the like idolatry that the people fell into at mount Sinai, when they made the golden calf; and continued fully obstinate in this apostacy, notwithstanding all means that could be used with them by the prophets, whom God sent, one after another, to reprove, counsel, and warn them, for about two hundred and fifty years; especially those two great prophets, Elijah and Elisha. Of all the kings that reigned over them, there was not so much as one but what was of a wicked character. And at last their case seemed utterly desperate so that nothing remained to be done with them, but to remove them out of God’s sight. Thus the scripture represents the matter, <sup><17></sup>2 Kings 17.

And as to the other two tribes, though their kings were always of the family of David, and they were favored in many respects far beyond their brethren, yet they were generally exceeding corrupt. Their kings were, most of them, wicked men, and their other magistrates, and priests, and people, were generally agreed in the corruption. Thus the matter is represented in the scripture history, and the books of the prophets. And when they had seen how God had east off the ten tribes, instead of taking warning, they made themselves vastly more vile than ever the others have done. <sup><17></sup>2 Kings 17:15, 19. <sup><17></sup>Ezekiel 16:46, 47, 51. God indeed waited longer upon them, for his servant David’s sake, and for Jerusalem’s sake,

that he had chosen and used more extraordinary means with them; especially by those great prophets, Isaiah and Jeremiah, but to no effect: I so that at last, as the prophet represent the matter, they were like a body universally and desperately diseased and corrupted, that would admit of no cure, the whole head sick, and the whole heart faint, etc.

Things being come to that pass, God took this method with them, he utterly destroyed their city and land, and the temple. which he had among them, made thorough work in purging the land of them; as when a man empties a dish, wipes it, and turns it upside down; or when a vessel is cast into a fierce fire, till its filthiness is thoroughly burnt out. (<sup>(21213)</sup>2 Kings 21:13. <sup>(2391)</sup>Ezekiel chapter 24.) they were carried into captivity, and there left, till that wicked generation was dead, and those old rebels were purged out; that afterwards the land might be resettled with a more pure generation.

After the return from the captivity, and God had built the Jewish church again in their own land, by a series of wonderful providence; yet they corrupted themselves again, to so great a degree, that the transgressors were come to the full again in the days of Antiochos Epiphanies; as the matter is represented in the prophecy of Daniel. (<sup>(2182)</sup>Daniel 8:23.) And then God made them the subjects of a dispensation, little, if any thing, less terrible, than that which had been in Nebuchadnezzar's days. And after God had again delivered them, and restored the state of religion among them, by the instrumentality of the Maccabees, they degenerated again so that when Christ came, they were arrived to that extreme degree of corruption which is represented in the accounts given by the evangelists.

It may be observed here in general, that the Jews, though so vastly distinguished with advantages, means, and motives to holiness, yet are represented, from time to time, as more wicked in the sight of God, than the very worst of the heathen. As, of old, God swore by his life, that the wickedness of Sodom was small, compared with that of the Jews; (<sup>(2367)</sup>Ezekiel 16:47, 48, etc. also chapter <sup>(2185)</sup>5:5-10.) So, Christ speaking of the Jews, in his time, represents them as having much greater guilt than the inhabitants of Tyre and Sydon. or even Sodom and Gomorrah.

But we are now come to the time when the grandest scene was displayed that ever was opened on earth. After all other schemes had been so long

and so thoroughly tried, and had so greatly failed of success, both among Jews and Gentiles, that wonderful dispensation was at length introduced — the greatest scheme for suppressing and restraining iniquity among mankind, that ever infinite wisdom and mercy contrived — even the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. “A new dispensation of grace was erected (to use Dr. T.’s own words, p. 239, 240.) for the more certain and effectual sanctification of mankind, into the image of God; delivering them from the sin and wickedness, into which they might fall, or were already fallen to redeem them from all iniquity, and bring them to the knowledge and obedience of God.” In whatever high and exalted terms the Scripture speaks of the means and motives which the Jews enjoyed of old; yet their privileges are represented as having no glory in comparison of the advantages of the gospel. Dr. T.’s words (p. 233.) are worthy to be here repeated. “Even the heathen (says he) knew God, and might have glorified him as God, but under the glorious light of the gospel, we have very clear ideas of the divine perfection’s, and particularly of the love of God as our Father, and as the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We see our duty in the utmost extent, and the most cogent reasons to perform it: we have eternity opened to us, even an endless state of honor and felicity, the reward of virtuous actions; and the Spirit of God promised for our direction and assistance. And all this may and ought to be applied to the purifying of our minds, and the perfecting of holiness. And to these happy advantages we are born for which we are bound for ever to praise and magnify the rich grace of God in the Redeemer.” And he elsewhere says, “The gospel constitution is a scheme the most perfect and effectual for restoring true religion, and promoting virtue and happiness, that ever the world has yet seen. And admirably adapted to enlighten our minds, and sanctify our heart. And never were motives so divine and powerful proposed, to induce us to the practice of all virtue and goodness.

And yet even these means have been ineffectual upon the far greater part of them with whom they have been used; of the many that have been called, few have been chosen.

As to the Jews, God’s ancient people, with whom they were used in the first place, and used long by Christ and his apostles, the generality of them rejected Christ and his gospel, with extreme pertinacity of spirit. They not only went on still in that career of corruption which had been increasing

from the time of the Maccabees; but Christ's coming, his doctrine and miracles, the preaching of his followers, and the glorious things that attended the same, were the occasion, through their perverse misimprovement, of an infinite increase of their wickedness. They crucified the Lord of glory, with the utmost malice and cruelty, and persecuted his followers; they pleased not God, and were contrary to all men, they went on to grow worse and worse, till they filled up the measure of their sin, and wrath came upon them to the uttermost, and they were destroyed, and cast out of God's sight, with unspeakably greater tokens of the divine abhorrence and indignation, than in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. The greater part of the whole nation were slain, and the rest were scattered abroad through the earth in the most abject and forlorn circumstances. And in the same spirit of unbelief and malice against Christ and the gospel, and in their miserable dispersed circumstances, do they remain to this day.

And as to the gentile nations, though there was a glorious success of the gospel amongst them, in the apostles' days, yet probably not one in ten of those that had the gospel preached to them embraced it. The powers of the world were set against it, and persecuted it with insatiable malignity. And among the professors of Christianity, there presently appeared in many a disposition to abuse the gospel to the service of pride and licentiousness. The apostles foretold a grand apostasy of the Christian world, which should continue many ages, and observed, that there appeared a disposition to such an apostasy, among professing Christians, even in that day. (~~SCROLL~~ 2 Thessalonians 2:7.) The greater part of the ages now elapsed, have been spent in that grand and general apostacy, under which the christian world, as it is called, has been transformed into what has been vastly more dishonorable and hateful to God, and repugnant to true virtue, than the state of the heathen world before: which is agreeable to the prophetic descriptions given of it by the Holy Spirit.

In these latter ages of the Christian church, God has raised up a number of great and good men, to bear testimony against the corruptions of the church of Rome, and by their means introduced that light into the world, by which, in a short time! at least one-third part of Europe was delivered from the more gross enormities of Antichrist: which was attended at first with a great reformation, as to vital and practical religion. But how is the gold become dim! To what a pass are things come in protestant countries

at this day, and in our nation in particular! To what a prodigious height has a deluge of infidelity, profaneness, luxury, debauchery, and wickedness of every kind, arisen! The poor savage Americans are mere babes, if I may so speak, as to proficiency in wickedness, in comparison of multitudes in the Christian world. Dr. T. himself, as before observed, represents, that the generality of Christians have been the most wicked, lewd, bloody, and treacherous of all mankind; and (Key, 388 ) that “The wickedness of the Christian world renders it so much like the heathen, that the good effects of our change to Christianity are but little seen.”

With respect to the dreadful corruption of the present day, it is to be considered, besides the advantages already mentioned, that great advances in reaming and philosophic knowledge have been made in the present and past century; affording great advantage for a proper and enlarged exercise of our rational powers, and for our seeing the bright manifestation of God’s perfections in his works. And it is to be observed, that the means and inducements to virtue, which this age enjoys, are in addition to most of those which were mentioned before, as given of old, and I among other things, in addition to the shortening of man’s life to 70 or 80 years, from near a thousand. And, with regard to this, I would observe, that as the case now stands in Christendom, take one with another of those who ever come to years of discretion, their life is not more than forty or forty-five years; which is but about the twentieth part of what it once was: and not so much in great cities, places where profaneness, sensuality, and debauchery, commonly prevail to the greatest degree.

Dr. T. (Key, 1.) truly observes, That God has from the beginning exercised wonderful and infinite wisdom, in the methods he has, from age to age, made use of to oppose vice, cure corruption, and promote virtue in the world, and introduced several schemes to that end. It is indeed remarkable, how many schemes and methods were tried of old, both before and after the flood; how many were used in the times of the Old Testament, both I with Jews and heathens and how ineffectual all these ancient methods proved, for 4000 years together, till God introduced that grand dispensation, for redeeming men from all iniquity, and purifying them to himself, a people zealous of good works; which the Scripture represents as the subject of the admiration of angels. But even this has now so long proved ineffectual, with respect to the generality, that Dr. T. thinks there

is need of a new dispensation, the present light of the gospel bring insufficient for the full reformation of the Christian world, by reason of its corruptions: (Note on ~~1:17~~ Romans 1:27.) — And yet all these things, according to him, without any natural bias to the contrary, no stream of natural inclination or propensity at all, to oppose inducements to goodness; no native opposition of heart, to withstand those gracious means, which God has ever used with mankind, from the beginning of the world to this day, any more than there was in the heart of Adam, the moment God created him in perfect innocence.

Surely Dr. T.'s scheme is attended with strange paradoxes. And that his mysterious tenets may appear in a true light, it must be observed that — at the same time he supposes these means, even the very greatest and best of them, to have proved so ineffectual, that help from them, as to any general reformation, is to be despaired of — that he maintains all mankind, even the heathen in all parts of the world, yea, every single person in it, (which must include every Indian in America, before the Europeans came hither; and every inhabitant of the unknown parts of Africa and Terra Australis,) has ability, light, and means sufficient to do their whole duty; yea, many passages in his writings plainly suppose, to perform perfect obedience to God's law, without the least degree of vice or iniquity.

But I must not omit to observe, that Dr. T. supposes, the reason why the gospel-dispensation has been so ineffectual, is, that it has been greatly misunderstood and perverted. In his Key, (389.) he says, "Wrong representations of the scheme of the gospel have greatly obscured the glory of divine grace, and contributed much to the corruption of its professors. — Such doctrines have been almost universally taught and received, as quite subvert it. Mistaken notions about nature, grace, election and reprobation, justification, regeneration, redemption, calling, adoption, etc. have quite taken away the very ground of the Christian life."

But how came the gospel to be so universally and exceedingly misunderstood? Is it because it is in itself so very dark and unintelligible, and not adapted to the apprehension of the human faculties? If so, how is the possession of such an obscure and unintelligible thing, so glorious an advantage? — Or is it because of the native blindness, corruption, and superstition of mankind? But this is giving up the thing in question, and



alloying a great depravity of nature Dr. T. speaks of the gospel as far otherwise than dark and unintelligible; he represents it as exhibiting the clearest and most glorious light, calculated to deliver the world from darkness, and to bring them into marvellous light. He speaks of the light which the Jews had, under the Mosaic dispensation, as vastly exceeding the light of nature, which the heathen enjoyed; and yet he supposes that even the latter was so clear, as to be sufficient men to the knowledge of God, and their whole duty to him. He speaks of the light of the gospel as vastly exceeding the light of the Old Testament, and says of the apostle Paul in particular, “That he wrote with great perspicuity; that he takes great care to explain every part of his subject; that he has left no part of it unexplained and unguarded; and that never was an author more exact and cautious in this.” Is it not strange, therefore, that the Christian world, without any native depravity, should be so blind in the midst of such glaring light, as to be all, or the generally, agreed, from age to age, so essentially to misunderstand that which is made so very plain?

Mr. T. says, (p. 167. S.) “It is my persuasion, at the christian religion was very early and grievously corrupted, by dreaming, ignorant, superstitious monks, too conceited to be satisfied with the plain gospel; and has long remained in that deplorable state.” — But how came the whole Christian world, without any blinding depravity, to hearken to these ignorant foolish men, rather than unto wiser and better teachers? especially, when the latter had plain gospel on their side, and the doctrines of the other were (as our author supposes) so very contrary not only to the plain gospel, but to men’s reason and common sense. Or were all the teachers of the Christian church nothing but a parcel of ignorant dreamers? If so, this is very strange indeed, unless mankind naturally love darkness rather than light; seeing in all parts of the Christian world, there was a great multitude in the work of the ministry, who had the gospel in their hands, and whose whole business it was to study and teach it; and therefore had infinitely greater advantages to become truly wise, than the heathen philosophers. But if, by some strange and inconceivable means, notwithstanding all these glorious advantages, all the teachers of the Christian church though the world, without any native evil propensity, very early became silly dreamers — and also in their dreaming generally stumbled on the same individual monstrous opinions, and so the world might be blinded for a while — yet,

why did not they hearken to that wise an great man, Pelagius, and others like him, when he plainly held forth the truth to the Christian world? Especially seeing his instructions were so agreeable to the plain doctrines. and the bright and clear light of the gospel of Christ, and also so agreeable to the plainest dictates of the common sense and understanding of all mankind; but the other so repugnant to it, that (according to our author) if they were true, it would prove understanding to be no unduly standing, and the word of God to be no rule of truth, nor at all to be relied upon, and god to be a Being worthy of no regard?

Besides; if the inefficacy of the gospel to restrain sin and promote virtue, be owing to the general prevalence of these doctrines, which are supposed to be so absurd and contrary to the gospel, here is this further to be accounted for, namely, Why, since there has been so great an increase of light in religious matters (as must be supposed on Dr. T.'s scheme) in this and the last age, an these monstrous doctrines of original sin, election, reprobation, justification, regeneration, etc. have been so much exploded, especially in our nation, there has been no reformation attending this great advancement of light and truth; but on the contrary, vice, and every thing opposite to practical Christianity, has, one on to increase, with unless God mercifully interposes, speedily to swallow up all that is virtuous and praiseworthy.

Many other things might have been mentioned under this head — the means which mankind have had to restrain vice, and promote virtue — such as wickedness being many ways contrary to men's temporal interest and comfort, and their having continually before their eyes so many instances of persons made miserable by their vices; the restraints of human laws, without which men cannot live in society; the judgments of God brought on men for their wickedness, with which history abounds, and the providential rewards of virtue; and innumerable particular means, that God has used from age to age to curb the wickedness of mankind, which I have omitted. But there would be no end of a particular enumeration of such things. They that will not be convinced by the instances which have been mentioned, probably would not be convinced, if the world had stood a thousand times so long, and we had the most authentic and certain accounts of means having been used from the beginning, in a thousand times greater variety and now dispensations had been introduced, after

others had been tried in vain, ever so often, and still to little effect. He that will not be convinced by a thousand good witnesses, it is not likely that he would be convinced by a thousand thousand.

The proofs that have been extant in the world, from trial and fact of the depravity of man's nature, are inexpressible, and as it were infinite, beyond the representation of all similitude. If there were a piece of ground which abounded with briers and thorns, or some poisonous plant and all mankind had used their endeavors, for a thousand years together, to suppress that evil growth — and to bring that ground by manure and cultivation, planting and sowing, to produce better fruit, all in vain; it would still be overrun with the same noxious growth — it would not be a proof, that such a produce was agreeable to the nature of that soil, in any wise to be compared to that which is given in divine providence, that wickedness is a produce agreeable to the nature of the field of the world of mankind. For the means used with it have been various, great, and wonderful, contrived by the unsearchable and boundless wisdom of God: medicines procured with infinite expense, exhibited with a vast apparatus a marvellous succession of dispensations, introduced one after another, displaying an incomprehensible length and breadth, depth and height, of divine wisdom, love, and power, and every perfection of the godhead, to the eternal admiration of principalities and powers in heavenly places.

## SECTION 9.

*Several evasions of the arguments for the depravity of nature, from trial and event's considered.*

Evasion I. Dr. T. says, (p. 231, 232.) “Adam's nature, it is allowed, was very far from being sinful; yet he sinned and therefore, the common doctrine of Original Sin, is no more necessary to account for the sin that has been or is in the world, than it is to account for Adam's sin.” Again, (p. 52-54. S. etc.) “If we allow mankind to be as wicked as R. R. has represented them to be; and suppose that there is not one upon earth that is truly righteous, and without sin, and that some are very enormous sinners, Yet it will not thence follow, that they are naturally corrupt: — For, if sinful action infers a nature originally corrupt, then, whereas Adam (according to them that hold the doctrine of Original Sin) committed the

most heinous and aggravated sin, that ever was committed in the world; for, according to them, he had greater light than any other man in the world, to know his duty, and greater power than any other man to fulfill it, and was under greater obligations than any other man to obedience; he sinned, when he knew he was the representative of millions, and that the happy or miserable state of all mankind, depended on his conduct, which never was, nor can be, the case of any other man in the world: — then, I say, it will follow, that his nature was originally corrupt, etc. — Thus their argument from the wickedness of mankind, to prove a sinful and corrupt nature, must inevitably and irrecoverably fall to the ground. — Which will appear more abundantly, if we take in the case of the angels, who in numbers sinned, and kept not their first estate, though created with a nature superior to Adam's." Again, (p. 145. S.) "When it is inquired, how it comes to pass that our appetites and passions are now so irregular and strong, as that not one person has resisted them, so as to keep himself pure and innocent? If this be the case, if such as make the inquiry will tell the world, how it came to pass that Adam's appetites and passions were so irregular and strong, that he did not resist them, so as to keep himself pure and innocent, when upon their principles he was far more able to have resisted them; I also will tell them how it comes to pass, that his posterity does not resist them. Sin doth not alter its nature, by it? being general; and therefore how far soever it spreads, it must come upon all just as It came upon Adam.

These things are delivered with much assurance. But is there any reason in such a way of talking? One thing implied in it, and the main thing, if any at all to the purpose, is, that because an effect being general, does not alter the nature of the effect, therefore nothing more can be argued concerning the cause, from its happening constantly, and in the most steady manner, than from its happening but once. But how contrary is this to reason! Suppose a person, through the deceitful persuasions of a pretended friend, once takes a poisonous draught of a liquor to which he had before no inclination; but after he has once taken of it, he is observed to act as one that has an insatiable, incurable thirst after more of the same, in his constant practice obstinately continued in as long as he lives, against all; possible arguments and endeavors used to dissuade him from it. And suppose we should from hence argue a fixed inclination, and begin to

suspect that this is the nature and operation of the poison, to produce such an inclination, or that this strong propensity is some way the consequence of the first draught. In such a case, could it be said with good reason, that a fixed propensity can no more be argued from his consequent constant practice, than from his first draught? Or, suppose a young man, soberly inclined, enticed by wicked companions, should drink to excess, until he had got a habit of excessive drinking, and should come under the power of a greedy appetite after strong drink, so that drunkenness should become a common and constant practice with him: and suppose an observer, arguing from this general practice, should say, "It must needs be that this young man has a fixed inclination to that sin; otherwise, how should it come to pass that he should make such a trade of it?" And another ridiculing the weakness of his arguing, should reply, "Do you tell me how it came to pass, that he was guilty of that sin the first time, without a fixed inclination, and I will tell you how he is guilty of it so generally without a fixed inclination. Sin does not alter its nature by being general: and therefore, how common soever it becomes, it must come at all times by the same means that it came at first." I leave it to every one to judge, who would be chargeable with weak arguing in such a case.

It is true, there is no effect without some cause, ground, or reason of that effect, and some cause answerable to the effect. But certainly it will not follow, that a transient effect requires a permanent cause, or a fixed propensity. An effect happening once, though great, yea, though it may come to pass on the same occasion in many subjects at the same time, will not prove any fixed propensity, or permanent influence. It is true, it proves an influence great and extensive, answerable to the effect, once exerted, or once effectual; but it proves nothing in the cause fixed or constant. If a particular tree, or a great number of trees standing together, have blasted fruit on their branches at a particular season — or if the fruit be very much blasted, and entirely spoiled — it is evident that something was the occasion of such an effect at that time; but this alone does not prove the nature of the tree to be bad. But if it be observed, that those trees, and all other trees of the kind, wherever planted, and in all soils, countries, climates, and seasons and however cultivated and managed, still bear ill fruit from year to year, and in all ages, it is a good evidence of the evil nature of the tree. And if the fruit, at all these times, and in all these

cases, be very bad, it proves the nature of the tree to be very bad. If we argue, in like manner, from what appears among men, it is easy to determine, whether the universal sinfulness of mankind — all sinning immediately, as soon as capable of it, and continually and generally being of a wicked character, at all times, in all ages, in all places, and under all possible circumstances, against means and motives inexpressibly manifold and great, and in the utmost conceivable variety — be from a permanent internal great cause.

If the voice of common sense were heard, there would be no occasion for labor in multiplying arguments to show, that one act does not prove a fixed inclination; but that constant pursuit does. We see that, in fact, it is agreeable to the reason of all mankind, to argue fixed principles, tempers, and prevailing inclinations, from repeated and continued actions — though the actions are voluntary, and performed of choice — and thus to Judge of the tempers and inclinations of persons, eyes, sexes, tribes, and nations. But is it the manner of men to conclude, that whatever they see others once do, they have a fixed abiding inclination to do? Yea, there may be several acts seen, and yet not be taken as good evidence of an established propensity, even though that one act, or those several acts, are followed by such constant practice, as afterwards evidences fixed disposition. As for example; there may be several instances of a man drinking some spirituous liquor, and those instances be no sign of a fixed inclination to that liquor: but these acts may be introductory to a settled habit or propensity, which may be made very manifest afterwards by constant practice.

From these things it is plain, that what is alleged concerning the first sin of Adam, and of the angels, without a previous fixed disposition to sin, cannot in the least weaken the arguments brought to prove a fixed propensity to sin in mankind, in their present state. From the permanence of the cause has been argued, the permanence of the effect. And that the permanent cause consists in an internal fixed propensity, and not in any particular external circumstances, has been argued from the effects being the same, through a vast variety and change of circumstances. But the first acts of sin in Adam or the angels, considered in themselves, were no permanent, continued effects. And though a great number of the angels sinned, and the effect on that account was the greater, and more extensive;

yet this extent of the effect is a very different thing from that permanence, or settled continuance of effect, which is supposed to show a permanent cause, or fixed propensity. Neither was there any trial of a vast variety of circumstances attending a permanent effect, to show the fixed cause to be internal, consisting in a settled disposition of nature, in the instances objected. And however great the sin of Adam, or of the angels, was, and however great the means, motives, and obligations were against which they sinned — and whatever may be thence argued concerning the transient cause, occasion, or temptation, as being very subtle, remarkably tending to deceive and seduce, etc. — yet it argues nothing of any settled disposition, or fixed cause, either great or small; the effect both in the angels and our first parents, being in itself transient, and, for ought appears, happening in each of them under one system or coincidence of influential circumstances.

The general continued wickedness of mankind, against such means and motives, proves each of these things, viz. that the cause is fixed, and that the fixed cause is internal in man's nature, and also that it is very powerful. It proves, that the cause is fixed, because the effect is so abiding, through so many changes. It proves that the fixed cause is internal, because the circumstances are so various — including a variety of means and motives — and they are such circumstances as cannot possibly cause the effect, being most opposite to it in their tendency. And it proves the greatness of the internal cause; or that the propensity is powerful, because the means which have opposed its influence, have been so great, and yet have been statedly overcome.

But here I may observe, by the way, that with regard to the motives and obligations against which our first father sinned, it is not reasonably alleged, that he sinned when he knew his sin would have destructive consequences to all his posterity, and might in process of time, pave the whole globe with skulls, etc. It is evident, by the plain account the scripture gives us of the temptation which prevailed with our first parents to commit that sin, that it was so contrived by the subtlety of the tempter, as first to blind and deceive them as to that matter, and to make them believe that their disobedience should be followed with no destruction or calamity at all to themselves, (and therefore not to their posterity) but on the contrary, with a great increase and advancement of dignity and happiness.

Evasion II. Let the wickedness of the world be ever so general and great, there is no necessity of supposing any depravity of nature to be the cause: man's own free will is cause sufficient. Let mankind be more or less corrupt, they make themselves corrupt by their own free choice. This Dr. T. abundantly insists upon, in many parts of his book.

But I would ask, how it comes to pass that mankind so universally agree in this evil exercise of their free will? If their wills are in the first place as free to good as to evil, what is it to be ascribed to, that the world of mankind, consisting of so many millions, in so many successive generations, without consultation, all agree to exercise their freedom in favor of evil? If there be no natural tendency or preponderation in the case, then there is as good a chance for the will being determined to good as to evil. If the cause be indifferent, why is not the effect in some measure indifferent? If the balance be no heavier at one end than the other, why does it perpetually preponderate one way? How comes it to pass, that the free will of mankind has been determined to evil, in like manner before the flood and after the flood; under the law and under the gospel; among both Jews and Gentiles, under the Old Testament, and since then, among Christians, Jews, Mahometans; among papists and Protestant's; in those nations where civility, politeness, arts, and learning most prevail, and among the Negroes and Hottentots in Africa, the Tartars in Asia, and Indians in America, towards both the poles, and on every side of the globe; in greatest cities and obscurest villages; in places and in huts, wigwams, and cells under ground! Is it enough to reply, It happens so, that men every where, and in all times, choose thus to determine their own wills, and so to make themselves sinful, as soon as ever they are capable of it, and to sin constantly as long as they live, and universally to choose never to come up half way to their duty?

A steady effect requires a steady cause; but free will, without any previous propensity to influence its determinations, is no permanent cause; nothing can be conceived of, farther from it: for the very notion of freedom of will, consisting in self-determining power, implies contingency; and if the will is perfectly free from any government of previous inclination, its freedom must imply the most absolute and perfect contingency: and surely nothing can be conceived of more unfixed than that. The notion of liberty of will, in this sense, implies perfect freedom from every thing that



should previously fix, bind, or determine it; that it may be left to be fixed and determined wholly by itself: therefore its determinations must be previously altogether unfixed. And can that which is so unfixed, so contingent, be a cause sufficient to account for an effect, in such a manner, and to such a degree, permanent, fixed, and constant?

When we see any person going on in a certain course with great constancy, against all manner of means to dissuade him, do we judge this to be no argument of a fixed disposition of mind, because, being free, he may determine if he will, without any such disposition if we see a nation, or people, that differ greatly from other nations, in such and such instances of them constant conduct — as though their tempers and inclinations were very diverse — and any should say, We cannot judge at a of the temper or disposition of people, by any thing observable in their constant practice or behaviour, because they have all free will, and therefore may all choose to act so they please, without any thing in their temper or inclination to bias them Would such an account of such effects satisfying to the reason of mankind? But infinitely further would it be from satisfying a cindererate mind, to account for the constant and universal sinfulness of mankind, by saying that their will is free, and therefore all may, if they first, begin to act as moral agents, and therefore all may if they please, begin to sin as soon as they begin to act: they are free as long as they continue to act in the world, and therefore they may all commit sin continually, if they will: men of all nations are free, and therefore all nations may act alike in these respects, if they please, though some do not know how other nations do act. Men of high and low condition, reamed and ignorant, are free, and therefore they may agree in acting wickedly, if they please, though they do not consult together. Men in all ages are free, and therefore men in one age may all agree with men in every other age in wickedness, if they please, though they do not know how men in other ages have acted, etc. Let every one judge whether such an account of things can satisfy reason.

Evasion III. It is said by many opposers of the doctrine of original sin, that the corruption of mankind may be owing not to a depraved nature, but to bad example. And I think we must understand Dr. T. as having respect to the powerful influence of bad instruction and example, when he says, (p. 118.) “The Gentiles in their heathen state, when incorporated into the body of the gentile world, were without strength, enable to help or

recover themselves.” And in several other places to the like purpose. If there was no depravity of nature, what else could there be but bad instruction and example, to hinder the heathen world, as a collective body, (for as such Dr. T. speaks of them, as may be seen p. 117, 118.) from emerging out of their corruption, on the rise of each new generation? As to their had instruction, our author insists upon it, that the heathen notwithstanding all their disadvantages, had sufficient light to know God, and do their whole duty. Therefore it must be chiefly bad example, according to him, that rendered their case helpless.

Now concerning this way of accounting for the corruption of the world, by the influence of bad example, I would observe,

**1.** It is accounting for the thing by the thing itself. It is accounting for the corruption of the world by the corruption of the world. For, that bad examples are general all over the world to be followed by others, and have been so from the beginning, is only an instance, or rather a description, of that corruption of the world which is to be accounted for. If mankind are naturally no more inclined to evil than good, then how come there to be so many more bad examples than good ones, in all ages? And if there are not, how come the bad examples that are set, to be so much more followed than the good? If the propensity of man’s nature be not to evil, how comes the current of general example, every where, and at all times, to be so much to evil? And when opposition has been made by good examples, how comes it to pass that it has had so little effect to stem the stream of general wicked practice?

I think from the brief account the Scripture gives us of the behavior of our first parents, and of the expressions of their faith and hope in God’s revealed mercy, we have reason to suppose, that before ever they had an, children, they repented, were pardoned, and became truly pious. So that God planted the world at first with a noble vine; and at the beginning of their generations, he set the stream of example the right way. And we see, that children are more apt to follow the example of their parents, than of any others, especially in early youth, their forming time, when those habits are generally contracted, which abide by them all their days. Besides, Adam’s children had no other examples to follow, but those of their parents. How therefore came the stream so soon to turn, and to

proceed the contrary way, with so violent a current! When mankind became so universally and desperately corrupt, as not to be fit to live on earth any longer, and the world was every where full of bad examples, God destroyed them all at once — except righteous Noah and his family — in order to remove those bad examples, and that the world might be planted again with good example, and the stream again turned the right way. How therefore came it to pass, that Noah's posterity did not follow his good example, especially when they had such extraordinary things to enforce it, but so generally, even in his life-time, became exceeding corrupt? One would think, the first generations at least, while all lived together as one family, under Noah, their venerable father, might have followed his good example. And if they had done so, then, when the earth came to be divided in Pelage's time, the heads of the several families would have set out their particular colonies with good examples, and the stream would have been turned the right way in all the various divisions, colonies, and nations of the world. But we see, in fact, that in about fifty years after Noah's death, the world in general was overrun with dreadful corruption, so that all virtue and goodness was like soon to perish from among mankind, unless something extraordinary should be done to prevent it.

Then, for a remedy, God separated Abraham and his family from all the rest of the world, that they might be delivered from the influence of bad example, and that in his posterity he might have an holy seed. Thus God again planted a noble vine Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob being eminently pious. But how soon did their posterity degenerate, till true religion was like to be swallowed up! We see how desperately and almost universally corrupt they were, when God brought them out of Egypt, and led them in the wilderness.

Then God was pleased, before he planted his people in Canaan, to destroy that perverse generation in the wilderness, that he might plant them there a noble vine, wholly a right seed, and set them out with good example, in the land where they were to have their settled anode. <sup><402></sup>Jeremiah 2:21. It is evident, that the generation which came with Joshua into Canaan was an excellent generation, by innumerable things said of them. But how soon did that people, nevertheless, become the degenerate plant of a strange vine!

And when the nation had a long time proved desperately and incurably corrupt, God destroyed them, and sent them into captivity — till the old rebels were dead and purged out, in order to deliver their children from their evil example. And when the following generation was purified as in a furnace, God planted them again in the land of Israel, a noble vine, and set them out with good example; which yet was not followed by their posterity.

When again the corruption was become inveterate, the Christian church was planted; and a glorious out-pouring of the Spirit of God caused true virtue and piety to be exemplified far beyond whatever had been on earth before; and thus the Christian church was planted a noble vine. But that primitive good example has not prevailed, to cause virtue to be generally and steadfastly maintained in the Christian world. To how great a degree it has been otherwise, has already been observed.

After many ages of general and dreadful apostasy, God was pleased to erect the Protestant church, as separated from the more corrupt part of Christendom; and true piety flourished in it very much at first; God planted it a noble vine: but notwithstanding the good examples of the first reformers, what a melancholy pass is the Protestant world come to at this day!

When England grew very corrupt, God brought over a number of pious persons, and planted them in New England this land was planted a noble vine. But how is the gold become dim! How greatly have we forsaken the pious examples of our fathers!

So prone have mankind always proved themselves to degeneracy and backsliding, that it shows plainly their natural propensity. And when good has revived, and been promoted among men, it has been by some divine interposition, opposing the natural current; the fruit of some extraordinary means. And the efficacy of such means has soon been overcome by constant natural bias the effect of good example presently lost, and evil has regained the dominion. Like a heavy body, which may by some great power be caused to ascend, against its nature, a little while, but soon goes back again towards the center, to which it naturally and constantly tends.

So that evil example will in no wise account for the corruption of mankind, without supposing a natural proneness to sin. The tendency of example alone will not account for general wicked practice, as consequent on good example. And if the influence of bad example is a reason of some of the wickedness, that alone will not account for men becoming worse than the example set, degenerating more and more, and growing worse and worse, which has been their manner.

**2.** There has been given to the world an example of virtue, which, were it not for a dreadful depravity of nature, would have influence on them who live under the gospel, far beyond all other examples; that is, the example of Jesus Christ.

God, who knew the human nature, and how apt men are to be influenced by example, has made answerable provision. His infinite wisdom has contrived that we should have set before us the most amiable and perfect example, in such circumstances, as should have the greatest tendency to influence all the principles of man's nature, but his corruption. Men are apt to be moved by the example of others like themselves, or in their own nature: therefore this example was given in our nature. Men are ready to follow the example of the great and honorable; and this — though that of one in our nature, yet — was the example of one infinitely higher and more honorable than kings or angels. A people are apt to follow the example of their prince. This is the example of that glorious person, who stands in a peculiar relation to Christians as their Lord and King, the supreme head of the church; and not only so, but the King of kings supreme head of the universe and head over all things to the church. Children are apt to follow the example of their parents; this is the example of the Author of our being, and of our holy and happy being; the Creator of the world, and everlasting Father of the universe. Men are very apt to follow the example of their friends: the example of Christ is that of one who is infinitely our greatest friend, standing in the most endearing relations of brother, redeemer, spiritual head and husband, whose grace and love expressed to us, transcends all other love and friendship, as much as heaven is higher than the earth. The virtues and acts of his example were exhibited to us in the most endearing and engaging circumstances that can possibly be conceived of. — His obedience and submission to God, his humility, meekness, patience, charity, self-denial, etc. being exercised and expressed

in a work of infinite grace, love, condescension and beneficence to us — and had all their highest expressions in his laying down his life, and meekly, patiently, and cheerfully undergoing unutterable suffering for our eternal salvation. Men are peculiarly apt to follow the example of those from whom they have great benefits: but it is utterly impossible to conceive of greater benefits, that we could have by the virtues of any person, than we have by the virtuous acts of Christ; we, who depend upon being thereby saved from eternal destruction, and brought to inconceivable, immortal glory at God's right hand. Surely if it were not for an extreme corruption of the human heart, such an example would have that strong influence on it, which would as it were swallow up the power of all the evil and hateful examples of a generation of vipers.

**3.** The influence of bad example, without corruption of nature, will not account for children universally committing sin as soon as capable of it: which, I think, is a fact that has been made evident by the Scripture. It will not account for it in the children of eminently pious parents; the first example set in their view being very good, which was especially the case of many children in Christian families in the apostolic days, when the apostle John supposes that every individual person had sin to repent of, and confess to God.

**4.** What Dr. T. supposes to have been fact, with respect to a great part of mankind — the state of the heathen world, which he supposes, considered as a collective body, was helpless, dead in sin, and unable to recover itself — cannot consistently be accounted for from the influence of bad example. Not evil example alone, no, nor as united with evil instruction, can be supposed a sufficient reason why every new generation that arose among them, should not be able to emerge from the idolatry and wickedness of their ancestors, in any consistence with his scheme. The ill example of ancestors could have no power to oblige them to sin, any other way than as a strong temptation. But Dr. T. himself says, (p.72. S.) “To suppose men's temptations to be superior to their powers, will impeach the goodness and justice of God, who appoints every man's trial.” And us to bad instructions, as he supposes that they all, yea every individual person, had light sufficient to know God, and do their whole duty. And if each one could do this for himself, then surely they might all be agreed in it through

the power of free will, as well as the whole world be agreed in corruption by the same power.

Evasion IV. Some modern opposers of the doctrine of original sin, thus account for the general prevalence of wickedness, viz. that in the course of nature our senses grow up first, and the animal passions get the start of reason. So Dr. Turnbull,. “Sensitive objects first affect us, and inasmuch as reason is a principle, which, in the nature of things, must be advanced to strength and vigor, by gradual cultivation, and these objects are continually assailing and soliciting us; so, unless a very happy education prevents, our sensitive appetites must have become very strong, before reason can have force enough to call them to an account, and assume authority over them.” From hence Dr. Turnbull supposes it comes to pass, “That though some few may, through the influence of virtuous example, be said to be sanctified from the womb, so liberal, so generous, so virtuous, so truly noble is their unit of mind, get generally speaking, the whole world lieth in such wickedness, that, with respect to the far greater part of mankind, the study of virtue is beginning to reform, and is a severe struggle against bad habits, early contracted, and deeply rooted, it is therefore putting off an old inveterate corrupt nature, and putting on a new form and temper, it is moulding ourselves anew, it is a being born again, and becoming as children. — And how few are there in the world who escape its pollutions, so as not to be early in that class, or to be among the righteous that need no repentance!”

Dr. Taylor, though not so explicit, seems to hint at the same thing, (p. 192.) “It is by slow degrees that children come to the use of understanding, the animal passions being for some years the governing part of their constitution. And therefore, though they may be froward and apt to displease us, yet how far this is sin in them, we are not capable of judging. But it may suffice to say, that it is the will of God that children should have appetites and passions to regulate and restrain, that he hath given parents instructions and commands to discipline and inform their minds, that if parents first learned true wisdom for themselves, and then endeavored to bring up their children in the way of virtue, there would be less wickedness in the world.”

Concerning these things I would observe, that such a scheme is attended with the very same difficulties, which they who advance it would avoid by it; liable to the same objections, which they make against God's ordering it so, that men should be brought into being with a prevailing propensity to sin. For this scheme supposes the Author of nature has so ordered things, that men should come into being as moral agents, that is, should first have existence in a state and capacity of moral agency under a prevailing propensity to sin. (or that strength, which sensitive appetites and animal passions come to by their habitual exercise, before persons come to the exercise of their rational powers, amounts to a strong propensity to sin, when they first come to the exercise of those rational powers, by the supposition: because this is given as a reason why the scale is turned for sin, and why, generally speaking, the whole world lies in wickedness, and the study of virtue is a severe struggle against bad habits, early contracted, and deeply rooted. Those deeply rooted habits must imply a tendency to sin; otherwise they could not account for that which they are brought to account for, namely, prevailing wickedness in the world: for that cause cannot account for an effect, which is supposed to have no tendency to that effect. And this tendency which is supposed, is altogether equivalent to a natural tendency, being as necessary to the subject. For it is supposed to be brought on the person, who is the subject of it, when he has no power to oppose it; the habit, as Dr. Turnbull says, becoming very strong, before reason can have force enough to call the passion to account, or assume authority over them. And It is supposed, that this necessity, by which men become subject to this propensity to sin, is from the ordering and disposal of the Author of nature; and therefore must be as much from his hand, and as much without the hand of I the person himself, as If he were first brought into being I with such a propensity. Moreover, it is supposed that the effect is truly wickedness. For it is alleged as a cause why the whole world lies in wickedness, and why all but a very few are first in the class of the wicked, and not among the righteous, that need no repentance. If they need repentance, what they are guilty of is truly and properly wickedness, or moral evil; for certainly men need no repentance for that which is no sin, or blamable evil. If, as a consequence of this propensity, the world lies in wickedness, and the far greater part are of a wicked character, without doubt the far greater part go to eternal perdition: for death does not pick and choose, only for men of a righteous character.



And certainly that is an evil, corrupt state of things, which naturally tends to and issues in this consequence, that as it were the whole world lies and lives in wickedness, dies in wickedness, and perishes eternally. And this by the supposition, is a state of things, wholly ordered by the Author of nature before mankind are capable of having any hand in the affair. And is this any relief to the difficulties, which these writers object against the doctrine of natural depravity?

And I might here also observe, that this way of accounting for the wickedness of the world amounts to just the same thing with that solution of man's depravity, mentioned before, against which Dr. T. cries out, as too gross to be admitted, (p. 188,189.) viz. God creating the soul pure, and putting it into such a body, as naturally tends to pollute it. I or this scheme suppose, that God creates the soul pure, and puts it into a body, and into such a state in that body, that the natural consequence is a strong propensity to sin as soon as the soul is capable of sinning.

Dr. Turnbull seems to suppose, that the matter could not have been ordered otherwise, consistent with the nature of things, than that animal passions should be so aforehand with reason, as that the consequence should be that which has been mentioned; because reason is a faculty of such a nature, that it can have strength and vigor no otherwise than by exercise and culture. But can there be any force in this? Is there any thing in nature, to make it impossible, but that the superior principles of man's nature should be so proportioned to the inferior, as to prevent such a dreadful consequence, as the moral and natural ruin, and eternal perdition of the far greater part of mankind? Could not those superior principles be in much greater strength at first, and yet be capable of endless improvement? And what should hinder its being so ordered by the Creator, that they should improve by vastly swifter degrees than they do? If we are Christians, we must be forced to allow it to be possible in the nature of things, that the principles of human nature should be so balanced, that the consequence should be no propensity to sin, in the very beginning of a capacity for moral agency because we must own, that it was so in fact in Adam, when first created, and also in the man Christ Jesus; though the faculties of the latter were such as grew by culture and improvement, so that he increased in wisdom as he grew in stature.

Evasion V. Seeing men in this world are in a state of trial, it is fit that their virtue should meet with trials, and consequently that it should have opposition and temptation to overcome; not only from without, but from within, in the animal passions and appetites; that by the conflict and victory our virtue may be refined and established. Agreeably to this Dr. T. (p. 253.) says, “Without a right use and application of our powers, were they naturally ever so perfect, we could not be judged fit to enter into the kingdom of God. — This gives a good reason why we are now in a state of trial and temptation, viz. to prove and discipline our minds, to season our virtue, and to fit us for the kingdom of God; for which, in the judgment of infinite wisdom, we cannot be qualified, but by overcoming our present temptations.” And, (p. 78. S.) “We are upon trial, and it is the will of our Father that our constitution should be attended with various passions and appetites, as well as our outward condition with various temptations.” He says the like in several other places. To the same purpose very often Dr. Turnbull, particularly Chris. “What merit (he says) except from combat! What virtue without the encounter of such enemies, such temptations, as arise both from within and from abroad? To be virtuous, is to prefer the pleasures of virtue to those which come into competition with it and vice holds forth to tempt us, and to dare to adhere to truth and goodness, whatever pains and hardships it may cost. There must therefore, in order to the formation and trial, in order to the very being of virtue, be pleasures of a certain kind to make temptations to vice.”

In reply to these things I would say, either the state of temptation, which is supposed to be ordered for men’s trial, amounts on the whole to a prevailing tendency to that state of general wickedness and ruin, which has been proved to take place, or it does not. If it does not amount to a tendency to such an effect, then how does it account for it? When it is inquired, by what cause such an effect should come to pass, is it not absurd to allege a cause, which is owned at the same time to have no tendency to such an effect? Which is as much as to confess, that it will not account for it. I think it has been demonstrated, that this effect must be owing to some prevailing tendency. — But if the other part of the dilemma be taken, and it be said, that this state of things does imply a prevailing tendency to that effect, which has been proved, viz. that all mankind, without one exception, sin against God, to their own deserved eternal ruin

— and not only so, but sin thus immediately, as soon as capable of it, and continually, have more sin than virtue, and have guilt that infinitely outweighs the value of all the goodness any ever have, and that the generality of the world in all ages are extremely stupid and foolish, of a wicked character, and actually perish for ever — then I say, if the state of temptation implies a natural tendency to such an effect as this it is a very evil, corrupt, and dreadful state of things, as has been already largely shown.

Besides, such a state has a tendency to defeat its own supposed end, which is to refine, ripen, and perfect virtue, and so to fit men for the greater eternal happiness and glory: whereas, the effect it tends to, is the rever. of this, viz. general, eternal infamy and ruin, in all generations. It is supposed, that men's virtue must have passions and appetites to struggle with, in order to have the glory and reward of victory: but the consequence is, a prevailing, continual, and generally effectual tendency — not to men's victory over evil appetites and passions, and the glorious reward of that victory, but — to the victory of evil appetites and lusts over men, utterly and eternally destroying them. If a trial of virtue be requisite, yet the question is, Whence comes so general a failing in the trial, if there be no depravity of nature? If conflict and war be necessary whence the necessity that there should be more cowards than good soldiers? and whence is it necessary that the whole world as it were should lie in wickedness, and die in cowardice?

I might also here observe, that Dr. Turnbull is not very consistent, in supposing, that combat with temptation is requisite to the very being of virtue. For I think it clearly follows from his own notion of virtue, that it must have a being prior to any virtuous or praiseworthy combat with temptation. For by his principles, all virtue lies in good affection, and no actions can be virtuous, but what proceed from good affection. Therefore, surely the combat itself can have no virtue in it, unless it proceeds from virtuous affection: and therefore virtue must have an existence before the combat, and be the cause of it.

## CHAPTER 2

### *Universal Mortality Original Sin, Particularly the Death of Infants With its Various Circumstances.*

THE universal reign of death over persons of all ages indiscriminately, with the awful circumstances and attendants of death, prove that men come sinful into the world. — It is needless here particularly to inquire, whether God has not a sovereign right to set bounds to the lives of his own creatures, be they sinful or not, and as he gives life, so to take it away when he pleases? Or how far God has a right to bring extreme suffering and calamity on an innocent moral agent! For death, with the pains and agonies with which it is usually brought on, is not merely a limiting of existence, but is a most terrible calamity; and to such a creature as man-capable of conceiving of immortality, made with an earnest desire after it, capable of foresight and reflection on approaching death, and having an extreme dread of it—is a calamity above all others terrible. I say, it is needless elaborate; to consider, whether God may not, consistent with his, perfections by absolute sovereignty, bring so great a calamity on mankind when perfectly innocent. It is sufficient. It we have good evidence from Scripture, that it is not agreeable to God's manner of dealing with mankind so to do.

It is manifest, that mankind were not originally subjected to this calamity: God brought it on them afterwards, on occasion of man's sin, when manifesting his great displeasure, and by a sentence pronounced by him as a judge, which Dr.T. often confesses. Sin entered into the world as the apostle says, and death by sin. Which certainly leads us to suppose, that this affair was ordered, not merely by the sovereignty of a creator, but by the righteousness of a judge. And the Scripture every where speaks of all great afflictions and calamities, which God in his providence brings on mankind, as testimonies of his displeasure for sin, in the subjects of those calamities excepting those sufferings which are to atone for the sins of others. He ever taught his people to look on such calamities as his rod, the rod of his anger, his frown, the hidings of his face in displeasure. Hence such calamities are in Scripture so often called by the name of judgments, being what God brings on men as a judge, executing a righteous sentence

for transgression. Yea, they are often called by the name of wrath especially calamities consisting or issuing in death. And hence also is that which Dr. T. would have us take so much notice of, that sometimes, in the Scripture calamity and suffering is called by such names as sin, iniquity, being guilty, etc. which is evidently by a metonymy of the cause for the effect. It is not likely that, in the language used of old among God's people, calamity or suffering would have been called by the names of sin and guilt, if it had been so far from having any connection with sin, that even death itself, which is always spoken of as the most terrible of calamities, is not so much as any sign of the sinfulness of the subject, or any testimony of God's displeasure for his guilt, as Dr. T. supposes.

Death is spoken of in Scripture as the chief of calamities, the most extreme and terrible of all natural evils in this world. Deadly destruction is spoken of as the most terrible destruction. (<sup><0611></sup>1 Samuel 5:11.) Deadly sorrow, as the most extreme sorrow. (<sup><2371></sup>Isaiah 17:11. <sup><1033></sup>Matthew 26:38.) And deadly enemies, as the most bitter and terrible enemies. (<sup><0709></sup>Psalms 17:9.) The extremity of Christ's sufferings is represented by his suffering unto death. (<sup><1208></sup>Philippians 2:8. and other places.) Hence the greatest testimonies of God's anger for the sins of men in this world, have been by inflicting: death, as on the sinners of the old world; on the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah; on Onan, Pharaoh, and the Egyptians on Nadab and Abihu, Korah and his company, and the rest of the rebels in the wilderness; on the wicked inhabitants of Canaan; on Habintants and Phinehas, Ananias and Sapphira, and the unbelieving Jews, upon whom wrath came to the uttermost, in the time of the last destruction of Jerusalem. This calamity is often spoken of as in a peculiar lamer the fruit of guilt. (<sup><1234></sup>Exodus 28:43. "That they bear not iniquity and die." <sup><0219></sup>Leviticus 22:9. "Lest they bear sin for it and die." (So <sup><0822></sup>Numbers 18:22. compared with <sup><1010></sup>Leviticus 10:1, 2.) The very light of nature, or tradition from ancient revelation, led the heathen to conceive of death as in a peculiar manner an evidence of divine vengeance. THUS we have an account, (<sup><1204></sup>Acts 28:4.) That "when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on Paul's hand, they said among themselves, no doubt this man is a murderer, whom though he hath escaped the seas, yet vengeance suffereth not to live."

Calamities, very small in comparison of the universal temporal destruction of mankind by death, are spoken of as manifest indications of God's great

displeasure for the sinfulness of the subject; such as the destruction of particular cities, countries, or numbers of men, by war or pestilence.

<sup><1524></sup>Deuteronomy 29:24. “All nations shall say Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land ? what meaneth the heat of this great anger?” (Compare <sup><1524></sup>Deuteronomy 32:30. <sup><1008></sup>1 Kings 9:8. and <sup><1018></sup>Jeremiah 22:8, 9.) These calamities, thus spoken of as plain testimonies of God’s great anger, consisted only in hastening, on that death, which otherwise, by God’s disposal, would most certainly have come in a short time. Now to take off thirty or forty years from seventy or eighty, supposing it to be so much, one with another, in the time of these extraordinary judgments, is but a small matter, in comparison of God first making man mortal, cutting off his hope of immortality subjecting him to inevitable death, which his nature so exceedingly dreads; and afterwards shortening his life further, by cutting off more than eight hundred years of it: so bringing it to be less than a twelfth part of what it was in the first ages of the world. Besides that innumerable multitudes in the common course of things without any extraordinary judgment, die in youth, in childhood, and infancy. Wherefore how inconsiderable a thing is the additional or hastened destruction. that is sometimes brought on a particular city or country by war, compared with that universal havoc which death makes of the whole human race, from generation to generation, without distinction of sex, age, quality, or condition; with all the infinitely various dismal circumstances, torments, and agonies, which attend the death of old and young, adult persons and little infants I If those particular and comparatively trivial calamities, extending perhaps not to more than the thousandth part of one generation, are clear evidences of God’s great anger; certainly this universal destruction-by which the whole world, in all generations, is swallowed up, as by a flood that nothing can resist-must be a most glaring manifestation of God’s anger for the sinfulness of mankind. Yea, the Scripture is express, that it is so: (<sup><1008></sup>Psalm 90:3, etc.) “Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men. — Thou carriest them away as with a flood: they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass, which groweth up; in the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth. For we are consumed by shine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of

our years are threescore years and ten: and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Who knoweth the power of thine anger? According to thy fear, so is thy wrath. So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” How plain and full is this testimony, that the general mortality of mankind is an evidence of God’s anger for the sin of those who are the subjects of such a dispensation!

Abimelech speaks of it as what he had reason to conclude from God’s nature and perfection, that he would not slay a righteous nation.

~~Q. 100~~ Genesis 20:4. By a righteous evidently meaning innocent. And if so, much less will God slay a righteous world — consisting of so many nations, repeating the great slaughter in every generation subject the whole world of mankind to death, when they are considered as innocent, as Dr. T. supposes. We have from time to time in Scripture such phrases as—worthy of death, and guilty of death: but certainly the righteous Judge of all the earth will not bring death on thousands of millions, not only that are not worthy of death, but are worthy of no punishment at all.

Dr. T. from time to time speaks of affliction and death as a great benefit, as they increase the vanity of all earthly things, and tend to excite sober reflections, and to induce us to be moderate in gratifying the appetites of the body, and to mortify pride and ambition, etc. To this I would say,

**1.** It is not denied but God may see it needful for mankind in their present state, that they should be mortal, and subject to outward afflictions, to restrain their lusts, mortify their pride, etc. But then is it not an evidence of man’s depravity, that it is so? Is it not an evidence of distemper of mind, yea, strong disease, when man stands in need of such sharp medicines, such severe and terrible means to restrain his lusts, keep down his pride, and to make him willing, and obedient to God? It must be owing to a corrupt and ungrateful heart, if the riches of divine bounty, in bestowing life and prosperity, things comfortable and pleasant, will not engage the heart to God and virtue, love and obedience. Whereas he must always have the rod held over him, be often chastised, and held under the apprehensions of death, to keep him from running wild in pride, contempt, and rebellion; ungratefully using the blessings dealt forth from God’s hand, in sinning against him, and serving his enemies. If man has no natural dis-

ingenuity of heart, it must be a mysterious thing indeed, that the sweet blessings of God's bounty have not as powerful an influence to restrain him from sinning against God, as terrible afflictions. If any thing can be a proof of a perverse and vile disposition, this must be a proof of it, that men should be most apt to forget and despise God, when his providence is most kind; and that they should need to have God chastising them with great severity, and even killing them, to keep them in order. If we were as much disposed to gratitude to God for his benefits, as we are to anger at our fellow-creatures for injuries, as we must be (so far as I can see) if we are not of a depraved heart, then the sweetness of divine bounty, and the height of every enjoyment pleasing to innocent human nature, would be as powerful incentives to a proper regard for God-tending as much to promote religion and virtue-as to have the world filled with calamities, and to have God (to use the language of Hezekiah, ~~2000~~ Isaiah 28:13. describing death and its agonies) as a lion, breaking all our bones, and from day even to night, making an end of us. Dr. T. himself (p. 252.) says, "that our first parents before the fall were placed in a condition proper to engage their gratitude, love, and obedience "Which is as much as to say, a condition proper to engage them to the exercise and practice of all religion. And if the paradisaical state was proper to engage to all religion and duty, and men still come into the world with hearts as good as the two first of the species, why is it not proper to engage them to it skill? What need of so vastly changing man's state, depriving him of all those blessings, and instead of them allowing to him a world full of briers and thorns, affliction, calamity, and death, to engage him to it? The taking away of life, and all those pleasant enjoyments man had at first, by a permanent constitution, would he no stated benefit to mankind, unless there was in them a stated disposition to abuse such blessings. The taking of them away, is supposed to be a benefit, under the notion of their tending to lead men to sin: but they would have no such tendency, at least in a stated manner, unless there was in men a fixed tendency to make that unreasonable misimprovement of them. Such a temper of mind, as amounts to a disposition to make such a misimprovement of blessings, is often spoken of in Scripture as most astonishingly vile and perverse. So concerning Israel abusing the blessings of Canaan, that land flowing with milk and honey, their ingratitude in it is spoken of by the prophets, as enough to astonish all heaven and earth, and as more than brutish stupidity and



vileness. <sup><24117></sup>Jeremiah 2:7. “I brought them into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit there of, and the goodness thereof. But when ye entered, ye I defiled my land,” etc. See the following verses, especially verse 12. “Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this.” So <sup><21002></sup>Isaiah 1:2-4. “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib; but my people doth not know, Israel doth not consider. Ah, sinful nation! a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters.” (Compare <sup><6316></sup>Deuteronomy 32:6-19.) If to be disposed thus to abuse the blessings of so fruitful and pleasant a land as Canaan, showed so great depravity, surely it would be an evidence of a corruption no less astonishing, to be inclined to abuse the blessings of Eden, and the garden of God.

**2.** If death be brought on mankind only as a benefit, and in that manner which Dr. T. mentions, — to mortify or moderate their carnal appetites and affections, wean them from the world, excite them to sober reflections, and lead them to the fear and obedience of God, etc. — is it not strange that it should fall so heavily on infants, who are not capable of making any such improvement of it, so that many more of mankind suffer death in infancy, than in any other equal part of the age of man? Our author sometimes hints, that the death of infant may be for the correction and punishment of parents. But hath God any need of such methods to add to parents’ afflictions? Are there not other ways for increasing their trouble, without destroying the lives of such multitudes of those who are perfectly innocent, and who, on the supposition, have in no respect any sin belonging to them? On whom death comes at an age, when not only the subjects are not capable of reflection, or making any improvement of it, either in suffering, or the expectation of it: but also at an age when parents and friends—who alone can improve, and whom Dr. T. supposes alone to be punished by it—suffer least by being bereaved of them; though the infants themselves sometimes suffer to great extremity?

**3.** To suppose, as Dr. T. does, that death is brought on mankind in consequence of Adam’s sin, not at all as a calamity but only as a favor and benefit, is contrary to the gospel; which teaches, that when Christ, as the second Adam, comes to remove and destroy that death, which came by the first Adam, he finds it not as a friend, but an enemy. <sup><6152></sup>1 Corinthians

15:22. “For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive,” (with ver 25, and 26.) “For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last ENEMY that shall be destroyed, is DEATH.

Dr. T. urges, that the afflictions to which mankind are subjected, and particularly their common mortality, are represented in Scripture as the chastisements of our heavenly Father, and therefore are designed for our spiritual good, and consequently are not of the nature of punishments. (So in 68, 69, 38, 39 S.)

Though I think the thing asserted far from being true viz. that the Scripture represents the afflictions of mankind in general, and particularly their common mortality as the chastisement of a heavenly Father, yet it is needless to stand to dispute that matter. For if it be so, it will be no argument that the afflictions and death of mankind are not evidences of their sinfulness. Those would be strange chastisements from the hand of a wise and good Father, which are wholly for nothing especially such severe chastisements, as to break the child’s bones, when at the same time the father does not suppose any guilt, fault, or offense, in any respect, belonging to the child but it is chastised in this terrible manner, only for fear that it will be faulty hereafter. I say, these would be a strange sort of chastisements; yea, though he should be able to make it up to the child afterwards. Dr. T. sneaks of representations made by the whole current of Scripture; I am certain, it is not agreeable to the current of Scripture, to represent divine fatherly chastisement) after this manner. It is trite, the Scripture supposes such chastenings to be the fruit of God’s goodness; yet at the same time it evermore represents them as being for the sin of the subject, and as evidences of the divine displeasure for its sinfulness. Thus the apostle (~~1~~ 1 Corinthians 11:30-32.) speaks of God chastening his people by mortal sickness, for their good, that they might not be condemned with the world and yet signifies that it was for their sin; FOR THIS CAUSE many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep: that is, for the profaneness and sinful disorder be fore mentioned. So Elihu, (~~33~~ Job 33:16, etc.) speaks of the same chastening by sickness, as for men’s good; to withdraw man from his sinful purpose, and to bide pride from man, and keep back his soul from the pit; that there fore God chastens man with pain on his bed, and the multitude of his, bones with strong pain. But these chastenings are for his SINS, as appears by what follows; (verse 28.)

Where it is observed, that when God by this means has brought men to repent, and humbly confess their sins, he delivers them. Again, the same Elihu, speaking of the unfailing love of God to the righteous, even when he chastens them, and they are bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction, (chapter <sup><891></sup>36:7, etc.) yet speaks of these christenings as being for their SINS, (verse 9.) “Then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions, that they have exceeded “So David (Psalm 30.) speaks of God’s chastening by some afflictions, as being for his good, and issuing joyfully; and yet being the fruit of God’s anger for his sin, (verse 5.) God’s ANGER endureth but for a moment, etc. (compare <sup><896></sup>Psalm 119:67, 71, 75.) God’s fatherly chastisements are spoken of as being for sin. (<sup><1074></sup>2 Samuel 7:14, 15.) “I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my mercy shall not depart away from him.” So the prophet Jeremiah speaks of the great affliction that God’s people suffered in the time of the captivity, as being for their good. (<sup><895></sup>Lamentations 3:25, etc.) But yet these chastisements are spoken of as being for their SIN, (see especially verse 39, 40.) -So Christ says,

“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.” (<sup><6189></sup>Revelation 3:19)

But the words following show, that these chastening from love are for sin that should be repented of: “Be zealous therefore, and repent.” And though Christ tells us, they are blessed that are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, and have reason to rejoice and be exceeding glad; yet even the persecutions of God’s people, as ordered in divine providence, are spoken of as divine chastenings for sin, like the just corrections of a father, when the children deserve them <sup><891></sup>Hebrews 12:The apostle there speaking to the Christians concerning the persecutions which they suffered, calls their sufferings by the name of divine rebuke; which implies testifying against a fault: and that they may not be discouraged, puts them in mind, that whom the Lord loves he chastens, and scourgeth every son that he receiveth. It is also very plain, that the persecutions of God’s people, as they are from the disposing hand of God, are chastisements for SIN.

If divine chastisement in general are certain evidences that the subjects are not wholly without sin, some way belonging to them, then in a peculiar manner is death so; for these reasons:


**1.** Because slaying, or delivering to death, is often spoken of as, in general, a more awful thing than the chastisements which are endured in this life. Thus, <sup><B87></sup>Psalm 118:17, 18. "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. The Lord hath chastened me sore but he hath not given me over unto death." So the Psalmist, (<sup><B85></sup>Psalm 88:15.) setting forth the extremity of his affliction, represents it as what was next to death. "I am afflicted, and ready to die, -while I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted." (See <sup><B18></sup>1 Samuel 20:3.) And so God's tenderness towards persons under chastisement, is, from time to time, set forth, that he did not proceed so far as to make an end of them by death. God's people often pray, when under great affliction, that God would not proceed to this, as the greatest extremity. <sup><B3B></sup>Psalm 13:3. "Consider, and hear me, O Lord, my God lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death."

Especially may death be looked upon as the most extreme of all temporal sufferings, when attended with such dreadful circumstances, and extreme pains, which Providence sometimes brings it on infants; as on the children that were offered up to Moloch, and some other idols who were tormented to death in burning brass. Dr. T. says, (p. 83, 128. S.) "The Lord of all being can never want time, and place and power, to compensate abundantly any suffering) indents now undergo in subserviency to his good providence." But there are no bounds to such a licence, in evading evidences from fact. It might as well be said, that there is not and cannot be any such thing as evidence, from events of God's displeasure; which is most contrary to the whole current of Scripture, as may appear in part from what has been observed. This gentleman might as well go further still, and say, that God may cast guiltless persons into hell fire, to remain there in the most unutterable torments for ages of ages, (which bear no greater proportion to eternity than a quarter of an hour,) and if he does so, it is no evidence of God's displeasure; because he can never want time, place, and power, abundantly to compensate their sufferings afterwards. If it be so, it is not to the purpose, as long as the Scripture so abundantly teaches us to look on great calamities and sufferings which God brings on men,

especially death, as marks of his displeasure for sin, and for sin belonging to them who suffer.

**2.** Another thing-which may well lead us to suppose death, in a peculiar manner, above other temporal sufferings, to be intended as a testimony of God's displeasure for — that death is attended with that awful appearance, that gloomy and terrible aspect, which naturally suggests to our minds God's awful displeasure. Of this Dr. T. himself takes particular notice, when (p. 69.) speaking of death; "Herein (says he) have we before our eyes a striking demonstration, that sin is infinitely hateful to God, and the corruption and ruin of our nature. Nothing is more proper then such a sight to give us the utmost abhorrence of all iniquity," etc. Now, if death be no testimony of god's displeasure for sin-no evidence that the subject is looked upon, by him who inflicts it, as any other than perfectly innocent, free from all imputation of guilt, and treated only as an object of favor — is it not strange, that God should annex to it such affecting appearances of his hatred and anger for sin, more than to other chastisements? Which yet the Scripture teaches us are always for sin. These gloomy and striking manifestations of God's hatred of sin attending death, are equivalent to the awful frowns of God attending the stroke of his hand. If we should see a wise and just father chastising his child, mixing terrible frowns with severe strokes, we should justly argue that the father considered his child as having in him something displeasing, and that he did not thus treat his child only under a notion of mortifying him, and preventing his being faulty hereafter, and making it up to him afterwards, when he had been perfectly innocent, and without fault, either of action or disposition.

We may well argue from these things, that infants are not sinless but are by nature children of wrath, seeing this terrible evil come; so heavily on mankind at this early period. But, besides the mortality of infants in general, there are some particular cases of their death attended with circumstances, which, in a peculiar manner, give evidence of their sinfulness, and of their just exposedness to divine wrath. Particularly,

The destroying of the infants in Sodom and the neighboring cities, may be pleaded in evidence, for these cities destroyed in so miraculous and awful a manner, are set forth as a signal example of God's dreadful vengeance for sin. (  Jude, verse 7.) God did not reprove, but manifestly countenanced,

Abraham, when he said, with respect to the destruction of Sodom, (<sup><1182></sup>Genesis 18:23, 25.) “Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to day the righteous with the wicked, and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” Abraham’s words imply that God would not destroy the innocent with the guilty. We may well understand innocent as included in the word righteous, according to the language usual in Scripture, in speaking of such cases of judgment and punishment. Eliphaz says,

“Who ever perished, being innocent?  
Or where were the righteous cut off?” (<sup><1801></sup>Job 4:7)

We see what great care God took that Lot should not be involved in that destruction. He was miraculously rescued by angels, sent on purpose; who laid hold on him, brought him, set him without the gates of the city, and told him that they could do nothing till he was out of the way. (<sup><1182></sup>Genesis 19:22) And not only was he thus miraculously delivered, but his two wicked daughters for his sake. The whole affair, both the destruction and the rescue, was miraculous; and God could as easily have delivered the infants which were in those cities. And if they had been without sin, their perfect innocence, one should think, would have pleaded much more strongly for them, than those lewd women’s relation to Lot pleaded for them. When in such a case, we must suppose these infants much further from deserving to be involved in that destruction, than even Lot himself. To say, that God could make it up to those infants in another world, must be an insufficient reply. For so he could as easily have made it up to Lot, or to ten or fifty righteous, if they had been destroyed in the same fire. Nevertheless, it is plainly signified, that this would not have been agreeable to the wise and holy proceedings of the judge of all the earth.

Since God declared, that if there had been found but ten righteous in Sodom, he would have spared the whole city for their sakes, may we not well suppose, if infants are perfectly innocent, that he would have spared the old world, in which there were, without doubt, many hundred thousand infants, and in general, one in every family, whose perfect innocence pleaded for its preservation? Especially when such vast care was taken to save Noah and his family, (some of whom, one at least, seem

to have been none of the best,) that they might not be involved in that destruction. If the perfect sinlessness of infants had been a notion entertained among the people of God, in the ages next following the flood—handed down from Noah and his children, who well knew that vast multitudes of infants perished in the flood—is it likely that Eliphaz who lived within a few generations of Shem and Noah would have said to Job, (~~Job~~ Job 4:7.) “Who ever perished, being innocent? and when were the righteous cut off? Especially’ since in the same discourse (chapter ~~5~~ 5:1.) he appeals to the tradition of the ancients for a confirmation of this very point, (also in chapter ~~15~~ 15:7-to. and ~~22~~ 22:15, 16.) and he mentions the destruction of the wicked by the flood, as an instance of that perishing of the wicked, which he supposes to be peculiar to them, for Job’s conviction; in which the wicked were cut down out of time, their foundation being overflowed with a flood. Where it is also observable, that he speaks of such an untimeliness of death as they suffered by the flood, as one evidence of guilt as he also does, chapter ~~15~~ 15:32, 33. “It shall be accomplished before his time; and his branch shall not be green.” But those who were destroyed by the flood in infancy, above all the rest, were cut down out of time; when instead of living above nine hundred years, according to the common period of man’s life, at that time, many were cut down before they were one year old.

When God executed vengeance on the ancient inhabitants of Canaan, he not only did not spare their cities and families for the sake of their infants, nor took care that they should not be involved in the destruction; but he often repeated his express commands, that their infants should not be spared, but should be utterly destroyed, without any pity; while Rahab the harlot (who had been far from innocence, though she expressed her faith in entertaining and safely dismissing the spies) was preserved and all her friends for her sake. And when God executed his wrath on the Egyptians, by slaying their first-born—though the children of Israel, who were most of them wicked men, as was before shown, were wonderfully spared by the destroying angel, yet the Egyptian infants were not spared. They not only were not rescued by the angel, and no miracle wrought to save them, (as was observed in the case of the infants of Sodom,) but the angel destroyed them by his own immediate hand, and a miracle was wrought to kill them.

Not to be particular, concerning, the command by Moses respecting the destruction of the infants of the Midianites (<sup><0617></sup>Numbers 31:17.) and that given to Saul to destroy all the infants of the Amalekites (<sup><0618></sup>1 Samuel 15:3.) and what is said concerning Edom

“Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.” (<sup><0619></sup>Psalm 137:9)

I proceed to take notice of something remarkable concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, represented in Ezekiel 9:when command was given to destroy the inhabitants, verse 1-8. And this reason is given for it, that their iniquity required it and it was a just recompence of their sin, (verse 9, 10.) God at the same time, was most particular and exact in his care, that such as had proved by their behavior, that they were not partakers in the abominations of the city, should by no means be involved in the slaughter. Command was given to the angel to go through the city, and set a mark upon their foreheads, and the destroying angel had a strict charge not to come near any man, on whom was the mark, yet the infants were not marked, nor a word said of sparing, them: on the contrary, infants were expressly mentioned as those that should be utterly destroyed, without pity, (verse 5, 6.) “Go through the city and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity. Slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark.”

And if any should suspect, that such instances as these were peculiar to a more severe dispensation, under the Old Testament, let us consider a remarkable instance in the days of the glorious gospel of the grace of God; even the last destruction of Jerusalem. This was far more terrible, and with greater testimonies of God’s wrath and indignation, than the destruction of Sodom, or of Jerusalem in Nebuchadnezzar’s time, or any thing that ever had happened to any city, or people, from the beginning of the world to that time. (Agreeable to <sup><0620></sup>Matthew 24:21. and <sup><0621></sup>Luke 21:22, 23.) At that time particular care was taken to distinguish and to deliver God’s people; as foretold, <sup><0622></sup>Daniel 12:1. And we have in the New Testament a particular account of the care Christ took for the preservation of his followers: he gave them a sign, by which they might know when the desolation of the city was nigh, that they who were in Jerusalem might flee



to the Mountains, and escape. And, as history relates, the Christians followed the directions given, and escaped to a place in the mountains called Pella, and wee preserved. Yet no care was taken to preserve the infants of the city in general, but according to the predictions of that event they were involved With of-hers m that great destruction. So heavily did the calamity fall upon them, that those words were verified,

“Behold the days are coming, in which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the womb that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck” (<sup><023></sup>Luke 23:29)

and that prophecy in <sup><1521></sup>Deuteronomy 32:21-25. which has undoubtedly a special respect to this very time, and is so applied by the best commentators; — “I will provoke them to jealousy with those that are not a people: for a fire is kindled in mine anger-and it shall burn to the lowest hell. I will heap mischiefs upon them: I will spend mine arrows upon them. They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and bitter destruction. The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man, and the virgin the suckling also, with the man of gray hairs.” And, by the history of that destruction appears, that then it was a remarkable fulfillment of <sup><1521></sup>Deuteronomy 27:53-57. concerning parents eating their children in the siege, — and the tender and delicate woman eating her newborn child. And here it must be remembered, that these very destructions of that city and land are spoken of as clear evidences of God’s wrath, to all nations who shall behold them. And if so, they were evidences of God’s wrath towards infants; who, equally with the rest, were the subject of the destruction. If a particular kind or rank of persons, which made a very considerable part of the inhabitants, were from time to time partakers of the overthrow, without any distinction made in Divine Providence, and yet this was no evidence at all of God’s displeasure with any of them; then being the subjects of such a calamity could not be an evidence of God’s wrath against any of the inhabitants, to the reason of all nations, or any nation, or so much as one person.

## PART 2

*Containing Observations on Particular Parts of the Holy Scripture,  
Which Prove the Doctrine of Original Sin.*

### CHAPTER 1.

*Observations Relating to Things Contained in the Three First Chapters  
of Genesis, With Reference to the Doctrine: of Original Sin.*

#### SECTION 1

*Concerning original righteousness; and whether our first parents  
were created with righteousness, or moral rectitude of heart?*

THE doctrine of Original Righteousness, or the creation of our first parents with holy principles and dispositions, has a close connection, in several respects, with the doctrine of original sin. Dr. T. was sensible of this; and accordingly he strenuously opposes this doctrine, in his book against original sin. And therefore in handling the subject, I would in the first place remove this author's main objection against this doctrine, and then show how it may be inferred from the account which Moses gives us, in the three first chapters of Genesis.

Dr. T.'s grand objection against this doctrine, which he abundantly insists on, is this: that it is utterly inconsistent with the nature of virtue, that it should be co-created with any person; because, if so, it must be by an act of God's absolute power without our knowledge or concurrence; and that moral virtue, in its very nature, implieth the choice and consent of the moral agent, with out which it cannot be virtue and holiness: that a necessary holiness is no holiness. So p. 180. where he observes, "That Adam must exist, he must be created, yea he must exercise thought and reflection, before he was righteous." (See also p. 250, 251.) In p 161. S. he says "To say, that God not only endowed Adam with a capacity of being righteous, but moreover that righteousness and true holiness were created with him, or wrought into his nature, at the same time he was made, is to

affirm a contradiction, or what is inconsistent with the very nature of righteousness.” And in like manner Dr. Turnbull in many places insists upon it, that it is necessary to the very being of virtue, that it be owing to our own choice, and diligent culture.

With respect to this, I would observe, that it consists in a notion of virtue quite inconsistent with the nature of things, and the common notions of mankind, and also inconsistent with Dr. T.’s own notions of virtue. Therefore, if to affirm that to be virtue or holiness, which is not the fruit of preceding thought, reflection, and choice, is to affirm a contradiction, I shall show plainly, that for him to affirm otherwise, is a contradiction to himself.

In the first place, I think it a contradiction to the nature of things, as judged of by the common sense of mankind. It is agreeable to the sense of men, in all nations and ages, not only that the fruit or effect of a good choice is virtuous but that the good choice itself, from whence that effect proceeds, is so; yea, also the antecedent good disposition, temper, or affection of mind, from whence proceeds that good choice, is virtuous. This is the general notion-not that principles derive their goodness from actions but-that actions derive their goodness from the principles whence they proceed, so that the act of choosing what is good, is no further virtuous, than it proceeds from a good principle, or virtuous disposition of mind.

Which supposes, that a virtuous disposition of mind may be before a virtuous act of choice; and that, therefore, It is not necessary there should first be thought, reflection, and choice, before there can be any virtuous disposition. If the choice be first, before the existence of a good disposition of heart, what is the character of that choice? There can, according to our natural notions, be no virtue in a choice which proceeds from no virtuous principle, but from mere self-love, ambition, or some animal appetites therefore, a virtuous temper of mind may be before a good act of choice, as a tree may be before the fruit, and the fountain before the stream which proceeds from it.

The following things, in Mr. Hutcheson’s inquiry concerning moral good and evil, are evidently agreeable to the nature of things, and the voice of human sense and reason. (Sect, 11. p. 132,133.) “Every action which we

apprehend as either morally good or evil, is always supposed to FLOW FROM some affections towards sensitive natures. And whatever we call virtue or vice, is either some such affection, or some action CONSEQUENT UPON IT. — All the actions counted religious in any country, are supposed by those who count them so, to FLOW FROM some affections towards the Deity: and whatever we call social virtue, we still suppose to FLOW FROM affections towards our fellow-creatures. — Prudence, if it is only employed in promoting private interest, is never imagined to be a virtue.” In these things Dr. Turnbull expressly agrees with Mr. Hutcheson, his admired author.

If a virtuous disposition or affection is aware of its acts, then they are before those virtuous acts of choice which proceed from it. Therefore, there is no necessity that all virtuous dispositions or affections should be the effect of choice: and so, no such supposed necessity can be a good objection against such a disposition, being natural, or from a kind of instinct, implanted in the mind in its creation. Agreeably to this Mr. Hutcheson says, (Ibid. Section III. p. 196, 197.) “I know not for what reason some will not allow that to be virtue, which flows from instinct or passions. But how do they help themselves? They say, virtue arises from reason. What is reason, but the sagacity we have in prosecuting any end? The ultimate end proposed by common moralists, is the happiness of the agent himself. And this certainly he is determined to pursue from instinct. Now may not another instinct towards the public, or the good of others, be as proper a principle of virtue as the instinct towards private happiness? If it be said, that actions from instinct are not the effect of prudence and choice, this objection will hold full as strongly against the actions which flow from self-love.

And if we consider what Dr. T. declares, as his own notion of the essence of virtue, and which he so confidently and often affirms, that it should follow choice, and proceed from it, we shall find it is no less repugnant to that sentiment, than it is to the nature of things, and the general notions of mankind. For it is his notion, as well as Mr. Hutcheson’s, that the essence of virtue lies in good affection, and particularly in benevolence or love; as he very fully declares in these words in his Key, “That the word that signifies goodness and mercy should also signify moral rectitude in general, will not seem strange, if we consider that love is the fulfilling of the law.

Goodness, according to the sense of Scripture, and the nature of things, includes all morel rectitude; which, I reckon, may every part of it, where it true and genuine, be resolved into this single principle.” If it be so indeed, then certainly no act whatsoever can have moral rectitude, but what proceeds from this principle. And consequently no act of volition or choice can have any moral rectitude, that takes place before this principle exists. And yet he most confidently affirms, that thought, reflection, and choice must go before virtue, and that all virtue or righteousness midst be the fruit of preceding choice. This brings his scheme to an evident contradiction. For no act of choice can be virtuous but what proceeds from a principle of benevolence or love; for he insists that all genuine moral rectitude, in every part of it, is resolved into this single principle. And yet the principle of benevolence itself cannot be virtuous, unless it proceeds from choice; for he affirms, that nothing can have the nature of virtue but what comes from choice. So that virtuous love as the principle of all virtue, must go before virtuous choice, and be the principle or spring of it, and yet virtuous choice must be before virtuous benevolence, and be the spring of that. If a virtuous act of choice goes before a principle of benevolence, and produces it, then this virtuous act is something distinct from that principle which follows it, and is its effect. So that here is at least one part of virtue, yea the spring and source of all virtue, viz. a virtuous choice, that cannot be resolved into that single principle of love.

Here also it is worthy to be observed, that Dr. T. (p. 128.) says the cause of every effect is alone chargeable with the effect it produceth or which proceedeth from it, and so he argues, that if the effect be bad, the cause alone is sinful. According to which reasoning, when the effect is, good, the cause alone is righteous or virtuous. To the cause is to be ascribed all the praise of the good effect it produceth. And by the same reasoning it will follow, that if, etc Dr. Taylor says Adam must choose to be righteous before he was righteous, and if it be essential to the nature of righteousness, or moral rectitude, that it be the effect of choice, and hence a principle of benevolence cannot have moral rectitude, unless it proceeds from choice, then not the principle of benevolence, which is the effect, but to the foregoing choice alone is to be ascribed all the virtue or righteousness that is in the case. And so, instead of all moral rectitude, in every part of it, being resolved into that single principle of benevolence, no

moral rectitude, in any part of it, is to be resolved into that principle, but all is to be resolved into the foregoing choice, which is the cause.

But yet it follows from these inconsistent principles that there is no moral rectitude or virtue in that first act of choice, that is the cause of all consequent virtue. This follows two ways,

1. Because every part of virtue lies in the benevolent principle, which is the effect; and therefore no part of it can lie ill the cause.
2. The choice of virtue, as to the first act at least, can have no virtue or righteousness at all, because it does not proceed from any foregoing choice. For Dr. T. insists, that a man must first hate reflection and choice, before he can have righteousness and that it is essential to holiness that it proceed from choice. So that the first choice from which holiness proceeds can have no virtue at all, because, by the supposition, It does not proceed from choice, being the first choice. Hence, if it be essential to holiness that it proceeds from choice, it must proceed from an unholy choice, unless the first holy choice can be before itself.

And with respect to Adam, let us consider how upon Dr. T. s principles, it was possible he ever should have any such thing as righteousness, by any means at all. In the state wherein God created him, he could have no such thing as love to God, or any benevolence in his heart. For if so, there would have been original righteousness; there would have been genuine moral rectitude; nothing would have been wanting: for our author says, True genuine moral rectitude, in every part of it is to be resolved into this single principle. But if he were wholly without any such thing as love to God, or any virtuous love, how should he come by virtue? The answer doubtless will be, by act of choice: he must first choose to be virtuous. But what if he did choose to be virtuous! It could not be from love to God, or any virtuous principle, that he chose it, for, by the supposition, he has no such principle in his heart. And if he chooses it without such a principle, still, according to this author, there is no virtue in his choice, for all virtue, he says, is to be resolved into that single principle of love. Or will he say, there may be produced in the heart a virtuous benevolence by an act or acts of choice, that are not virtuous? But this does not consist with what he implicitly asserts, that to the cause alone is to be ascribed

what is in the effect. So that there is no way that can possibly be devised, in consistence with Dr. T.'s scheme, in which Adam ever could have any righteousness, or could ever either obtain any principle of virtue, or perform any one virtuous act.

These confused inconsistent assertions, concerning virtue and moral rectitude, arise from the absurd notions in vogue, concerning freedom of will, as if it consisted in the will's self-determining power, supposed to be necessary to moral agency, virtue, and vice. The absurdities of which, with the grounds of these errors, and what the truth is respecting these matters, with its evidences, I have, according to my ability, fully and largely considered, in my "Inquiry" on that subject; to which I must refer the reader, who desires further satisfaction, and is willing to give himself the trouble of leading that discourse.

Having considered this great argument, and pretended demonstration of Dr. T. against original righteousness; I proceed to the proof of the doctrine. And, in the first place, I would consider, whether there be not evidence of it in the three first chapters of Genesis: or, whether the history there delivered does not lead us to suppose, that our first parents were created in a state of moral rectitude and holiness.

**I.** This history leads US to suppose, that Adam's sin, with relation to the forbidden fruit, was the first sin he committed. Which could not have been, had he not always, till then, been perfectly righteous, righteous from the first moment of his existence; and consequently, created or brought into existence righteous. In a moral agent, subject to moral obligations, it is the same thing, to be perfectly innocent, as to be perfectly righteous. It must be the same, because these can no more be any medium between sin and righteousness, or between being right and being wrong, in a moral sense, than there can be a medium between straight and crooked, in a natural sense. Adam was brought into existence capable of acting immediately, as a moral action, and therefore he was immediately under a rule of right action. He was obliged as soon as he existed to act aright. And if he was obliged to act aright as soon as he existed, he was obliged even then to be inclined to act right. Dr. T. says, (p. 166. S.) "Adam could not sin without a sinful inclination:" and, just for the same reason, he could not do aright, without an inclination to right action. And as he was obliged to act rightly

from the first moment of his existence, and did so, till he sinned in reference to the forbidden fruit, he must have had a disposition of heart to do rightly the first moment of his existence, and that is the same as to be created, or brought into existence, with an inclination to right action, or, which is the same thing, a virtuous and holy disposition of heart.

Here it will be in vain to say, “It is true, that it was Adams duty to have a good disposition or inclination, as soon as it was possible to be obtained, in the nature of things; but as it could not be without time to establish such a habit, which requires antecedent “bought, reflection, and repeated right action; therefore all that Adam could be obliged to, in the first place, was to reflect, and consider things in a right manner, and apply himself to right action, in order to obtain a right disposition:” for this supposes, that even the reflection and considerations to which he was obliged, was right action. Surely he was obliged to it no otherwise than as a thing that was right: an I therefore he must have an inclination to this right action immediately, before he could perform those first right actions. And as the inclination to them should be right, the principle, or disposition from which he performed even these actions, must be good: Otherwise the actions would not be right in the sight of him who looks at the heart; nor would they answer his obligations, if he had done them for some sinister end, and not from a regard to God and his duty. Therefore there must have been a regard to God and his duty implanted in him at his first existence: otherwise it is certain, he would have done nothing from a regard to God and his duty; no, not so much as to reflect and consider, and try to obtain such a disposition. The very supposition of a disposition to right action being first obtained by repeated right action, is grossly inconsistent with itself: for it supposes a course of right action, before there is a disposition to perform any right action.

These are no invented quibbles or sophisms. If God expected from Adam any obedience, or duty to him at all, when he first made him-whether it was in reflecting, considering, or any way exerting his faculties-then he was expected immediately to exercise love to God. For how could it be expected, that Adam should have a strict and perfect regard to God’s commands and authority, and his duty to him, when he had no love nor regard to him in his heart, nor could it be expected he should have any? If Adam from the beginning did his duty to God, and had more respect to the



will of his Creator, than to other things and as much respect to him as he ought to have; then from the beginning he had a supreme and perfect respect and love to God: and if so, he was created with such a principle. There is no avoiding the consequence. Not only external duties, but internal ones, such as summarily consist in love, must be immediately required of Adam, as soon as he existed, if any duty at all was required. For it is most apparently absurd, to talk of a spiritual being, with the faculties of understanding and will, being required to perform external duties, without internal. Dr. T. himself observes, that love is the fulfilling of the law, and that all moral rectitude, even every part of it, must be revolved into that single principle. Therefore; if any morally right act at all, reflection, consideration, or any thing else, was required of Adam immediately, on his first existence, and was performed as required; then he must, the first moment of his existence, have his heart possessed of that principle of divine love, which implies the whole of moral rectitude in every part of it according to our author's own doctrine and so the whole of moral rectitude or righteousness must begin with his existence: which is the thing taught in the doctrine of original righteousness.

Let us consider how it could be otherwise, than that Adam was always, in every moment of his existence, obliged to exercise such respect of heart toward) every object, as was agreeable to the apparent merit of that object. For instance, would it not at any time have become Adam on the exhibition of God's infinite goodness to him, to have exercised answerable gratitude; and would not the contrary have been unbecoming and odious? And if some thing had been presented to Adam's view, transcendently amiable in itself, for instance, the glorious perfection of the divine nature, would it not have become him to love, relish, and delight in it? Would not such an object have merited this? And if the view of an object so amiable in itself did not affect his mind with complacence, would it not, according to the plain dictates of our understanding, have shown an unbecoming temper of mind? Time, by culture, to form and establish a good disposition, would not have taken off the odiousness of the temper. And if there had been never so much time, I do not see how it could be expected he should improve it aright in order to obtain a good disposition? if he had not already some good disposition to engage him to it.

That belonging to the will, and disposition of the heart, which is in itself either odious or amiable, unbecoming or decent, always would have been Adam's virtue or sin, in any moment of his existence, if there be any such thing as virtue or vice; by which terms nothing can be meant, but something in our moral disposition and behavior, which is becoming or unbecoming, amiable or odious.

Human nature must be created with some dispositions; a disposition to relish some things as good and amiable, and to be averse to other things as odious and disagreeable: otherwise, it must be without any such thing as inclination or will; perfectly indifferent, without preference, without choice, or aversion, towards any thing as agreeable or disagreeable. if it had any concreated dispositions at all, they must be either right or wrong, either agreeable or disagreeable to the nature of things. If man had at first the highest relish of things excellent and beautiful, a disposition to have the quickest and highest delight in those things which were most worthy of it, then his dispositions were morally right and amiable, never can be excellent in a higher sense. But if he had a disposition to love most those things that were inferior and less worthy, then his dispositions were vicious. And it is evident there can be no medium between these.

**II.** This notion of Adam being created without a principle of holiness in his hearts, taken with the rest of Dr. T.'s scheme, is inconsistent with what the history in the beginning of Genesis leads us to suppose of the great favors and smiles of Heaven, which Adam enjoyed while he remained in innocence. The Mosaic account suggests to us, that till Adam sinned, he was in happy circumstances, surrounded with testimonies and fruits of God's favor. This is implicitly owned by Dr. T. when he says, (p. 252.) "That in the dispensation our first parents were under before the fall, they were placed in a condition proper to engage their gratitude, love, and obedience." But it will follow, on our author's principles, that Adam, while in innocency, was placed in far worse circumstances, than he was in after his disobedience, and infinitely worse than his posterity are in; under unspeakably greater disadvantages for avoiding sin, and the performance of duty. For by this doctrine, Adam's posterity come into the world with their hearts as free from any propensity to sin as he, and he was made as destitute of any propensity to righteousness as they: and yet God, in favor to them, does great things to restrain them from sin, and excite them

to virtue, which he never did for Adam in innocency, but laid him, in the highest degree, under contrary disadvantages. God, as an instance of his great favor, and fatherly love to man, since the fall, has denied him the ease and pleasures of paradise, which gratified and allured his senses, and bodily appetites, that he might diminish his temptations to sin. And as a still greater means to restrain from sin, and promote virtue, has subjected him to labor, toil, and sorrow in the world: and not only so, but as a means to promote his spiritual and eternal good far beyond this, has doomed him to death. When all this was found insufficient, he, in further prosecution of the designs of his love, shortened men's lives exceedingly, made them twelve or thirteen times shorter than in the first ages. And yet this, with all the innumerable calamities which God, in great favor to mankind, has brought on the world—whereby their temptations are so vastly cut short, and the inducements to virtue heaped one upon another to so great a degree have we proved insufficient, now for so many thousand years together, to restrain from wickedness in any considerable degree; while innocent human nature, all along, comes into the world with the same purity and harmless dispositions that our first parents had in paradise. What vast disadvantages indeed then must Adam and Eve be in, who had no more in their nature to keep them from sin, or incline them to virtue, than their posterity, and yet were without all those additional and extraordinary means! They were not only without such exceeding great means as we now have, when our lives are made so very short, but had vastly less advantages than their antediluvian posterity, who to prevent their being wicked, and to make them good, had so much labor and toil, sweat and sorrow, briers and thorns, with a body gradually decaying and resuming to the dust. Our first parents had the extreme disadvantage of being placed amongst many and exceeding great temptations — not only without toil or sorrow, pain or disease, to humble and mortify them, and a sentence of death so wean them from the world, but—in the midst of the most exquisite and aluring sensitive delights: the rever. in every respect, and the highest degree, of that most gracious state of requisite means, and great advantages, which mankind now enjoy I If mankind now, under these vast restraints, and great advantages are not restrained from general, and as it were universal wickedness, how could it be expected that Adam and Eve, created with no better hearts than men bring into the world now, and

destitute of all these advantages, and in the midst of all contrary disadvantages, should escape it?

These things are not agreeable to Mose's account. That represents a happy state of peculiar favors and blessings before the fall, and the curse coming afterwards; but according to this scheme, the curse was before the fall, and the great favors and testimonies of love followed the apostacy. And the curse before the fall must be a Curse with a witness, being to so high a degree the rever. of such means, means so necessary for such a creature as innocent man, and in all their multitude and fullness proving too little. Paradise therefore must be a mere delusion I There was indeed a great show of favor, in placing man in the midst of such delights. But this delightful garden it seems, with all its beauty and sweetness, was in its real tendency worse than the apples of Sodom. It was but a mere bait, (God forbid the blasphemy,) the more effectually enticing by its beauty and deliciousness, to Adam's eternal ruin. Which might be the more expected to be fatal to him, seeing he was the first man, having no capacity superior to his posterity, and wholly without the advantage of their observations, experiences, and improvements.

I proceed now to take notice of an additional proof of the doctrine we are upon, from another part of the Holy Scripture. A very clear text for original righteousness we have in <sup>2072</sup>Ecclesiastes 7:29.

**“Lo, this only have I found, that God made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.”**

It is an observation of no weight which Dr. T. makes on this text, that the word man is commonly used to signify mankind in general, or mankind collectively taken. It is true, it often signifies the species of mankind; but then it is used to signify the species, with regard to its duration and succession from its beginning, as well as with regard to its extent. The English word mankind is used to signify the species: but what then? Would it be an improper very of speaking, to say, that when God first made mankind, he placed them in a pleasant paradise, (meaning in their first parents,) but now they live in the midst of briars and thorns? And it is certain, that to speak thus of God making mankind — his giving the species an existence in their first parents, at the creation is agreeable to the scripture use of such an expression. As in <sup>2082</sup>Deuteronomy 4:32.

“Since the day that God created man upon the earth.”

“Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon the earth.” (<sup><310></sup>Job 20:4.)

“I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens.” (<sup><241></sup>Isaiah 14:12.)

“I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power.” (<sup><215></sup>Jeremiah 22:5.)

All these texts speak of God making man, signifying the species of mankind, and yet they all plainly have respect to God making man at first, when he made the earth, and stretched out the heavens. In all these places the same word, Adam, is used as in ecclesiastes; and in the last of them, used with (HE emphaticum) the emphatic sign, as here; though Dr. T. omits it, when he tells us he gives us a catalogue of all the places in Scripture where the word is used. And it argues nothing to the Doctor’s purpose, that the pronoun ‘they’ is used, — They have sought out many inventions. This is properly applied to the species, which God made at first upright: the species begun with more than one, and continued in a multitude. As Christ speaks of the two sexes, in the relation of man and wife, continued in successive generations; <sup><191></sup>Matthew 19:4. “He that made than at the beginning, made them male and female;” having reference to Adam and Eve. No less impertinent, and also very unfair, is his criticism on the greek word translated upright. Because the word sometimes signifies? right, he would from thence infer, that it does not properly signify moral rectitude, even when used to express the character of moral agents. He might as well insist, that the English word upright, sometimes, and in its most original meaning, signifies right up, or in an erect posture, therefore it does not properly signify any moral character, when applied to moral agents. And indeed less unreasonably; for it is known, that in the Hebrew language, in a peculiar manner, most words used to signify moral and spiritual things, are taken from external and natural objects. The greek word is used, as applied to moral agents, or to the words and actions of such, (if I have not misreckoned,) about an hundred and ten times in Scripture; and about an hundred of them, without all dispute, to signify virtue, or moral rectitude, (though Dr. T. is pleased to say, the word does not generally signify a moral character,) and for the most part it signifies

true virtue, or virtue in such a sense, as distinguishes it from all false appearances of virtue, or what is only virtue in some respects, but not truly so in the sight of God. It is used at least eighty times in this sense: and scarce any word can be found in the Hebrew language more significant of this. It is thus used constantly in Solomon's writings, (where it is often found) when used to moral agents. And it is express a character of property of moral agents. And it is beyond all controversy, that he uses it in this place, (the 7th of Ecclesiastes) to signify moral rectitude, or a character of real virtue and integrity. For the wise man is speaking of persons with respect to their moral character, enquiring into the corruption and depravity of mankind, (as is confessed, p. 184.) and he here declares, he had not found more than one among a thousand of the right stamp, truly and thoroughly virtuous and upright: which appeared a strange thing! But in this text he clears God, and lays the blame on man: man was not made thus at first. He was made of the right stamp, altogether good in his kind, (as all other things were,) truly and thoroughly virtuous, as he ought to be; but they have sought out many inventions. Which last expression signifies things sinful, or morally evil; (as is confessed, p. 185.) And this expression, used to signify those moral evils he found in man, which he sets in opposition to the uprightness man was made in, shows, that by uprightness he means the most true and sincere goodness. The word rendered inventions, most naturally and aptly signifies the subtle devices, and crooked deceitful ways, of hypocrites, wherein they are of a character contrary to men of simplicity and godly sincerity; who, though wise in that which is good, are simple concerning evil. Thus the same wise man, in <sup>and</sup>Proverbs 12:2. sets a truly good man in opposition to a man of wicked devices, whom God will condemn. Solomon had occasion to observe many who put on an artful disguise and fair show of goodness; but on searching thoroughly, he found very few truly upright. As he says, <sup>and</sup>Proverbs 20:6. "Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" So that it is exceeding plain, that by uprightness, in this place, (<sup>and</sup>Ecclesiastes 7.) Solomon means true moral goodness.

What our author urges concerning many inceptions whereas Adam's eating of the forbidden fruit was but one invention, is of as little weight as the test of what he says on this text. For the many lusts and corruption's of mankind, appearing in innumerable ways of sinning, are all the

consequence of that sin. The great corruption men are fallen into by the original apostacy appears in the multitude of the wicked ways to which they are inclined. And therefore these are properly mentioned as the fruits and evidences of the greatness of that apostacy and corruption.

## SECTION 2

*Concerning the kind of death, threatened to our first parents, if they should eat if the forbidden fruit.*

DR. T. in his observations on the three first chapters of Genesis says, (p. 7.) “The threatening to man in case of transgression was, that he should surely die. — Death IS the losing of life. Death is opposed to life, and must be understood according to the nature of that life, to which it is opposed. Now the death here threatened can, with any certainty, be opposed only to the life God gave Adam, when he created him (verse 7.). Any thing besides this must be pure conjecture, without solid foundation.”

To this I would say; it is true, Death it opposed to life, and must be understood according to the nature of that life, to which it is opposed. But does it therefore follow, that nothing can be meant by it but the loss of life? Misery is opposed to happiness, and sorrow is in Scripture often opposed to joy; but can we conclude from thence, that nothing is meant in Scripture by sorrow, but the loss of joy? or that there is no more in misery, than the loss or absence of happiness? And if the death threatened to Adam can, with certainty, be opposed only to the life given to Adam, when God created him; I think, a state of perfect, perpetual, and hopeless misery is properly opposed to that state Adam was in when God created him. for I suppose it will not be denied, that the life Adam had, was truly a happy life; happy in perfect innocency, in the favor of his Maker, surrounded with the happy fruits and testimonies of his love. And I think it has been proved, that he also was happy in a state of perfect righteousness. Nothing is more manifest, than that it is agreeable to a very common acceptation of the word life, in Scripture, that it be understood as signifying a state of excellent and happy existence. Now that which is most opposite to that life and state in which Adam was created, is a state of total, confirmed wickedness, and perfect hopeless misery, under the

divine displeasure and curse; not excluding temporal death, or the destruction of the body, as an introduction to it.

Besides, that which is much more evident, than any thing Dr. T. says on this head, is, that the death which was to come on Adam, as the punishment of his disobedience, was opposed to that life, which he would have had as the regard of his obedience in case he had not sinned. Obedience and disobedience are contraries; the threatenings and promises which are sanctions of a law, are set in direct opposition, and the promises, regards, and threatened punishments, are most properly taken as each others' opposites. But none will deny, that the life which would have been Adam's reward, if he had persisted in obedience, was eternal life. And therefore we argue justly that the death which stands opposed to that life, (Dr. T. himself being judge, p. 120. S.) is manifestly eternal death, a death widely different from the death we now die. — to use his own word). If Adam, for his persevering obedience, was to have had everlasting life and happiness in perfect holiness, union with his Maker, and enjoyment of his favor, and this was the life which was to be confirmed by the tree of life; then, doubtless, the death threatened in case of disobedience, which stands in direct opposition to this, was an exposure to everlasting wickedness and misery, in separation from God, and in enduring his wrath.

When God first made mankind, and made known to them the methods of his moral government towards them, in the revelation he made of himself to the natural head of the whole species — and letting him know, that obedience to him was expected, and enforcing his duty with the sanction of a threatened punishment, called by the name of death — we may with the greatest reason suppose, in such a case, that by death was meant the most proper punishment of the sin of mankind, and which he speaks of under that name throughout the Scripture, as the proper wages of sin; and this was always, from the beginning, understood to be so in the church of God. It would be strange indeed, if it should be otherwise. It would have been strange, if, when the law of God was first said, and enforced by the threatening of a punishment, nothing at all had been mentioned of that great punishment, ever spoken of under the name of death — in the revelations which he has given to mankind from age — as the proper punishment of the sin of mankind.



And it would be no less strange, if when the punishment which was mentioned and threatened on that occasion, was called by the same name, even death, yet we must not understand it to mean the same thing, but something infinitely diverse, and infinitely more inconsiderable.

But now let us consider what that death is, which the Scripture ever speaks of as the proper wages of sin, and is spoken of as such by God's saints in all ages of the church. I will begin with the New Testament. When the apostle Paul says, (<sup>602</sup>Romans 6:23.) "The wages of sin is death," Dr. T. tells us, (p. 120. S.) that this means eternal death, the second death, a death widely different from the death we now die. The same apostle speaks of death as the proper punishment due for sin, (<sup>610</sup>Romans 7:5. and chapter 8:13. <sup>608</sup>2 Corinthians 3:7. <sup>609</sup>1 Corinthians 15:56. In all which places, Dr. T. himself supposes the apostle to intend eternal death. And when the apostle James speaks of death, as the proper reward, fruit, and end of sin, (<sup>605</sup>James 1:15.) "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death;" it is manifest, that our author supposes eternal destruction to be meant. And the apostle John, agreeably to Dr. T.'s sense, speaks of the second death as that which sin unrepented of will bring all men to at last. (<sup>601</sup>Revelation 2:11. <sup>606</sup>20:6, 14. and <sup>603</sup>21:8. In the same sense the apostle John uses the word in his first epistle chapter <sup>604</sup>3:14. "We know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren. He that hateth his brother, abideth in death." In the same manner Christ used the word from time to time, when he was on earth, and spake concerning the punishment of sin.

"He that heareth my word, and believeth, etc. hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death to life." (<sup>607</sup>John 5:24.)

Where, according to Dr. T.'s own way of arguing, it cannot be the death which we now die, that Christ speaks of, but eternal death, because it is yet in opposition to everlasting life,

"This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die." (<sup>600</sup>John 6:50)

Chapter <sup>609</sup>8:51. "Verily, verily I say unto you, if a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." Chapter <sup>612</sup>11:26. "And whosoever liveth and

believeth in me, shall never die.” In which places it is plain Christ does not mean that believers shall never see temporal death. (See also <sup>2105</sup>Matthew 10:28. and <sup>2105</sup>Luke 10:28.) In like manner, the word was commonly used by the prophets of old, when they spake of death as the proper en and recompence of sin. So, abundantly by the prophet Ezekiel.

“When I say unto the wicked man, thou shalt surely die.”  
(<sup>2105</sup>Ezekiel 3:18)

In the original it is, Dying, thou shalt die: the same form of expression, which God used in the threatening to Adam. We have the same words again, chapter <sup>2588</sup>33:18. In chapter <sup>2680</sup>18:4. it is said, “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” And that temporal death is not meant in these places is plain, because it is promised most absolutely, that the righteous shall not die the death spoken of Chapter <sup>2682</sup>18:21. “He shall surely live he shall not die.” (So verse 9, 17, 19, and 22. and chapter <sup>2682</sup>3:21.) And it is evident the prophet Jeremiah uses the word in the same sense. <sup>2683</sup>Jeremiah 31:30. “Every one shall die for his own iniquity.” And the same death is spoken of by the prophet Isaiah. <sup>2684</sup>Isaiah 11:4. “With the breath of his tips shall he slay the wicked.” (See also chapter <sup>2684</sup>66:16. with verse 24.) Solomon, who we must suppose was thoroughly acquainted with the sense in which the word was used by the wise, and by the ancients, continually speaks of death as the proper fruit, issue, and recompence of sin, using the word only in this sense. <sup>2685</sup>Proverbs 11:19. “As righteousness tendeth to life, so he that pursueth evil pursued it to his own death.” — He cannot mean temporal death, for he often speaks of it as a punishment of the wicked, wherein the righteous shall certainly be distinguished from them: as in <sup>2685</sup>Proverbs 12:28. “In the way of righteousness is life, and in the path-way thereof is no death.” (So in chapter <sup>2685</sup>10:2. <sup>2685</sup>11:4. <sup>2685</sup>13:14. <sup>2685</sup>14:27. and many other places.) Put we find this same wise man observes, that as to temporal death, and temporal events in general, there is no distinction, but that they happen alike to good and bad. (<sup>2685</sup>Ecclesiastes 2:4-16. <sup>2685</sup>8:14. and <sup>2685</sup>9:2, 3.) His words are remarkable in <sup>2685</sup>Ecclesiastes 7:15. “There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life, in his wickedness.” So we find, David in the book of Psalm uses the word death in the same sense, when he speaks of it as the proper wages and issue of sin, <sup>2685</sup>Psalm 34:21. “Evil shall slay the wicked.” He speaks of it as a certain thing, <sup>2685</sup>Psalm 139:19.

“Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God.” And he speaks of it as a thing wherein the wicked are distinguished from the righteous, <sup><1938></sup>Psalm 69:28. “Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.” — And thus we find the word death used in the Pentateuch, where we have the account of the threatening of death to Adam. When, in these books, it is spoken of as the proper fruit, and appointed reward of sin, it is to be understood of eternal death. Thus, <sup><1915></sup>Deuteronomy 30:15. “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.” Verse 19. “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing.” The life that is spoken of here, is doubtless the same that is spoken of in <sup><1916></sup>Leviticus 18:5. “Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, which if a man do, he shall live in them.” This the apostle understands of eternal life; as is plain by <sup><1910></sup>Romans 10:5. and <sup><1912></sup>Galatians 3:12. But that the death threatened for sin in the law of Moses meant eternal death, is what Dr. T. abundantly declares. So in his note on <sup><1911></sup>Romans 5:20. (Par. p. 291.) “Such a constitution the law of Moses was, subjecting, those who were under it to death for every transgression: meaning, by death ETERNAL DEATH.” These are his words. The like he asserts in many other places. When it is said, in the place now mentioned, I have set before thee LIFE and DEATH, blessing and cursing, without doubt, the same blessing and cursing is meant which God had already set before them with such solemnity, in the 27th and 28th chapters; where we have the sum of the curses in those last words of the 27th chapter, Cursed is every one that continueth not all the words of this law, to do them. Which the apostle speaks of as a threatening of eternal death; and with him Dr. T. himself: In this sense also Job and his friends spoke of death, as the wages and end of sin, who lived before any written revelation, and had their religion, and their phraseology about religion, from the ancients.

If any should insist upon it as an objection — against supposing that death was intended to signify eternal death ill the threatening to Adam — that this use of the word is figurative: I reply, that though this should be allowed, yet it is by no means so figurative as many other phrases used in the history contained in these three chapters: as when it Is said, God said, Let there be light, God said Let there be a firmament, etc. as though God spake such words with a voice. So when it is said, God called the light,

day: God called the firmament, heaven, etc. God rested on the seventh day; as though he had been weary and then rested. And when it is said, They heard the voice of God walking; as though the Deity had feet, and took steps on the ground. Dr. T. supposes, that when it is said of Adam and Eve, Their eyes were opened, and they were that they were naked; by the word naked is meant a state of guilt. (P. 12.) which sense of the word, naked, is much further from the common use of the word, than the supposed sense of the word death. SO this author supposes the promise concerning the seed of the woman bruising the serpent's head, while the serpent should bruise his heel, is to be understood of the Messiah destroying the power and sovereignty of the devil, and receiving some slight hurt from him. (P. 15,16.) Which makes the sentence full of figures. And why might not God deliver threatenings to our first parents in figurative expressions, as well as promises?

But indeed, there is no necessity of supposing the word death, or the Hebrew word so translated, if used in the manner that has been supposed, to have been figurative at all. It does not appear but that this word, in its true and proper meaning, might signify perfect misery, and sensible destruction, though the word was also applied to signify something more external and visible. There are many words in our language, such as heart, sense, view, discovery, conception, light, and many others, which are applied to signify external things as that muscular part of the body called heart; external feeling, called sense; the sight of the bodily eye, called view; the finding of a thing by its being uncovered, called discovery; the first beginning of the fetus in the womb, called conception; and the rays of the sun, called light. Yet these words do as truly and properly signify other things of a more spiritual internal nature; such as the disposition, affection, perception, and thought of the mind, and manifestation and evidence to the soul. Common use, which governs the propriety of language, makes the latter things to be as much signified by those words, in their proper meaning, as the former. It is especially common in the Hebrew, and I suppose, other Oriental languages, that the same word that signifies something external, does no less properly and usually signify something more spiritual. So the Hebrew words used for breath, have such a double signification; Neshama signifies both breath and the soul; and the latter as commonly as the former: Ruach is used for breath or wind, but yet more

commonly signifies spirit. *Nephesh* is used for breath, hut yet more commonly signifies soul. So the word *Lebh*, heart, no less properly signifies the soul, especially with regard to the will and attentions, than that part of the body so called. The word *Shalom*, which we render peace, no less properly signifies prosperity and happiness, than mutual agreement. The word translated life, signifies the natural life of the body, and also the perfect and happy state of sensible active being; and the latter as properly as the former. So the word death, signifies destruction, us to outward sensibility, activity, and enjoyment: but it has most evidently another signification, which in the Hebrew tongue is no less proper, viz. perfect, sensible hopeless ruin and misery.

It is therefore wholly without reason urged, that death properly signifies only the loss of this present life, and that therefore nothing else was meant by that death which was threatened for eating the forbidden fruit. Nor does it at all appear but that Adam—who, from what God said concerning the seed of the woman, could understand that relief was promised as to the death which was threatened, as Dr. T. himself supposes — understood the death which was threatened, in the more important sense. Especially seeing temporal death, considered originally and in itself is evermore, excepting as changed by divine grace, an entrance into that dismal state of misery which is shadowed forth by the awful circumstances of this death; circumstances naturally suggesting to the mind the most dreadful state of hopeless, sensible ruin.


As to the objection, that the phrase, *Dying thou shalt die*, is several times used in the books of Moses, to signify temporal death, it can be of no force. For it has been shown already, that the same phrase is sometimes used in Scripture to signify eternal death, in instances much more parallel with this. But indeed nothing can be certainly argued concerning the nature of the thing intended, from its being expressed in such a manner. For it is evident, that such repetitions of a word in the Hebrew language, are no more than an emphasis upon a word in the more modern languages, to signify the great degree of a thing, the importance or certainly of it. etc. When we would signify and impress these, we commonly put an emphasis on our words. Instead of this, the Hebrews, when they would express a thing strongly, repeated or doubled the word, the more to impress the mind of the hearer; as may be plain to every one in the least conversant


with the Hebrew Bible. The repetition in the threatening to Adam, therefore, only implies the solemnity and importance of the threatening. But God may denounce either eternal or temporal death with peremptoriness and solemnity, and nothing can certainly be inferred concerning the nature of the thing threatened, because it is threatened with emphasis more than this, that the threatening is much to be regarded. Though it be true, that it might in an especial manner be expected that a threatening of eternal death would be denounced with great emphasis, such a threatening being infinitely important, and to be regarded above all others.

### SECTION 3

*Wherein it is inquired, whether there be any thing in the history of the three first chapters of Genesis, which should lead us to suppose, that God in his constitution with Adam, dealt with mankind in general, as included in their first father, and that the threatening of death, in case he should eat the forbidden fruit, had respect not only to him, but his posterity?*

Dr. T. rehearsing that threatening to Adam, Thou shalt surely die, and giving us his paraphrase of it, (p. 7, 8.) concludes thus; “Observe, here is not one word relating to Adam’s posterity.” But it may be observed, in opposition to this, that there is scarcely one word that we have an account of, which God ever said to Adam or Eve, but what does manifestly include their posterity in the meaning and desire of it. There is as much of a word said about Adam’s posterity in that threatening, as there is in those words of God to Adam and Eve,

“Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it;”  
(Genesis 1:28.)

and as much in events, to lead us to suppose Adam’s posterity to be included. There is as much of a word of kits posterity in that threatening, as in those words, (verse 29.) “Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, and every tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed,” etc. Even when God was about to create Adam, what he said on that occasion, had not respect only to Adam, but to his posterity. Genesis 1:26. “Let us make man in our image, and let them have dominion over the

fish of the sea,” etc. And, what is more remarkable, there is as much of a word said about Adam’s posterity in the threatening of death, as there is in that sentence, (~~CHAP~~ Genesis 3:19.) “Unto dust shalt thou return.” Which Dr. T. himself supposes to be a sentence pronounced for the execution of that very threatening, Thou shalt surely die. This sentence he himself also often speaks of as including Adam’s posterity: and, what is much more remarkable still, is a sentence which Dr. T. himself often speaks of as including his posterity, at a SENTENCE OF CONDEMNATION, as a JUDICIAL sentence and a sentence which God pronounced with regard to Adam’s POSTERITY, ACTING THE PART OF A JUDGE, and as such condemning them to temporal death. Though he is therein utterly inconsistent with himself, inasmuch as he at the same time abundantly insists, that death is not brought on Adam’s posterity in consequence of his sin, at all as a punishment, but merely by the gracious disposal of a father, bestowing a benefit of the highest nature upon him.

But I shall show, that I do not in any of these things falsely charge or misrepresent Dr. T. — He speaks of the sentence in chapter ~~CHAP~~ 3:19. as pronounced in pursuance of the threatening in the former chapter, in these words, (p. 17, 18.) “The sentence upon the man, verse 17,18,19. First affects the earth, upon which he was to subsist: the ground should be encumbered with many noxious weeds, and the tillage of it more toilsome: which would oblige the man to procure a sustenance by hard labor, till he should die, and drop into the ground, from whence he was taken.

Thus death entered by sin into the world, and man became mortal, ACCORDING TO THE ‘THREATENING IN THE FORMER CHAPTER.’ Now, if mankind became mortal, and must die, according to the threatening in the former chapter, then doubtless the threatening in the former chapter, Thou shalt die, had respect not only to Adam, but to mankind, and included Adam’s posterity. Yea, and Dr. T. is express in it, and very often so, that the sentence concerning dropping into the ground, or resuming to the dust, did include Adam’s posterity. So, p. 20. speaking there of that sentence, “Observe (says he) that we their prosperity are in fact subjected to the same affliction and mortality, here by sentence inflicted upon our first parents.” — P. 42. Note. “But yet man through that long tract, were all subject to death, therefore they must be included in the sentence.” The

same he affirms in innumerable other places, some of which I shall have occasion to mention presently.

The sentence which is founded on the threatening, and (as Dr. T. says) according to the threatening, extends to as many as were included in the threatening and to no more. If the sentence be upon a collective subject, indefinitely, the greatest part of which were not included in the threatening, nor were ever threatened at all, then certainly this sentence is not according to the threatening, nor built upon it. If the sentence be according to the threatening, then we may justly explain the threatening by the sentence. And if we find the sentence spoken to the same person whom the threatening was spoken, and spoken in the second person singular in like manner with the threatening, founded on the threatening, and according to it; and if we find the sentence includes Adam's posterity, then we may certainly infer, that so did the threatening. And hence, that both the threatening and sentence were delivered to Adam as the public head and representative of his posterity.

And we may also further infer from it, in another respect. directly contrary to Dr. T.'s doctrine, that the sentence which included Adam's posterity, was to death, as a punishment to that posterity, as well as to Adam himself. For a sentence pronounced in execution of a threatening, is for a punishment. Threatenings are of punishments. Neither God nor man are wont to threaten others with favors and benefits.

But lest any of this author's admirers should stand to it, that it may very properly be said, God threatened mankind with bestowing great kindness upon them, I would observe, that Dr. T. himself open speaks of this sentence as pronounced by God on all mankind, as condemning them; as a sentence of condemnation judicially pronounced, or a sentence which God pronounced on all mankind acting as their judge, and in a judicial proceeding. This he affirms in multitudes of places. In p. 20. speaking of this sentence, which, he there says, subjects us, Adam's and Eve's posterity, to affliction and mortality, he calls it a judicial act of condemnation. "The judicial act of condemnation (says he) clearly implies, a taking him to pieces, and turning, him to the ground from whence he was taken." And (p. 28, 29. Note.) "In all the Scripture from one end to the other, there is recorded but one judgment to condemnation, which came



upon all men, and that is, <sup><0087></sup>Genesis 3:17-19. Dost thou art, etc. P. 40. speaking of the same, he says, "All men are brought under condemnation." In p. 27, 28. "BY judgment, judgment to condemnation, it appeareth evidently to me, he (Paul) means the being adjudged to the aforementioned death; he means the sentence at death, of a general mortality, pronounced upon mankind, in consequence of Adam's first transgression. And the condemnation inflicted by the judgment of God, answereth to, and is in effect the same thing with; being dead." P. 30. "The many, that is mankind, were subject to death by the judicial act of God." P. 31. "Being made sinners may very well signify, being adjudged, or condemned to death. — for the Hebrew word, etc. signifies to make one a judicial sentence, or to condemn." — P. 178. Par on <sup><8189></sup>Romans 5:19. "Upon the account of one man's disobedience, mankind were judicially constituted sinners that is subjected to death by the sentence of God the Judge, — And there are many other places where he repeats the same thing. And it is pretty remarkable, that (page 48, 49.) immediately after citing <sup><0075></sup>Proverbs 17:15. "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, are both an abomination to the Lord" — and when he is careful in citing these words, to put us in mind, that it is meant of a judicial act yet, in the very next words, he supposes that God himself does so, since he constantly supposes that Adam's posterity, whom God condemns, are innocent. His words are these, "From all this it followeth, that as the judgment, that passed upon all men to condemnation, is death's coming upon all need, by the judicial act of God, upon occasion of Adam's transgression: so," etc.—And it is very remarkable, that (p. 3, 4, 7. S.) he insists, "That in Scripture no action is said to be imputed, reckoned, or accounted to any person for righteousness or CONDEMNATION, but the proper act and deed of that person." — And Yet he thus continually affirms, that all mankind are made sinners by a judicial act at God the Judge, even to condemnation and judicially-constituted sinners, and so subjected to a judicial sentence of condemnation, on occasion of Adam's sin, and all according to the threatening denounced to Adam, "Thou shalt surely die:" though he supposes Adam's posterity were not included in the threaten, and are looked upon as perfectly innocent, and treated wholly as such.

I am sensible Dr. T. does not run into all this inconsistency only through oversight and blundering; but that he is driven to it, to make out his matters in his evasion of that noted paragraph in the fifth chapter of Romans; especially those three sentences; (verse 16.) "The judgment was by one to condemnation." (verse 18.) "By the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation;" and (verse 19.) "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." And I am also, sensible of what he offers to salve the inconvenience, viz. "That if the threatening had immediately been executed on Adam, he would have had no posterity; and that so far the possible existence of Adam's posterity fell under the threatening of the law, And into the hands of the judge, to be disposed of as he should think fit: and that this is the ground of the judgment to condemnation, coming upon all men." But this is trifling, to a great degree: for,

**1.** Suffering death, and failing of possible existence, are entirely different things. If there had never been any such thing as sin committed, there would have been infinite numbers of possible beings, which would have failed of existence, by God's appointment. God has appointed (If the phrase be allowable) not to bring into existence numberless possible worlds, each replenished with innumerable possible inhabitants. But is this equivalent to God's appointing them all to suffer death?

**2.** Our author represents, that by Adam's sin, the possible existence of his posterity fell into the hand' of the Judge, to be disposed of as he should think fit. But there was no need of any sin of Adam, or of any body else, in order to their being brought into God's hands, in this respect. The future possible existence of all created beings is in God's hands, antecedently to the existence of any sin. And therefore, infinite members of possible beings without any relation to Adam, or any other sinning being fail of their possible existence. And if Adam had never sinned, yet it would be unreasonable to suppose, but that innumerable multitudes of his possible posterity would have failed of existence by God's disposal. For will any be so unreasonable as to imagine, that God would and must have brought into existence as many of his posterity as it was possible should be, if he had not sinned? Or, that then it would not have been possible, that any other persons of his posterity should ever had existed, shall those Individual persons who now actually suffer death, and return to the dust?

**3.** We have many accounts in Scripture, which imply the actual failing of the possible existence of innumerable multitudes of Adam's posterity, yea, of many more than ever come into exigency. As, of the possible posterity of Abel, the possible posterity of all them that were destroyed by the flood, and the possible posterity of the innumerable multitudes, which we read of in Scripture, destroyed by sword, pestilence? etc. And if the threatening to Adam reached his posterity, In no other respect than this, that they were liable to be deprived by it of their possible existence, then these instances are much more properly a fulfillment of that threatening, than the suffering of death by such as actually come into existence, and so is that which is most properly the judgment to condemnation, executed by the sentence of the Judge, proceeding on the ground of that threatening. But where do we ever find this so represented in Scripture? We read of multitudes cut off for their personal sins, who thereby fails from their possible posterity. And these are mentioned as God's judgments on them, and effects of God's condemnation of them: but when are they ever spoken of as God judicially proceeding against, and condemning their possible posterity?

**4.** Dr. T. in what he says concerning this matter, speaks of the threatening of the law delivered to Adam, which the possible existence of his posterity fell under, as the ground of the judgment to condemnation coming upon all men. But herein he is exceeding inconsistent with himself: for he affirms in a place fore-cited, that the Scripture never speaks of any sentence of condemnation coming upon all men, but that sentence in the third of Genesis, concerning man fuming to dust. But, according to him, the threatening of the law delivered to Adam, could not be the ground of that sentence; for he greatly insists upon it, that that law was entirely abrogated before that sentence was pronounced, had no existence to have any such influence as might procure a sentence of death, and therefore this sentence was introduced entirely on another footing, a new dispensation of grace. The reader may see this matter strenuously urged, and particularly argued by him p. 113-120. S. So that this sentence could not, according to him, huge the threatening of that law for its ground, as he supposes; for it never stood upon that ground. It could not be called a judgment of condemnation, under any such view; for it could not be viewed in circumstances where It never existed.

**5.** If, as our author supposes, that the sentence of death on all men comes under the notion of a judgment to condemnation by this means, viz. that the threatening to Adam was in some respect the ground of it; then it also comes under the notion of a punishment: for threatening annexed to breaches of laws, are to punishments; and a judgment of condemnation to the thing threatened, must be to punishment; and the thing condemned to, must have as much the notion of a punishment, as the sentence has the notion of a judgment to condemnation. But this Dr. T. wholly denied: he denies that death comes as any punishment at all; but insists that it comes only as a savor and benefit, and a fruit of fatherly love to Adam's posterity, respected not as guilty, but wholly innocent. So that his scheme will not admit of its coming under the notion of a sentence to condemnation in any respect whatsoever Our author's supposition, that the possible existence of Adam's posterity comes under the threatening of the law, and into the hands of the Judge, angst is the ground of the condemnation of all men to death, implies, that death by this sentence is appointed to mankind us an evil, at least negatively so; as it is a privation of good: for he manifestly speaks of a non-existence as a negative evil. But herein he is inconsistent with himself: for he continually insists, that mankind are subjected to death only as a benefit, as has been before shown. According to him, death is not appointed to mankind, as a negative evil. as any cessation of existence, or even diminution of good; but on the contrary, as a means of more happy existence, and a great increase of good.

So that this evasion of Dr. T. is so far from helping the matter, that it increases and multiplies the inconsistency. And that the law, with the threatening of death annexed, was given to Adam as the head of mankind, and to his posterity as included in him, not only follow from some of our author's own assertions-and the plain, full declarations of the apostle in the fifth of Romans, which drove Dr. T. into such gross inconsistencies — but the account given in the three first chapters of Genesis, directly and inevitably teed us to such a conclusion.

Though the sentence, <sup><009></sup>Genesis 3:19. "Unto dust thou shalt return." be not of equal extent with the threatening in the foregoing chapter, or an execution of the main curse of the law therein denounced-for, that it should have been so, would have been inconsistent with the intimations of mercy just before given — yet it is plain, this sentence is in pursuance of that

threatening, being to something that was included in it. The words of the sentence were delivered to the same person with the words of the threatening, and in the same manner, in like singular terms, and as much without any express mention of his posterity. Yet it manifestly appears by the consequence, as well as all circumstances, that his posterity were included in the words of the sentence, as is confessed on all hands. And as the words were apparently delivered in the form of the sentence of a judge, condemning for something that he was displeased with, and ought to be condemned, viz. sin, and as the sentence to him and his posterity was but one, dooming to the same suffering, under the same circumstances, both the one and the other sentenced in the same words, spoken but once, and immediately to but one person, we hence justly infer, that it was the same thing to both; and not as Dr. T. suggests, (p. 67.) a sentence to a proper punishment to Adam, but a mere promise of favor to his posterity.

Indeed, sometimes our author seems to suppose, that God meant the thing denounced in this sentence, as a favor both to Adam and his posterity. But to his posterity or mankind in general, who are the main subject, he ever insists, that it was purely intended as a favor. And therefore, one would have thought, the sentence should have been delivered, with manifestations and appearances of favor, and not of anger. How could Adam understand it as a promise of great favor, considering the manner and circumstances of the denunciation? how could he think, that God would go about to delude him, by clothing himself with garments of vengeance, using words of displeasure and rebuke, setting forth the heinousness of his crime, attended with cherubims and a flaming sword;

when all that he meant was only higher testimonies of devour than he had before in a state of innocence, and to manifest fatherly love and kindness, in promises of great blessings? If this was the case, God's words to Adam must be understood thus: "Because thou, hast done so wickedly, hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it, therefore I will be more kind to thee than I was in thy state of innocence, and do now appoint for thee the following great favors: Cursed be the ground for thy sake," etc. And thus Adam must understand what was said, unless any will say, (and God forbid that any should be so blasphemous,) that God clothed himself with appearances of displeasure, to deceive Adam,

and make him believe the contrary of what he intended, and lead him to expect a dismal train of evils on his posterity, contrary to all reason and justice, implying the most horribly unrighteous treatment of millions of perfectly innocent creatures. It is certain, there is not the least appearance in what God said, or the manner of it, as Moses, gives its the account, of any other, than that God was now testifying displeasure, condemning the subject of the sentence he was pronouncing, as justly exposed to punishment for sin, and for that sin which he mentions.

When God was pronouncing this sentence, Adam doubt less understood, that God had respect to his posterity, as well as himself, though God spake wholly in the second person singular, Because then thou shalt eat, — In sorrow thou shalt eat, — Unto the dust shalt thou return. But he had as much reason to understand God as having respect to his posterity, when he directed his speech to him in like manner in the threatening, Thou shalt surely die. The sentence plainly refers to the threatening, and results from it. The threatening says, by thou eat, thou shalt die: the sentence says, Because thou hast eaten thou shalt die. And Moses, who wrote the account, had no reason to doubt but that the affair would be thus understood by his readers; for such a way of speaking was well understood in those days: the history he gives us of the origin of things, abounds with it. Such a manner of speaking to the heads of the race, having respect to the progeny, is not only used in almost every thing that God said to Adam and Eve, but even in what he said to the very birds and fishes, <sup><0012></sup>Genesis 1:22. And also in what he said afterwards to Noah, <sup><0010></sup>Genesis 9:10 Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Canaan, <sup><0015></sup>Genesis 9:5-27. So in promises made to Abraham, God directed his speech to him, and spake in the second person singular, from time to time, but meant chiefly his posterity: To thee will I give this land. In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed, etc. etc. And in what is said of Ishmael, as of his person, but meant chiefly of his posterity, <sup><0012></sup>Genesis 16:12. and <sup><0013></sup>17:20. Thus in what Isaac said to Esau and Jacob, in his blessing he spake to them in the second person singular, but meant chiefly their posterity. And so for the most part in the promises made to Isaac and Jacob; and in Jacob blessing Ephraim and Manasseh, and his twelve sons.

But I shall take notice of one or two things further, showing that Adam's posterity were included in God's establishment with him, and the

threatening denounced for his sin, and that the calamities which come upon them in consequence of his sin, are brought on them as punishments.

This is evident from the curse on the ground; which if it be any curse at all, comes equally on Adam's posterity with himself. And if it be a curse, then against whomsoever it is designed, and on whomsoever terminates, it comes as a punishment, and not as a blessing, so far as it comes in consequence of that sentence.

Dr. T. (p. 19.) says, "A curse is pronounced upon the ground, but no curse upon the woman and the man." And (p. 45, 46. S.) he insists that the ground only was cursed, and not the man: as though a curse could terminate on lifeless, senseless earth wise than as terminating upon man though the ground would be as senseless as to suppose the meaning to be, The ground shall be punished and shall be miserable for thy sake. Our author interprets the curse on the ground; of its being encumbered with noxious weeds: but would these weeds have been any curse on the ground, if there had been no inhabitants, or if the inhabitants had been of such a nature, that these weeds should not have been noxious, but useful to them? It is said,

"Cursed shall be thy basket, and thy store:"  
(~~Exod~~ Deuteronomy 28:17)

and would he not be thought to talk very ridiculously, who should say, "Here is curse upon the basket, but not a word of any curse upon the owner: and therefore we have no reason at all to look upon it as any punishment upon him, or any testimony of Gods displeasure towards him." How plain is it, that when lifeless things, not capable either of benefit or suffering, are said to be cursed or blessed with regard to sensible beings—who use or possess these things, or have connection with them—the meaning must be, that these sensible beings are cursed or blessed in the other or with respect to them! In ~~Exod~~ Exodus 23:25. it is said "He shall bless thy bread and thy water." And I suppose, never any body yet proceeded to such a degree of subtlety in distinguishing as to say, "Here is a blessing on the bread and the water which went into the possessor's mouth, but no blessing on him." To make such a distinction, with regard to the curse God pronounced on the ground, would in some respects be more unreasonable, because God is express in explaining the matter declaring that it was man's

sake, expressly referring this curse to him, as being for the sake of his guilt, and as consisting in the sorrow and suffering he should have from it: “In sorrow shalt thou eat of it. — Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee.” So that God’s own words tell us where the curse terminates. The words are parallel with those in <sup><1830></sup>Deuteronomy 28:16. but only more plain and explicit, “Cursed shalt thou be in the field, or in the ground.”

If this part of the sentence was pronounced under no notion of any curse or punishment at all upon mankind, but, on the contrary, as making an alteration for the better, as to them—that instead of the sweet, but tempting, pernicious fruit of paradise, it might produce wholesome fruits, more for the health of the soul; that it might bring forth thorns and thistles, as excellent medicines, to prevent or cure moral distempers, diseases which would issue in eternal death—then it was a blessing on the ground, and not a curse, and it might more properly have been said, “Blessed shall the ground be for thy sake.—I will make a happy change in it, that it may be a habitation more fit for a creature so infirm, and so apt to be overcome with temptation, as thou art.”

The event makes it evident, that in pronouncing this curse, God had as much respect to Adam’s posterity, as to himself. And so it was understood by his pious posterity before the flood, as appears by what Lamech, the father of Noah, says,

“And he called his name Noah; saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work, and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.” (<sup><1830></sup>Genesis 5:29)

Another thing which argues, that Adam’s posterity were included in the threatening of death—and that our first parents understood, when fallen, that the tempter, in persuading them to eat the forbidden fruit, had aimed at the punishment and ruin of both them and their posterity, and had procured it — is Adam immediately giving his wife that new name, Eve or Life, on the promise or intimation of the disappointment and overthrow’ of the tempter in that matter by her seed. This Adam understood to be by his procuring LIFE; not only for themselves, but for many of their posterity, and there delivering them from that death and ruin which the serpent had brought upon them. Those that should be thus delivered, and obtain life, Adam calls the living. And because he observed, be what God



said, that deliverance, or life, was to be by the seed of the woman he therefore remarks, that she is the mother of all living, and thereupon gives her a new name, LIFE, ~~Gen~~Genesis 3:20.

There is a great deal of evidence, that this is the occasion of Adam giving his wife her new name. This was her new honor, and the greatest honor, at least in her present state, that the Redeemer was to be of her seed. New names were wont to be given for something that was the person's peculiar honor. So it was with regard to the new names of Abraham, Sarah, and Israel. Dr. T. himself observes, that they who are saved by Christ, are called, (hi I, ~~2 Cor~~2 Corinthians 4:11.) the living or they that live.

Thus we find in the Old Testament, the righteous are exiled by the name of the living,

“Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not he written with the righteous.” (~~Psa~~Psalm 69:28)

If what Adam meant by her being the mother of all living, was only her being the mother of mankind, and gave her the name life upon that account, it were much the most likely that he would have given her this name at first, when God first united them, under that blessing be fruitful and multiply, and when he had a prospect of her being: the mother of mankind in a state of immortality, living indeed, living and never dying.

But that Adam should at that time give her only the name of Isha, and then immediately on that melancholy change, by their coming under the sentence of death, with all their posterity — having now a new awful prospect of her being the mother of nothing but a dying race, all from generation to generation turning to dust, through her folly he should chance her name into life, calling her now the mother of all living, is (on that supposition) perfectly unaccountable. Besides, it is manifest, that it was not her being the mother of all mankind-or her relation, as a mother, to her posterity-but the quality of those of whom she was to be the mother, Adam had in view, in giving his wife this new name; as appears by the name itself, which signifies life. And if it had been only a natural and mortal life he had in view, this was nothing to distinguish her posterity from the brutes; for the very same name of living ones; or living things, is given from time to time to them. Besides, if by life the quality of her

posterity was not meant, there was nothing in it to distinguish her from Adam, for thus she was no more the mother of all living, than he was the father of all living; and she could no more properly be called by the name of life on any such account, that; he: but names are given for distinction. Doubtless Adam took notice of something distinguishing concerning her, that occasioned his giving her this new name. And I think it is exceeding natural to suppose, that as Adam had given her the first name from the manner of her creation, so he gave her the new name from redemption, and as it were new creation, through a Redeemer, of her seed. And, it is equally probable, that he should give her this name from that which comforted him, with respect to the curse that God had pronounced on him and the earth, as Lamech named Noah,

“Saying, this same shall comfort us concerning our work, and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.”  
(~~GEN~~ Genesis 5:29)

Accordingly he gave her this new name not at her first creation, but immediately after the promise of a Redeemer. (See ~~GEN~~ Genesis 3:15-20.)

Now, as to the consequence which I infer from Adam giving his wife this name, on the intimation which God had given-that Satan should by her seed be overthrown and disappointed, as to his malicious design in tempting the woman-it is, that great numbers of mankind should be saved, whom he calls the living, they should be saved from the effects of this malicious design of the old serpent, and from that ruin which he had brought upon them by tempting their first parents to sin- and so the serpent would be, with respect to them, disappointed and over thrown in his design. But how is any death, or indeed any calamity at all, brought upon their posterity by Satan’s malice in that temptation, if instead of that, all the consequent death and sorrow was the fruit of God’s fatherly love? an instance of his free and sovereign favor? And if multitudes of Eve’s posterity are saved from either spiritual or temporal death, by a Redeemer, one of her seed how is that any disappointment of Satan’s design, in tempting our first parents? How came he to have any such thing in view, as the death of Adam’s and Eve’s posterity, by tempting them to sin, or any some have objected, against his posterity being included in the threatening delivered to Adam, that the threatening itself was inconsistent

with his having any posterity: it being that he should die on the day that he sinned To this I answer, that the threatening was not inconsistent with his having posterity, on two accounts:

**I.** Those words, In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die, according to the use of such like expressions among the Hebrew, do not signify immediate death, or that the execution shall be within twenty-four hours from the commission of the fact; nor did God by those words limit himself as to the time of executing the threatened punishment, but that was still left to God's pleasure. Such a phrase, according to the idiom of the Hebrew tongue, signifies no more than these two things:

**1.** A real connection between the sin and the punishment. So <sup>298</sup>Ezekiel 33:12, 13. "The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression. As for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness: neither shall the righteous be able to live in the day that he sinneth: hut for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it." Here it is said, that in the day he sinneth, he shall not be able to live, but he shall die; not signifying the time when death shall be executed upon him, but the connection between his sin and death; such a connection as in our present common use of language is signified by the adverb of time, when; as if one should say, "According to the laws of our nation, so long as a man behaves himself as a good subject, he may live; but when he turns rebel, he must die:" not signifying the hour, day, or month, in which he must be executed, but only the connection between his crime and death.

**2.** Another thing which seems to be signified by such an expression is, that Adam should be exposed to death by one transgression, without waiting to try him the second time. If he eat of that tree, he should immediately fall under condemnation, though afterwards he might abstain ever so strictly. In this respect the words are much of the same force with those words of Solomon to Shimei; <sup>299</sup>1 Kings 2:37. "For it shall be that on the day that thou goest out, and passest over the brook Kidron, thou shalt know for certain that thou shalt surely die." Not meaning, that he should certainly be executed on that day, but that he should be assuredly liable to death for the first offense, and that he should not have another trial to see whether he would go over the brook Kidron a second time.-Besides.

**II.** If the words had implied, that Adam should die that very day (within twenty-four or twelve hours) or that moment in which he transgressed, yet it will by no means follow, that God obliged himself to execute the punishment in its utmost extent on that day. The sentence was in great part executed immediately; he then died spiritually. he lost his innocence and original righteousness, and the favor of God, a dismal alteration was made in his soul, by the loss of that holy divine principle, which was in the highest sense the life of the soul. In this he was truly ruined and undone that very day; becoming corrupt, miserable, and helpless. And I think it has been shown, that such a spiritual death was one great thing implied in the threatening. And the alteration then made in his body and external state, was the beginning of temporal death. Grievous external calamity is called by the name of death in Scripture, ~~Exodus~~ Exodus 10:17 “Entreat the Lord that he may take awe! this death.” Not only way Adam’s soul ruined that day, but his BODY was ruined; it lost its beauty and vigor, and became a poor, dull, decaying, dying thing.

And besides all this, Adam was that day undone in a more dreadful sense, he immediately fell under the curse of the law, and condemnation to eternal perdition. In the language of Scripture, he is dead, that is, in a state of condemnation to death; even as our author often explains this language in his exposition upon Romans. In scripture language, he that believes in Christ, immediately, receives life. He passes at that time from death to life, and thenceforward (to use the apostle John’s phrase) “has eternal life abiding in him.” But yet, he does not then receive eternal life-in its highest completion; he has but the beginning of it; and receives it in a vastly greater degree at death. The proper time for the complete fullness, is not till the day of judgment. When the angels sinned, their punishment was immediately executed in a degree; but their full punishment is not till the end of the world. And there is nothing in God’s threatening to Adam that bound him to execute his full punishment at once; nor any thing which determines, that he should have no posterity. The constitution which God established and declared determined, that IF he sinned, and had posterity, he and they should die. But there was no constitution determining the actual being of his posterity in this case; what posterity he should have, how many, or whether any at all. All these things God had reserved in his own power: the law and its sanction not with the matter.

It may be proper in this place also to take some notice of that objection of Dr. T. against Adam being supposed to be a federal head for his posterity, that it gives him greater honor than Christ, as it supposes that all his posterity would have had eternal life by his obedience, if he had stood, and so a greater number would have had the benefit of his obedience, than are saved by Christ. — I think, a very little consideration is sufficient to show, that there is no weight in this objection. For the benefit of Christ's merit may nevertheless be vastly beyond that which would have been by the obedience of Adam. For those that are saved by Christ, are not merely advanced to happiness by his merits, but saved from the infinitely dreadful effects of Adam's sin, and many from immense guilt, pollution, and misery, by personal sins. They are also brought to a holy and happy state through infinite obstacles, and exalted to a far greater degree of dignity, felicity, and glory, than would have been due for Adam's obedience; for aught I know, many thousand times so great. And there is enough in the gospel-dispensation, clearly to manifest the sufficiency of Christ's merits for such effects in all mankind. And how great the number will be, that shall actually be the subjects of them, or how great a proportion of the whole race, considering the vast success of the gospel that shall be in that future, extraordinary, and glorious season, often spoken of, none can tell. And the honor of these two federal heads arises not so much from what was proposed to each for his trial, as from their success, and the good actually obtained; and also the manner of obtaining. Christ obtains the benefits men have through him by proper merit of conditioning, and a true purchase by an equivalent, which would not have been the case with Adam if he had obeyed.

I have now particularly considered the account which Moses gives us, in the beginning of the Bible, of our first parents, and God's dealings with them; the constitution he established with them, their transgression, and what followed. And on the whole, if we consider the manner in which God apparently speaks to Adam from time to time; and particularly, if we consider how plainly and undeniably his posterity are included in the sentence of death pronounced on him after his fall, founded on the foregoing threatening, and consider the curse denounced on the ground for his sake, for his sorrow, and that of his posterity; and also consider, what is evidently the occasion of his giving his wife the new name of Eve, and

his meaning in it-and withal consider apparent fact in constant and universal events, with relation to the state of our first parents and their posterity from that time forward, through all ages of the world-I cannot but think, it must appear to every impartial person, that Moses's account does, with sufficient evidence, lead all mankind, to whom his account is communicated, to understand, that God, in his constitution wish Adam, dealt with him as a public person — as the head of the human species-and had respect to his posterity, as included in him. And it must appear, that this history is given by divine direction, in the beginning of the first written revelation, in order to exhibit to our view the origin of the present sinful, miserable state of mankind, that we might see what that was, which first gave occasion for all those consequent wonderful dispensations of divine mercy and grace towards mankind, which are the great subject of the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, and that these things are not obscurely and doubtfully pointed forth, but delivered in a plain account of things, which easily and naturally exhibits, them to our understandings.

## CHAPTER 2

### *Observations on Other Parts of the Holy Scriptures, Chiefly in the Old Testament, That Prove the Doctrine of Original Sin.*

ORIGINAL depravity may well be argued, from wickedness being often spoken of in Scripture, as a thing belonging to the race of mankind, and as if it were a property of the species. So in <sup><B44D></sup>Psalm 14:2, 3. “The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” The like we have again, <sup><B5FD></sup>Psalm 53:2, 3.-Dr. T. says, (p. 104,105.) “The HOLY Spirit does not mean this of every individual; because in the very same psalm, he speaks of some that were righteous, verse 5. God is in the generation of the righteous.” But how little is this observation to the purpose? For who ever supposed, that no unrighteous men were ever chanced by divine grace, and afterwards made righteous? The psalmist is speaking of what men are as they are the children of men, born of the corrupt human race; and not as born of God, whereby they come to be the children of God, and of the generation of the righteous. The apostle Paul cites this place in <sup><B5FD></sup>Romans 3:10-12. to prove the universal corruption of mankind, but yet in the same chapter he supposes the same persons spoken of as wicked, may become righteous, through the righteousness and grace of God.

Wickedness is spoken of in other places in the book of Psalm, as a thing that belongs to men, as of the human race as sons of men. Thus, in <sup><B04D></sup>Psalm 4:2. O ye sons of men how long will ye turn my glory into shame? How long will ye love vanity?” etc. <sup><B57D></sup>Psalm 57:4 “I lie among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.” <sup><B58D></sup>Psalm 58:1, 2. Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O Congregation? Do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men? Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh out the violence of your hands in the earth.” Our author mentioning these places, says, (p. 105. note,) “There was a strong party in Israel disaffected to David’s person and government, and sometimes he chooseth to denote them by the sons or children of men.” But it would have been worth his while to have

inquired, Why the psalmist should choose to denote the worst men in Israel by this name? Why he should choose thus to disgrace mankind, as if the compellation of sons of men most property belonged to such as were of the vilest character, and as if all the sons of men, even every one of them, were of such a character, and none of them did good; no, not one? Is it not strange, that the righteous should not be thought worthy to be called sons of men, and ranked with that noble race of beings, who are born into the world wholly right and innocent? It is a good, easy, and natural reason; why he chooseth to call the wicked, sons of men, as a proper name for them, That by being of the sons of men, or of the corrupt, ruined race of mankind, they come by their depravity. And the psalmist himself leads us to this very reason, <sup><180></sup>Psalm 58. “Do ye judge uprightly, O ye son of men yea, in heart ye work wickedness ye weigh out the violence of your hands. The wicked are estranged from the womb,” etc. Of which I shall speak more by and by.

Agreeable to these places in <sup><180></sup>Proverbs 21:8.

“The way of man is froward and strange; but as for the pure,  
his work is right.”

He that is perverse in his walk, is here called by the name of man, as distinguished from the pure: which I think is absolutely unaccountable, if all mankind by nature are pure, and perfectly innocent, and all such as are froward and strange in their ways, therein depart from the native purity of all mankind. The words naturally lead us to suppose the contrary; that depravity and perverseness properly belong to mankind as they are naturally, and that a being made pure, is by an after-work by which some are delivered from native pollution, and distinguished from mankind in general: which is perfectly agreeable to the representation in <sup><640></sup>Revelation 14:4. where we have an account of a number that were not defiled, but were pure, and followed the Lamb; of whom it is said, “These were redeemed from among men.”

To these things agree <sup><2475></sup>Jeremiah 17:5, 9. In verse 5. it is said, “Cursed is he that trusteth in man.” And in verse 9 this reason is given, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” What heart is this so wicked and deceitful? Why? evidently the heart of him, who, it was said before, we must not trust; and that is MAN. It alters



not the case as to the present argument, whether the deceitfulness of the heart here spoken of, be in deceitfulness to the man himself, or to others. So <sup><210B></sup>Ecclesiastes 9:3. "Madness is in the heart of the sons of men, while they live." And those words of Christ to Peter, <sup><1062></sup>Matthew 16:23. "Get thee behind me, Satan-for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men. Signifying plainly, that to be carnal and vain, and opposite to what is spiritual and divine, is what properly belongs to men in their present state. The same thing is supposed in that of the apostle, <sup><410B></sup>1 Corinthians 3:3. "For ye are yet carnal. For whereas there is among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" And that in <sup><2107></sup>Hosea 6:7. "But they, like men, have transgressed the covenant." To these places may be added <sup><410B></sup>Matthew 7:2. "If ye being evil, know how to Live good gifts." <sup><304F></sup>James 4:5. "Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, the spirit that dwelleth in, us, lusteth to envy?"-<sup><100B></sup>1 Peter 4:2. "That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the lusts of men, but to the will of god."-Yet above all, that in <sup><3316></sup>Job 15:16. "How much more abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh iniquity like water?" Of which more presently.

Now what account can be given of these things, on Dr. T.'s scheme? How strange is it, that we should have such descriptions, all over the Bible, of MAN, and the sons OF MEN! Why should man be so continually spoken of as evil, carnal, perverse, deceitful, and desperately wicked, if all men are by nature as perfectly innocent, and free from any propensity to evil, as Adam was the first moment of his creation, all made right, as our author would have us understand <sup><2102></sup>Ecclesiastes 7:29;? Why, on the contrary, is it not said, at least as often, and with equal reason. that the heart of man is right and pure; that the way of man is innocent and holy, and that he who savours true virtue and wisdom, savors the things that be of men? Yea, and why might it not as well have been said, the Lord looked down from heaven on the sons of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and did seek after God, and they were all right, altogether, pure, there was none inclined to do wickedness, no, not one.

Of the like import with the texts mentioned ale those which represent wickedness as what properly belongs to the WORLD and that they who are otherwise, are saved from the world and called out of it. As <sup><100B></sup>John 7:7. "The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth; because I testify of it, that

the works thereof are evil.” Chapter <sup><882></sup>8:23. “Ye are of this world: I am not of this world. Chapter <sup><847></sup>14:17. “The spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive; because it seeth him not neither knoweth him: but ye know him.” Chapter <sup><858></sup>15:18, 19. “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it bated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, hut I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” <sup><648></sup>Revelation 14:3, 4. “These are they which were deemed on the earth, — redeemed from among men.

<sup><879></sup>John 17:9. “I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me.” Verse 14. “I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world <sup><883></sup>1 John 3:13 “Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.” Chapter <sup><845></sup>4:5. “They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.” Chapter <sup><859></sup>5:19. “We are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.” It is evident, that in these places, by the world is meant the world of mankind; not their habitation, but the inhabitants: for, it is the world spoken of as loving, hating, doing evil works speaking, hearing, etc. The same thing is shown, when wickedness is often spoken of as being man’s OWN, in contradistinction from virtue and holiness. So men’s lusts are often called their OWN hearts’ lusts, and their practicing wickedness is called walking in their OWN ways, walking in their OWN counsels, in the imagination of their own heart, and in the sight of their own eyes, according to their OWN devices, etc. These things denote wickedness to be a quality belonging properly to the character and nature of mankind in their present state: as, when Christ would represent that lying is remarkably the character and the very nature of the devil in his present state, he expresses it thus,

“When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his OWN: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” (<sup><884></sup>John 3:44)

And that wickedness belongs to the very nature of men in their present state, may be argued from those places which speak of mankind as being wicked in their children, or from their childhood. So <sup><895></sup>Proverbs 22:15.

“Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child: but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”

Nothing is more manifest, than that the wise man in this book continually uses the word folly, or foolishness, for wickedness; and that this is what he means in this place, the words themselves explain. For the rod of correction is proper to drive away no other foolishness, but that which is of amoral nature. The word rendered bound, signifies (as observed in Pool's Synopsis) a close and firm union. The same word is used in chapter ~~2002~~6:21. "Bind them continually upon shine heart." And chapter ~~2002~~7:3. "Bind them upon thy finales write them upon the table of thine heart." The same verb is used, ~~2002~~1 Samuel 18:1. "The soul of Jonathan was knit, or bound, to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." — But how comes wickedness to be so firmly bound, and strongly fixed, in the hearts of children, if it be not there naturally? They have had no time firmly to fix habits of sin, by long custom in actual wickedness, as those who have lived many years in the world.

The same thing is signified in that noted place,

"For the imagination of man's heart is evil, from his youth."

(~~2002~~Genesis 8:21)

It alters not the case, whether it be translated for or though the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, as Dr. T. would have it. The word translated youth, signifies the whole of the former liars of the age of man, which commences from the beginning of life. The word in its derivation, has reference to the birth or beginning of existence. It comes from a word to shake off, as a tree shakes off its ripe fruit, or a plant its seed; the birth of children being commonly represented by a tree yielding fruit, or a plant yielding seed. So that the word here translated youth, comprehends not only what we in English most commonly call the time of youth, but also childhood and infancy, and is very often used to signify these latter. Dr. T. says, (p. 124. note,) that he "conceives, from the youth, is a phrase signifying the greatness or long duration of a thing. But if by long duration he means any thing else than what is literally expressed, viz. from the beginning of life, he has no reason to conceive so, neither has what he offers so much as the shadow of a reason for his conception. There is no appearance in the words of the two or three texts he mentions, of their meaning anything else than what is most literally signified. And it is certain, that what he suggests is not the ordinary import of such a phrase

among the Hebrews; but that thereby is meant from the beginning, or the early time of life, or existence, as may be seen in the places following, where the same word in the Hebrew is used as in the eighth of Genesis.

<sup><1912></sup>1 Samuel 12:2. "I am old and gray-headed and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day." <sup><1970></sup>Psalm 71:5, 6. "Thou art my trust from my youth: by thee have I been holden up from the womb. Thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels." (Verse 17, 18.) "O God, thou hast taught me from any youth; and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works: now also, when I am old and gray-headed, forsake me not." <sup><1991></sup>Psalm 129:1, 2. "Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, man Israel now say: many a time have they afflicted me from my youth; yet have they not prevailed against me." <sup><2370></sup>Isaiah 47:10 "Stand now with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast labored from thy youth." (So also verse 15.) <sup><1997></sup>2 Samuel 19:7. "That will be worse unto thee, than all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now." <sup><3091></sup>Jeremiah 3:24, 25. "Shame hath devoured the labor of our fathers, from our youth. — We have sinned against the Lord our God from our youth, even to this day."

And it is to be observed, that according to the manner of the Hebrew language, when it is said, such a thing has been from youth or the first part of existence, the phrase is to be understood as including that first time of existence. So <sup><1062></sup>Joshua 6:21. "They utterly destroyed all, from the young to the old," (so in the Hebrew) i. e. including both. (So <sup><1109></sup>Genesis 19:4. and <sup><1701></sup>Esther 3:18.) And as mankind are represented in Scripture, as being of wicked heart from their youth, so in other places they are spoken of as being thus from the womb.

**"The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." (<sup><1818></sup>Psalm 58:3)**

It is observable, that the psalmist mentions this as what belongs to the wicked, as the SONS OF MEN: for, these are the preceding words, "Do ye judge uprightly, O Ye sons of men? Yea, in heart ye work wickedness." Then it follows, the wicked are estranged from THE WOMB, etc. The next verse is, their poison is like the poison of a serpent. Serpents are poisonous as soon as they come into the world and they derive a poisonous nature by their generation. Dr. T. (p. 134,135.) says, "It is

evident that this is a scriptural figurative way of aggravating wickedness on the one hand, and of signifying early and settled habits of virtue on the other, to speak of it as being from the womb.” And as a probable instance of the latter, he cites that in <sup><3901</sup>Isaiah 49:1. “The Lord hath called me from the womb, from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.” But I apprehend, that in order to seeing this to be either evident or probable, a man must have eyes peculiarly affected. I humbly conceive that such phrases as that in the 49th of Isaiah, of God’s calling the prophet from the womb, are. evidently not of the import which he supposes, but mean truly from the beginning, of existence, and are manifestly of like signification with that which is said of the prophet Jeremiah, <sup><3005</sup>Jeremiah 1:5. “Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee: before thou camest out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.” Which surely means something else besides a high degree of virtue: it plainly signifies that he was, from his first existence, set apart by God for a prophet. And it would be as unreasonable to understand it otherwise, as to suppose the angel meant any other than that Samson was set apart to be a Nazarite from the beginning of his life, when he says to his mother, “Behold, thou shalt conceive and bear a son: and now drink no wine, nor strong drink, etc. it or the child shall be a Nazarite to God, from the womb, to the day of his death.” By these instances it is plain, that the phrase, from the womb as the other from the youth, as used in Scripture, properly signifies from the beginning of life.

Very remarkable is that place, <sup><18154</sup>Job 15:14-16. “What is men, that he should be clean? And he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight: how much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water!” And no less remarkable is our author’s method of managing it. The 16th verse expresses an exceeding degree of wickedness, in as plain and emphatical terms, almost, as can be invented; every word representing this in the strongest manner: “How much more abominable and filthy is man, that drinketh iniquity like water!” I cannot now recollect where we have a sentence equal to it in the whole Bible, for an emphatical, lively and strong representation of great wickedness of heart. Any one of the words, as such words are used in Scripture, would

“present great wickedness: if it had been only said, “How much more abominable is man! Or, how much more filthy is man! Or, man that drinketh iniquity.” But all these are accumulated with the addition of like water, — the further to represent the boldness or greediness of men in wickedness. Though iniquity be the most deadly poison, yet men drink it as boldly as they drank water, are as familiar with it as with their common drink, and drink it with like greediness, as he that is thirsty drinks water. That boldness and eagerness in persecuting the saints, by which the great degree of the depravity of man’s heart often appears, as thus represented,

“Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge, who eat up my  
people as they eat bread?” (~~Psalm~~ Psalm 14:4)

And the greatest eagerness of thirst is represented by thirsting as an animal thirsts after water, ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 13:1. Now let us see the soft, easy, light manner, in which Dr. T. treats this place. (p. 143.) “How much more abominable and, filthy is man, IN COMPARISON OF THE DIVINE PURITY, who drinketh iniquity like water! who is attended with so many sensual appetites, and so apt to indulge them.

You see the argument, man in his present weak and fleshly state, cannot be clean before God. Why so? Because he is conceived and born in sin, by reason of Adam’s sin? No such thing. But because, if the purest creatures are not pure, in comparison of God, much less a being subject to so many INFIRMITIES AS A MORTAL man. Which is a demonstration to me, not only that Job and his friends did not intend to establish the doctrine we are now examining, but that they were wholly strangers to it.” Thus he endeavors to reconcile this text with his doctrine of the perfect native innocence of mankind; in which we have a notable specimen of his demonstrations, as well as of that great impartiality and fairness in examining and expounding the Scripture, of which he so often makes a profession!

In this place we are not only told, how wicked man’s heart is, but also how men come by such wickedness; even by being of the race of mankind, by ordinary generation: What is man, that he should be clean? and be that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Our author (p. 141, 142.) represents man being born of a woman, as a periphrasis, to signify man; and that there is no design in the words to give a reason, why man is not clean and righteous. But the case is most evidently otherwise, if we may

interpret the book of Job by itself. It is most plain, that man's being horn of a woman is given as a reason of his not being clean; chapter <sup>1340</sup>14:4. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Job is speaking there expressly of man's being born of a woman, as appears in verse 1. And here how plain is it that this is given as a reason of man's not being clean.

Concerning this Dr. T. says, That this has no respect to any moral uncleanness, but only common frailty, etc. But how evidently is this also otherwise I when that uncleanness, which a man has by being born of a woman, is expressly explained of unrighteousness, in the next chapter at the 14th verse, "What is man that he should he clean? And he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" Also in chapter <sup>1350</sup>25:4. "How then can man be justified with God? And how can he be clean that is born of a woman?" It is a moral cleanness Bildad is speaking of, which a man needs in order to his being justified. His design is to convince Job of his mortal impurity and from thence of God's righteousness in his severe judgments upon him; and not of his natural frailty.

And, without doubt, David has respect to this way of derived wickedness of heart, when mother conceive me." It alters not the case, as to the argument we are upon, whether the word conceive signifies to conceive, or to nurse; which latter, our author takes so much pains to prove: for, when he has done all, he speaks of it as a just translation of the words to render them thus, I was BORN in iniquity, and in sin did my mother nurse me. (p. 135.) If it is owned that man is Born in no, it is not worth the while to dispute, whether It Is expressly asserted, that he is conceive in sin. But Dr. T. after his manner, insists, that such expressions, as being born in sin, being transgressors from the womb, and the like, are only phrases figuratively to denote aggravation, and a high degree of wickedness. But the contrary has been already demonstrated, from many plain scripture instances Nor is one instance produced, in which there is any evidence that such a phrase is used in such a manner. A poetical sentence out of Virgil's Eneid has here been produced, and made much of by some, as parallel with this, in what Dido says to Aeneas, in these lines: In which she tells Aeneas, that not a goddess was his mother, nor Anchises his father; but that he had been brought forth by a horrid rocky mountain, and nursed at the dugs of tigers, to represent the greatness of his cruelty to her. But now unlike and unparallel is this! Nothing could be more natural, than for a

woman overpowered with the passion of love, and distracted with raging jealousy and disappointment thinking herself treated with brutish perfidy and cruelty, by a lover whose highest fame had been his being the son of a goddess, to aggravate his inhumanity and hard-heartedness with this, that his behavior was not worthy the son of a goddess, nor becoming one whose father was an illustrious prince: and that he acted more as if he had been brought forth by hard unrelenting rocks, and had sucked the dugs of tigers. But what is there in the case of David parallel, or at all in like manner leading him to speak of himself as born in sin, in any such figurative sense? He is not speaking himself, nor any one speaking to him, of any excellent and divine father and mother, of whom he was born: nor is there any appearance of his aggravating his sin, by its being unworthy of his high birth. There is nothing else visible in David's case to lead him to take notice of his being born in sin, but only his having such experience of the continuance and power of indwelling sin, after so long a time, and so many and great means to engage him to holiness; which showed that sin was inbred, and in his very nature.

Dr. T. often objects to these and other texts, brought by divines to prove original sin, that there is no mention made in them of Adam, nor of his sin. He cries out, Here is not the least mention, or intimation of Adam, or any ill effects of his sin upon us. — Here is not one word nor the least hint of Adam, or any consequences of his sin, etc. etc. He says, "If Job and his friends had known and believed the doctrine of a corrupt nature, derived from Adam's sin only, they ought in reason and truth to have given this as the true and only reason of the human imperfection and uncleanness they mention." But these objections and exclamations are made no less impertinently, than frequently. It is no more a proof, that corruption of nature did not come by Adam's sin, because many times when it is mentioned, his sin is not expressly mentioned as the cause of it; than that death did not come by Adam's sin, as Dr. T. says it did. For though death as incident to mankind, is mentioned so often in the Old Testament, and by our Savior in his discourses, yet Adam's sin is not once expressly mentioned, after the three first chapters of Genesis, any where in all the Old Testament, or the four Evangelists, as the occasion of it.

What Christian has there ever been, that believed the moral corruption of human nature, who ever doubted that it came in the way, of which the



apostle speaks, when he says, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin?” Nor indeed have they any more reason to doubt of it, than to doubt of the whole history of our first parents, because Adams name is so rarely mentioned, on any occasion in Scripture, after that first account of him, and Eve’s never at all; and because we have no more any express mention of the particular manner, in which mankind were first brought into being, either with respect to the creation of Adam or Eve. It is sufficient, that the abiding, most visible effects of these things, remain in the view of mankind in all ages, and are often spoken of in Scripture and that the particular manner of their being introduced is once plainly set forth in the beginning of the Bible, in that history which gives us an account of the origin of all things And doubtless it was expected, by the great author of the Bible, that the account in the three first chapters of Genesis should be taken as a plain account of the introduction of both natural and moral evil into the world. The history of Adam’s sin, with its circumstances God’s threatening, the sentence pronounced upon him after his transgression and the immediate consequences, consisting in so vast an alteration in his state-and the state of the world, with respect to all his posterity-most directly and sufficiently lead us to understand the rise of calamity, sin, and death, in this sinful, miserable world.

It is first we all should know, that it does not become us to tell the Most High, how often he shall particularly explain and give the reason of any doctrine which he teaches, he order to our believing what he says. If he has at all given us evidence that it is a doctrine agreeable to his mind, it becomes us to receive it with full credit and submission; and not sullenly to reject it, because our notions and humors are not suited in the manner, and number of times, of his particularly explaining it. How often is pardon of sins promised in the Old Testament to repenting and resuming sinners! How many hundred times is God’s special devour there promised to the sincerely righteous, without any express mention of these benefits being through Christ! Would it therefore become us to say that inasmuch as our dependence on Christ for these benefits is a doctrine, which, if true, is of such importance, God ought expressly to have mentioned Christ’s merits as the reason and ground of the benefits, if he knew they were the ground of them; and should have plainly declared it sooner, and more frequently, if ever he expected we should believe him, when he did tell us of it? How

oft is vengeance and misery threatened in the Old Testament to the wicked, without any clear and express signification of any such thing intended, as that everlasting fire, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth, in another world, which Christ so often speaks of as the punishment appointed for all the wicked! Would it now become a Christian, to object and say, that if God really meant any such thing, he ought in schemes and truth to have declared it plainly and fully; and not to have been so silent about a matter of such vast importance to all mankind, for four thousand years together!

## CHAPTER 3

### *Observations on Various Other Places of Scripture Principally of the New Testament, Proving; the Doctrine of Original Sin.*

#### SECTION 1

##### *Observation, on ~~John~~ John 3:6. in connection with some other passages in the New Testament.*

THOSE words of Christ, giving a reason to Nicodemus, why we must be born again, ~~John~~ John 3:6. “That which is born of the flesh, is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit,” have not without good reason been produced by divines, as a proof of the doctrine of original sin: supposing, that by flesh here is meant the human nature in a debased and corrupt state. Yet Dr. T. (p. 144.) thus explains these words, that which is born of the flesh, is flesh, “that which is born by natural descent and propagation, is a man consisting of body and soul, or the mere constitution and powers of a man in their natural state.” But the constant use of these terms, flesh and spirit, in other parts of the New Testament, when thus set in opposition, and the latter said to be produced by the Spirit of God, as here — and when expressive of the same thing, which Christ is here speaking of to Nicodemus, viz. the requisite qualifications to salvation — will fully vindicate the sense, of our divines. Thus in the 7th and 8th chapters of Romans, where these terms flesh and spirit are abundantly repeated, and set in opposition, as here. 30 chapter 7:14. The law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. He cannot only mean, “I am a man consisting of body and soul, and having the powers of a man.” Verse 18. “I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.” He does not mean to condemn his frame, as consisting of body and soul, and to assert, that in his human constitution, with the power of a man, dwells no good thing. And when he says in the last verse of the chapter, “With the mind, I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin;” he cannot mean, “I myself serve the law of God; but with my innocent human constitution, as having the powers of a man, I serve the law of sin.” And when he says in the next words, the beginning of the 8th chapter, “there is no condemnation to them, — that walk not after the flesh, but after the

spirit;" and verse 4. "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh;" he cannot mean, "there is no condemnation to them that walk not according to the powers of a man," etc. And when he says, (verse 5 and 6.) "They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh: and to be carnally minded is death," he does not intend, "they that are according to the human constitution, and the powers of a man, do mind the things of the human constitution and powers; and to mind these is death." And when he says, (verse 7 and 8.) "The carnal (or fleshly) mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be: so that they that are in the flesh cannot please God," he cannot mean that to mind the things which are agreeable to "the powers and constitution of a man," who as our author says, is constituted or made right, is enmity against God, and that a mind which is agreeable to this right human constitution, as God hath made it, is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be; and that they who are according to such a constitution, cannot please God. And when it is said, (verse 9.) "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit;" the apostle cannot mean, "ye are not in the human nature, as constitution of body and soul, and with the powers of a man." It is most manifest, that by the flesh here the apostle means a nature that is corrupt, of an evil tendency, and directly opposite to the law and holy nature of God, so that to walk according to it, and to have a mind so conformed, is to be an utter enemy to God and his law; in a state of perfect inconsistency with subjection to God, and of being pleasing to him; and in a sure and infallible tendency to death and utter destruction. And it is plain, that here by walking, after or according to, the flesh, is meant the same thing as walking according to a corrupt and sinful nature; and to walk according to the spirit, is to walk according to a holy and divine nature, or principle: and to be carnally minded, is the same as being viciously and corruptly minded; and to be spiritually minded, is to be of a virtuous and holy disposition.

When Christ says,

"That which is born of the flesh, is flesh," (~~John~~ John 3:6)

he represents the flesh not merely as a quality: for it would be incongruous to speak of a quality as a thing born. Therefore man, as in his whole nature corrupt, is called flesh; which is agreeable to other scripture

representations, where the corrupt nature is called the old Adam, the body of sin, and the body of death. Agreeable to this are those representations in the 7th and 8th chapters of Romans. There, flesh is figuratively represented as a person, according to the apostle's manner. This is observed by Mr. Locke, and after him by Dr. T. who takes notice, that the apostle, in the 6th and 7th of Romans, represents sin as a person; and that he figuratively distinguishes in himself two persons, speaking of flesh as his person. For I know that in ME, that is, in my FLESH, dweller no good thing. And it may be observed, that in the 8th chanter he still continues this representation, speaking of the flesh as a person. Accordingly, in the 6th and 7th verses, he speaks of the mind of the flesh, and of the mind of the spirit, as if the flesh and spirit were two opposite persons, each having a mind contrary to that of the other. Dr. T. interprets this mind of the flesh, and mind of the spirit, as though the flesh and the Spirit were the different objects, about which the mind is conversant. But this is plainly beside the apostle's meaning; who speaks of the flesh and spirit as the subjects in which the mind is; and in a sense the agents, but not the objects, about which it acts. We have the same phrase again, verse 27. "He that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the spirit." The mind of the spiritual nature in the saints is the same with the mind of the Spirit of God himself, who imparts and actuates that spiritual nature; and here the spirit is the subject and agent; but not the object. The same apostle, in a similar manner, uses the word, for mind

"Vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, by the mind of his flesh."

(~~SIN~~ Colossians 2:18)

And this agent so often called flesh, represented by the apostle as altogether evil, without any good thing dwelling in it, or belonging to it — yea perfectly contrary to God and his law, and tending only to death and ruin, and directly opposite to the spirit — is what Christ speaks of to Nicodemus as born in the first birth, and furnishing a reason why there is a necessity of a new birth, in order to a better production.

One thing is particularly observable in that discourse of the apostle — in which he so often uses the term flesh, as opposite to spirit — that he expressly calls it sinful, flesh, ~~SIN~~ Romans 8:3. It is manifest, that by sinful flesh he means the same thing with that flesh spoken of in all the context:

and that when it is said, Christ was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, the expression is equipollent with those that speak of Christ as made sin, and made a curse for us flesh and spirit are opposed to one another in Galatians 5: in the same manner as in the 8th of Romans. And there, assuredly, by flesh cannot be meant only the human nature of body and soul, or the mere constitution and powers of a man, as in its natural state, innocent and right. In the 16th verse the apostle says, “Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh: “the flesh, is something of an evil inclination, desire, or lust. But this is more strongly signified in the next words; “For the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other.” What could have been said more plainly, to show that what the apostle means by flesh, is something very evil in its nature, and an irreconcilable enemy to all goodness? And it may be observed, that in these words, and those that follow, the apostle still figuratively represents the flesh as a person or agent, desiring, acting, having lusts, and performing works. And by works of the flesh, and fruits of the spirit, which are opposed to each other, (from verse 19, to the end,) are plainly meant the same a works of a sinful nature, and fruits of a holy renewed nature. “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,” etc. “But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness,” etc. The apostle, by flesh, does not mean any thing that is innocent and good in itself, which only needs to be restrained, and kept in proper bounds, but something altogether evil, which is to be destroyed.

“To deliver such an one to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh.”

(~~1~~ 1 Corinthians 5:5.)

We must have no mercy on it; we cannot be too cruel to it; it must even be crucified.

“They that are Christ’s, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” (~~Gal~~ Galatians 5:24.)

The apostle John — the same apostle that writes the account of what Christ said to Nicodemus — by the spirit means the same thing as a new, divine, and holy nature, exerting itself in a principle of divine love, which

is the sum of all Christian holiness. <sup><GR3></sup>1 John 3:23, 24. “And that we should love one another, as he gave us commandment, and he that keepeth his commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him: and hereby we know that he abideth in us by the spirit it that he hath given us. Chapter <sup><GR2></sup>4:12, 13. “If we love one another. God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us: hereby know we, that we dwell in him, because he hath given us of his Spirit.”

The spiritual principle in us being as it were a communication of the Spirit of God to us.

And as by spirit, is meant a holy nature, so by the epithet, spiritual is meant the same as truly virtuous and holy. <sup><RR1></sup>Galatians 6:1.”Ye that are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness.” The apostle refers to what he had just said at the end of the foregoing chapter, where he had mentioned meekness as a fruit of the spirit. And so by carnal, or fleshly, is meant the same as sinful. <sup><RR4></sup>Romans 7:14. “The law is spiritual, (i. e. holy,) but I am carnal, sold under sin.”

And it is evident, that by flesh, as the word is used in the New Testament, and opposed to spirit, when speaking of the qualifications for eternal salvation, is meant — not only what is now vulgarly called the sins of the flesh, consisting in inordinate appetites of the body, and their indulgence; but — the whole body of sin, implying those lusts that are most subtle, and farthest from any relation to the body; such as pride, malice, envy, etc. When the works of the flesh are enumerated, <sup><RR3></sup>Galatians 5:19-21. they are vices of the latter kind chiefly that are mentioned “idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath strife, seditions, heresies, envyings.” So, pride of heart is the effect or operation of the flesh.

<sup><RR5></sup>Colossians 2:18. “Vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.” in the Greek, (as before observed,) by the mind of the flesh. So, pride, envying, and strife, and division, are spoken of as works of the flesh, <sup><RR6></sup>1 Corinthians 3:3, 4. “For ye are yet carnal fleshly). For whereas there is envying, and strife, and division, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?” Such kind of lusts do not depend on the body, or external senses; for the devil himself has them in the highest degree, who has not, nor ever had, any body or external senses to gratify.

Here, if it should be inquired, how corruption or depravity in general, or the nature of man as corrupt and sinful, came to be called flesh, and not only that corruption which consists in inordinate bodily appetites? I think, what the apostle says in the last cited place, “Are ye not carnal and walk as men?” leads us to the true reason. It is because a corrupt and sinful nature is what properly belongs to mankind, or the race of Adam, as they are in themselves, and as they are by nature. the word flesh is often used in both the Old and the New Testament to signify mankind in their present state. To enumerate all the places, would be very tedious, I shall therefore only mention a few in the New Testament. <sup><180></sup>Matthew 24:22.

“Except those days should be shortened no flesh should be saved.”

<sup><181></sup>Luke 3:6. “All flesh shall; see the salvation of God.” <sup><182></sup>John 17:2.

“Thou hast given him power over all flesh.” Man’s nature, being left to itself; forsaken of the Spirit of God, as it was when man fell, and consequently forsaken of divine and holy principles, of itself became exceeding corrupt, utterly depraved and ruined: and so the word flesh which signifies man came to be used to signify man as he is in himself, in his natural state, debased, corrupt, and ruined. On the other hand, the word spirit came to be used to signify a divine and holy principle, or new nature, because that is not of man, but of God, by the indwelling and vital influence of his Spirit. And thus to be corrupt, and to be carnal, or fleshly, and to wick as men, are the same thing. And so in other parts of Scripture, to savor the things that be of man, and to savor things which are corrupt, are the same; and, sons of men, and wicked men, also are the same, as observed before. And on the other hand, to savor the thirsts that be of God, and to receive the things of the Spirit of God, are phrases that signify as much as relishing and embracing true holiness or divine virtue.

All these things confirm what we have supposed to be Christ’s meaning, in saying, “That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.” His speech implies, that what is born in the first birth of man, is nothing but man as he is of himself; without any thing divine in him; depraved, debased; sinful, ruined man, utterly unfit to enter into the kingdom of god, and incapable of the spiritual divine happiness of that kingdom. But that which is born, in the new birth, of the Spirit of God, is a spiritual principle, a holy and divine nature, meet for the heavenly kingdom. It is no small confirmation of this being the true



meaning, that the words understood in this sense, contain the proper and true reason, why a man must be born again, in order to enter into the kingdom of God; the reason given every where in other parts of Scripture for the necessity of a renovation, a change of mind, a new heart, etc. in order to salvation: to give a reason of which to Nicodemus, is plainly Christ's design in the words which have been insisted on. — Before I proceed, I would observe one thing as a corollary from what has been said.

Corol. If by flesh and spirit, when spoken of in the New Testament, and opposed to each other, in discourses on the necessary qualifications for salvation, we are to understand what has been now supposed, it will not only follow, that men by nature are corrupt, but wholly corrupt, without any good thing. If by flesh is meant man's nature, as he receives it in his first birth, then therein dwelleth no good thing; as appears by ◀RMS Romans 7:18. It is wholly opposite to God, and to subjection to his law, as appears by ◀RMD Romans 8:7, 8. It is directly contrary to true holiness, and wholly opposes it, as appears by ◀RMT Galatians 5:17 So long as men are in their natural state, they not only have no good thing, but it is impossible they should have or do any good thing; as appears by ◀RMS Romans 8:8. There is nothing in their nature, as they have it by the first birth, whence should arise any true subjection to God; as appears by ◀RMD Romans 8:7. If there were any thing truly good in the flesh, or in man's nature, or natural disposition, under a moral view, then it should only be amended; but the Scripture represents as though we were to be enemies to it, and were to seek nothing short of its entire destruction, as before observed. And elsewhere the apostle directs not to the amending of the old man, but putting it off, and putting on the new man, and seeks not to have the body of death made better, but to be delivered from it, and says, "that if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, (which doubtless means the same as a man new born,) old things are (not amended, but) passed away, and all things are become new."

But this will be further evident, if we particularly consider the apostle's discourse in 1 Corinthians the latter part of the second chapter and the beginning of the third. There the apostle speaks of the natural man, and the spiritual man; where natural and spiritual are opposed just in the same manner as carnal and spiritual often are. In chapter ◀RMD 2:14, 15. he says, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are

foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual, judgeth all things. “And not only does the apostle here oppose natural and spiritual, just as he elsewhere does carnal and spiritual, but his following discourse evidently shows, that he means the very same distinction, the same two distinct and opposite things. For immediately on his thus speaking of the difference between the natural and the spiritual man, he says, “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal.” Referring manifestly to what he had been saying, in the immediately preceding discourse, about spiritual and natural men, and evidently using the word, carnal, as synonymous with natural. By which it is put out of all reasonable dispute, that the apostle by natural men means the same as men in that carnal, sinful state, that they are in by their first birth; — notwithstanding all the glosses and criticisms, by which modern writers have endeavored to palm upon us another sense of this phrase, and so to deprive us of the clear instruction the apostle gives in that 14th verse, concerning the sinful miserable state of man by nature. Dr. T. says, this is the animal man, the man who maketh sense and appetite the law of his action. If he aims to limit the meaning of the word to external sense, and bodily appetite, his meaning is certainly not the apostle’s. For the apostle in his sense includes the more spiritual vices of envy, strife, etc. as appears by the four first verses of the next chapter; where, as I have observed, he uses the word carnal. So the apostle Jude used the word in like manner opposing it to spiritual, or having the Spirit, verse 19. “These are they that separate themselves, sensual, not having the Spirit.” The vices he had been just speaking of, were chiefly of the more spiritual kind, verse 16. “These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men’s persons in admiration, because of advantage.” The vices mentioned are much of the same kind with those of the Corinthians, for which he calls them carnal; envy, strife, divisions, saying, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos; and being puffed up for one against another. We have the same word again, ~~James~~ James 3:14, 15. “If ye have bitter envying and strife, glory not, and lie not against the truth: this wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish,” where also the vices the apostle speaks of are of the more spiritual kind.

So that on the whole, there is sufficient reason to understand the apostle, when he speaks of the natural man, in <sup><K14></sup>1 Corinthians 2:14. as meaning man in his native corrupt state. And his words represent him as totally corrupt, wholly a stranger and enemy to true virtue or holiness, and things appertaining to it, which it appears are commonly intended in the New Testament by things spiritual, and are doubtless here meant by things at the Spirit of God. These words also represent, that it is impossible man should be otherwise, while in his natural state. The expressions are very strong: The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, is not susceptible of things of that kind, neither can he know them can have no true sense or relish of them, or notion of their real nature and true excellency; because they are spiritually discerned; they are not discerned by means of any principle in nature; but altogether by a principle that is divine, something introduced by the grace of God's Holy Spirit, which is above all that is natural. The words are in a considerable degree parallel with those of our Savior, <sup><K16></sup>John 14:16 17. "He shall give you the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know; him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

## SECTION 2

### *Observations on <sup><K19></sup>Romans 3:9-24.*

IF the Scriptures represent all mankind as wicked in their first state, before they are made partakers of the benefits of Christ's redemption, then they are wicked by nature: for doubtless men's first state is their native state, or that in which they come into the world. But the Scriptures do thus represent all mankind.

Before I mention particular texts to this purpose, I would observe, that it alters not the case, as to the argument in hand, whether we suppose these texts speak directly of infants, or only of such as understand something of their duty and state. For if all mankind, as soon as ever they are capable of reflecting, and knowing their own moral state, find themselves wicked, this proves that they are wicked by nature; either born so, or born with an infallible disposition to be wicked as soon as possible, if there be any difference between these; and either of them will prove men to be born

exceedingly depraved. I have before proved, that a native propensity to sin certainly follows from many things said of mankind in the Scripture; but what I intend now, is to prove by direct scripture testimony, that all mankind, in their first state, are really of a wicked character.

To this purpose, exceeding full, express, and abundant is that passage of the apostle, in ~~xxx~~ Romans 3:9-24. which I shall set down at large, distinguishing the universal terms which are here so often repeated, by a distinct character. The apostle having in the first chapter (verse 16, 17.) laid down his proposition, that none can be saved in any other way than through the righteousness of God, by faith in Jesus Christ, he proceeds to prove this point, by showing particularly that all are in themselves wicked, and without any righteousness of their own. First, he insists on the wickedness of the Gentiles, in the first chapter; next, on the wickedness of the Jews, in the second chapter.

And then, in this place, he comes to sum up the matter, and draw the conclusion in the words following: "What then, are we better than they! No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are ALL under sin: as it is written, there is NONE righteous, No, NOT ONE; there is NONE that understandeth, there is NONE that seeketh after God, they are ALL gone out of the way they are TOGETHER become unprofitable; there is NONE that doeth good, No, NOT ONE. Their throat is an open sepulcher, with their tongues they have used deceit: the poison of asps is under their lips, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their wars, and the way of peace they have not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know, that whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that EVERY mouth may be stopped, and ALL THE WORLD may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no FLESH be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sm. But now the righteousness of God without the law, is manifest, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto ALL, and upon ALL them that believe, for there is No DIFFERENCE. For ALL have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ."

Here the thing, which I would prove, viz. that mankind in their first state, before they are interested in the benefits of Christ's redemption, are universally wicked, is declared with the utmost possible fullness and precision. So that if here this matter be not set forth plainly, expressly, and fully, it must be because no words can do it, and it is not in the power of language, or any manner of terms and phrases, however contrived and heaped up one upon another, determinately to signify any such thing.

Dr. T. to take off the force of the whole, would have us to understand, (p. 104-107.) that these passages quoted from the Psalm, and other Parts of the Old Testament do not speak of all mankind, nor of all the Jews; but only of them of whom they were true. He observes, there were many that were innocent and righteous; though these were also many a strong party, that were wicked, corrupt, etc. of whom these texts were to be understood. Concerning which I would observe the following: things:

**1.** According to this, the universality of the terms in these places, which the apostle cites from the Old Testament, to prove that all the world, both Jews and Gentiles, are under sin, is nothing to his purpose. The apostle uses universal terms in his proposition, and in his conclusion, that ALL are under sin, that EVERY MOUTH is stopped, ALL THE WORLD guilty, — that by the deeds of the law NO FLESH can be justified. And he chooses out a number of universal sayings or clauses out of the Old Testament, to confirm this universality; as, There is none righteous; no, not one: they are all gone out of the way; there is none that understandeth, etc. But yet the universal terms found in them have no reference to any such universality, either in the collective, or personal sense; no universality of the nations of the world, or of particular persons in those nations, or in any one nation in the world: “but only of those of whom they are true!” That is, there is none at them righteous, of whom it is true, that they are not righteous: NO, not one; there it none that understand, of whom it is true, that they understand not: they are all gone out of the way, of whom it is true, that they are gone out of the way, etc. Or these expressions are to be understood concerning that strong party in Israel, in David and Solomon's days, and in the prophets' days; they are to be understood of them universally. And what is that to the apostle's purpose! How does such an universality of wickedness — that all were wicked in Israel, who were wicked, or, that there was a particular evil party, all of which were wicked

— confirm that universality which the apostle would prove, viz. That all Jews and Gentiles, and the whole world, were wicked, and every mouth stopped, and that no flesh could be justified by their own righteousness.

Here nothing can be said to abate the nonsense, hut this, that the apostle would convince the Jews, that they were capable of being wicked, as well as other nations; and to prove it, he mentions some texts, which show that there was a wicked party in Israel a thousand years ago. And as to the universal terms which happened to be in these texts, the apostle had no respect to them but his reciting them is as it were accidental they happened to be in some texts which speak of an evil party in Israel, and the apostle cites them as they are, not because they are any more to his purpose for the universal terms, which happen to be in them. But let the reader look on the words of the apostle, and observe the violence of such a supposition. Particularly let the words of the 9th and 10th verses, and their connection, be observed. All are under sin: as it is written, There is none righteous: no, not one. How plain it is, that the apostle cites that latter universal clause out of the 14th Psalm, to confound the preceding universal words of his own proposition! And yet it will follow from what Dr. T. supposes, that the universality of the terms in the last words, there is none righteous; no, not one hath no relation at all to that universality he speaks of in the preceding clause, to which they are joined, all are under sin: and is no more a confirmation of it, than if the words were thus, “There are some or there are many in Israel, that are not righteous.”

**2.** To suppose, the apostle’s design in citing these passages, was only to prove to the Jews, that of old there was a considerable number of their nation that were wicked men, is to suppose him to have gone about to prove what none of the Jews denied, or made the least doubt of, even the Pharisees, the most self-righteous sect of them, who went furthest in glorying in the distinction of their nation from other nations, as a holy people, knew it, and owned it; they openly confessed that their forefathers killed the prophets, <sup>Ⓜᵐᵐ</sup>Matthew 23:29-31. And if the apostle’s design had been only to refresh their memories, to put them in mind of the ancient wickedness of their nation, to lead to reflection on themselves as guilty of the like wickedness, as Stephen does, (<sup>Ⓜᵐᵐ</sup>Acts 7.) what need had he to go so far about to prove this — gathering up many sentences here and there which prove, that their scriptures speak of some as wicked men

— and then to prove, that the wicked men spoken of must be Jews, by this argument, that what things soever the law saith, it saith to, them that are under the law, or that whatsoever the books of the Old Testament said, it must be understood of that people who had the Old Testament? What need had the apostle of such an ambages as this, to prove to the Jews, that there had been many of their nation in past ages, which were wicked men; when the Old Testament was full of passages that asserted this expressly, not only of a strong party, but of the nation in general? How much more would it have been to such a purpose, to have put them in mind of the wickedness of the people in general in worshipping the golden calf; of the unbelief, murmuring, and perverseness of the whole congregation in the wilderness, for forty years, as Stephen does! Which things he had no need to prove to he spoken of their nation, by any such indirect argument as this, Whatsoever things the laws saith, it saith to them that are under the law.

**3.** It could have been impertinent to the apostle's purpose, even as our author understands his purpose, for him to have gone admit to convince the Jews, that there had been a strong party of bad men in the time of David and Solomon, and the prophets. For Dr. T. supposes, the apostle's aim is to prove the great corruption of both Jews and Gentiles when Christ came into the world.

In order the more fully to evade the clear and abundant testimonies to the doctrine of original sin, contained in this part of the Holy Scripture, our author says. the apostle is here speaking of bodies of people, of Jews and Gentiles in a collective sense, as two great bodies into which mankind are divided, speaking of them in their collective capacity, and not with respect to particular persons, that the apostle's design is to prove, that neither of these two great bodies, in their collective sense can be justified by law, because both were corrupt; and so that no more is implied, than that the generality of both were wicked. On this I observe,

**(1.)** That this supposed sense disagrees extremely with the terms and language which the apostle here makes use of. For according to this, we must understand, either,

**First,** That the apostle means no universality at all, but only the far greater part. But if the words which the apostle uses, do not most

fully and determinately signify an universality, no words ever used in the Bible are sufficient to do it. I might challenge any man to produce any one paragraph in the Scripture, from the beginning to the end, where there is such a repetition and accumulation of terms, so strongly, and emphatically, and carefully, to express the most perfect and absolute universality; or any place to be compared to it. What instance is there in the Scripture or indeed in any other writing, when the meaning is only the much greater part where this meaning is signified in such a manner, They are all, — They are all — They are all — together, — every one, — all the world; joined to multiplied negative terms, to show the universality to be without exception, saying, There is no flesh, — there is none, — there is none, — there is none, — there none, four times over; besides the addition of No, not one, — no, not one, — once and again! Or,

**Secondly,** If any universality at all be allowed, it is only of the collective bodies spoken of: and these collective bodies but two, as Dr. T. reckons them, viz. the Jewish nation, and the Gentile world; supposing the apostle is here representing each of these parts of mankind as being wicked. But is this the way of men using language, when speaking of but two things, to express themselves in such universal terms, when they mean no more than that the thing affirmed is predicated of both of them? If a man speaking! of his two feet as both lame, should say, All my feet are lame — They are all lame — All together are become weak — None of my feet are strong — None of them are sound — No, not one, would not he be thought to be lame in his understanding, as well as his feet? When the Apostle says, That crater mouth may be stopped, must we suppose, that he speaks only of these two great collective bodies, figuratively ascribing to each of them a mouth, and means that these two mouths are stopped? Besides, according to our author's own interpretation, the universal terms used in these texts, cited from the Old Testament, have no respect to those two great collective bodies, nor indeed to either of them; but to some in Israel, a particular disaffected party in that one nation, which was made up of wicked men. So that his interpretation is every way absurd and inconsistent.



(2.) If the apostle is speaking only of the wickedness or guilt of great collective bodies, then it will follow, that also the justification he here treats of, is no other than the justification of such collective bodies. For, they are the same of whom he speaks as guilty and wicked, and who cannot be justified by the works of the law, by reason of their being wicked. Otherwise his argument is wholly disannulled. If the guilt he speaks of be only of collective bodies, then what he argues from that guilt, must be only, that collective bodies cannot be justified by the works of he law, having no respect to the justification of particular Persons. And indeed this is Dr. T.'s declared opinion. he supposes the apostle here, and in other parts of this epistle, is speaking of men's justification considered only as in their collective capacity. But the contrary is most manifest. The 26th and 28th verses of this third chapter cannot, without the utmost violence, be understood otherwise than of the justification of particular persons. "That he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. — Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law." So in chapter 6:5. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." And what the apostle cites in the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses from the book of Psalm, evidently shows, that he is speaking of the justification of particular persons. "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." David says these things in the 32nd Psalm, with a special respect to his own particular case; There expressing the great distress he was in, while under a sense of personal sin and guilt, and the great joy he had when God forgave him.

And what can be plainer, that in the paragraph we have been upon, (~~¶~~ Romans 3:20.) it is the justification of particular persons of which the apostle speaks. "Therefore by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." He refers to Psalm. 143:2. "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." Here the psalmist is not speaking of the justification of a nation, as a collective body, or of one of the two parts of the world, but of a particular man. And it its further manifest, that the apostle is here speaking of personal justification, inasmuch as this place is evidently parallel with ~~¶~~ Galatians

3:10, 11. “For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse: for it is written Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the works of the law, is evident; for, The just shall live by faith.” It is plain, that this place is parallel with that in the 3rd of Romans, not only as the thing asserted is the same, and the argument by which it is proved — that all are guilty, and exposed to condemnation by the law. — But the same saving of the Old Testament is cited, (~~ROM~~ Galatians 2:16.) Many other things demonstrate, that the apostle is speaking of the same justification in both places, which I omit for brevity’s sake.

And besides all these things, our author’s interpretation makes the apostle’s argument wholly void another way. The apostle is speaking of a certain subject which cannot be justified by the works of the law; and his argument is, that the same subject is guilty. and is condemned by the law. If he means, that one subject, suppose a collective body or bodies, cannot be justified by the law, because another subject, another collective body, is condemned by the law, it is plain, the argument would be quite vain and impertinent. Yet thus the argument must stand according to Dr. T.’s interpretation. The collective bodies which he supposes are spoken of as wicked, and condemned by the law, considered as in their collective capacity, are those two, the Jewish nation, and the heathen world: but the collective body which he supposes the apostle speaks of as justified without the deeds of the law, is neither of these, but the christian church, or body of believers; which is a new collective body, a new creature, and a new man, (according to our author’s understanding of such phrases,) which never had any existence before it was justified, and therefore never was wicked or condemned, unless it was with regard to the individuals of which it was constituted and it does not appear, according to our author’s scheme that these individuals had before been generally wicked. For according to him, there was a number both among the Jews and Gentiles, that were righteous before. And how does it appear, but that the comparatively few Jews and Gentiles, of which this new-created collective body was constituted, were chiefly of the best of each!

So that in every view, this author’s way of explaining the passage appears vain and absurd. And so clearly and fully has the apostle expressed himself, that it is doubtless impossible to invent any other sense to put

upon his words, than that which will imply, that all mankind, even every individual of the whole race, but their Redeemer himself are in their first original state corrupt and wicked.

Before I leave this passage, (~~RRR~~ Romans 3:9-14.) it may be proper to observe, that it not only is a most clear and full testimony to the native depravity of mankind, but also plainly declares that natural depravity to be total and exceeding great. It is the apostle's manifest design in these citations from the Old Testament, to show these three things.

1. That all mankind are by nature corrupt.
2. That every one is altogether corrupt, and, as it were, depraved in every part.
3. That they are in every part corrupt in an exceeding degree.

With respect to the second of these, it is plain the apostle puts together those particular passages of the Old Testament, wherein most of those members of the body are mentioned, that are the soul's chief instruments or organs of external action. The hands (implicitly) in those expressions, "They are together become unprofitable. There is none that doth good." The throat, tongue, and mouth, the organs of speech, in those words, "Their throat is an open sepulcher: with their tongues they have used deceit, the poison of asps is under their lips, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." The feet in those words, verse 15. "Their feet are swift to shed blood." These things together signify, that man is as it were all over corrupt in every part. Arid not only is the total corruption thus intimated, by enumerating the several parts, but also by denying all good; any true understanding or spiritual knowledge, any virtuous action, or so much as a truly virtuous desire, or seeking after God. "There is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God; there is none that doth good, the way of peace have they not known." And in general, by denying all true piety or religion in men in their first state, verse 18. "There is no fear of God before their eyes." — The expressions also are evidently chosen to denote a most extreme and desperate wickedness of heart. An exceeding depravity is ascribed to every part: to the throat, the scent of an open sepulcher; to the tongue and lips, deceit, and the poison asps; to the mouth, cursing and bitterness; of their feet it is said, they are swift to

shed, blood: and with regard to the whole man, it is said, destruction and misery are in their ways. The representation is very strong of each of these things, viz. That all mankind are corrupt, that every one is wholly and altogether corrupt, and also extremely and desperately corrupt. And it is plain, it is not accidental, that we have here such a collection of such strong expressions, so emphatically signifying these things; but that they are chosen of the apostle on design, as being directly and fully to his purpose, which purpose appears in all his discourse in the whole of this chapter, and indeed from the beginning of the epistle.

### SECTION 3

*Observations on <sup><B></sup>Romans 5:6-10. and <sup><B></sup>Ephesians 2:3. with the content, and Romans 7.*

ANOTHER passage of this apostle, which shows that all who are made partakers of the benefits of Christ's redemption, are in their first state wicked, desperately wicked, is from <sup><B></sup>5:6-10. "For when we were yet without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." — Here all for whom Christ died, and who are saved by him, are spoken of as being in their first state sinners, ungodly, enemies to God, exposed to divine wrath, and without strength, without ability to help themselves, or deliver their souls from this miserable state.

Dr. T. says the apostle here speaks of the Gentiles only in their heathen state, in contradistinction to the Jews; and that not of particular persons among the heathen Gentiles, or as to the state they were in personally; but only of the Gentiles collectively taken, or of the miserable state of that great collective body, the heathen world: and that these appellations, sinners, ungodly, enemies, etc. were names by which the apostles in their writings were wont to signify and distinguish the heathen world, in opposition to the Jews and that in this sense these appellations are to be

taken in their epistles, and in this place in particular. And it is observable, that this way of interpreting these phrases in the apostolic writings is become fashionable with many late writers; whereby they not only evade several clear testimonies to the doctrine of original sin, but make void great part of the New Testament; on which account it deserves the more particular consideration.

It is allowed to have been long common and customary among the Jews, especially the sect of the Pharisees, in their pride and confidence in their privileges as the peculiar people of God, to exalt themselves exceedingly above other nations, and greatly to despise the Gentiles, calling them by such names as sinners enemies, dogs, etc. Themselves they accounted, in general, (excepting the publicans, and the notoriously profligate,) as the friends, the special favorites and children, of God; because they were the children of Abraham, were circumcised, and had the law of Moses as their peculiar privilege, and as a wall of partition between them and the Gentiles.

But it is very remarkable that a Christian divine, who has studied the New Testament and the epistle to the Romans in particular, so diligently as Dr. T. has done, should so strongly imagine that the apostles of Jesus Christ countenance and cherish these self-exalting, uncharitable dispositions and notions of the Jews which gave rise to such a custom, so far as to fall in with that custom, and adopt that language of their pride and contempt; and especially that the apostle Paul should do it. It is a most unreasonable imagination on many accounts.

**1.** The whole gospel dispensation is calculated entirely to overthrow and abolish every thing to which this self-distinguishing self-exalting, language of the Jews was owing. It was calculated wholly to exclude such boasting, and to destroy the pride and self-righteousness which were the causes of it. It was calculated to abolish the enmity, and break down the partition-wall between Jews and Gentiles, and of twain, to make one new man, so making peace to destroy all dispositions in nations and particular persons to despise one another, or to say one to another, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou, and to establish the contrary principles of humility, mutual esteem, honor and love. and universal union, In the most firm and perfect manner.

**2.** Christ when on earth, set himself through the whole course of his ministry, to militate against this pharisaical spirit practice, and language of the Jews; by which they showed so much contempt of the Gentiles publicans, and such as were openly lewd and vicious, and thus exalted themselves above them; calling them sinners and enemies, and themselves holy, and God's children; not allowing the Gentile to be their neighbour, etc. He condemned the Pharisees for not esteeming themselves sinners, as well as the publicans; trusting, in themselves that they were righteous, and despising others. He militated against these things in his own treatment of some Gentiles, publicans, and others, whom they called sinners and in what he said on those occasions.

He opposed these notions and manners of the Jews in his parables, and in his instructions to his disciples how to treat the unbelieving Jews; and in what he says to Nicodemus about the necessity of a new birth, even for the Jews, as well as the unclean Gentiles with regard to their proselytism, which some of the Jews looked upon as a new birth. And in opposition to their notions of their being the children of God, because the children of Abraham, but the Gentiles by nature sinners and children of wrath, he tells them that even they were children of the devil.

**3.** Though we should suppose the apostles not to have been thoroughly brought off from such notions, manners and language of the Jews, till after Christ's ascension, yet after the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, or at least, after the calling of the Gentiles begun in the conversion of Cornelius, they were fully instructed in this matter, and effectually taught no longer to call the Gentiles unclean, as a note of distinction from the Jews, ~~4018~~ Acts 10:28. which was before any of the apostolic epistles were written.

**4.** Of all the apostles, none were move perfectly instructed in this matter, than Paul, and none so abundant in instructing others in it, as this great apostle of the Gentiles. None of the apostles had so much occasion to exert themselves against the fore-mentioned notions and language of the Jews in opposition to Jewish teachers and judaizing Christians who strove to keep up the separation — wall between Jews and Gentiles, and to exalt the former, and set at nought the latter.

**5.** This apostle, in his epistle to the Romans, above all his other writings, exerts himself in a most elaborate manner, and with his utmost skill and power, to bring the Jewish Christians off from every thing of this kind. He endeavors by all means that there might no longer be in them any remains of these old notions, in which they had been educated, of such a great distinction between Jews and Gentiles, as were expressed in the names they used to distinguish them by, the Jews, holy children of Abraham, friends and children of God, but the Gentiles, sinners, unclean, enemies, and the like. He makes it almost his whole business, from the beginning of the epistle, <sup>ⲉⲩⲓⲛⲓⲛ</sup>Romans 5:6 &c. to convince them that there was no ground for any such distinction, and to prove that in common, both Jews and Gentiles, all were desperately wicked, and none righteous, no not one. He tells them, chapter <sup>ⲉⲩⲓⲛⲓⲛ</sup>3:9. that the Jews were by no means better than the Gentiles and (in what follows in that chapter) that there was no difference between Jews and Gentiles; and represents all as without strength, or ant sufficiency of their own in the affair of justification and redemption. And in the continuation of the same discourse, in the 4th chapter, he teaches that all who were justified by Christ, were in themselves ungodly; and that being the children of Abraham was not peculiar to the Jews. In this 5th chapter still in continuation of the same discourse — on the same subject and argument of justification through Christ, and by faith in him — he speaks of Christ dying for the ungodly and sinners, and those who were without strength or sufficiency for their own salvation, as he had done all along before. But now, it seems, the apostle by sinners and ungodly, must not he understood according as he used there words before: but must be supposed to mean only the Gentiles as distinguished from the Jews adopting the language of those self-righteous, self-exalting, disdainful judaizing teachers, whom he was with all his might opposing: countenancing the very same thing in them, which he had been from the beginning of the epistle discountenancing arid endeavoring to discourage, and utterly to abolish, with all his art and strength.

One reason why the Jews looked on themselves better than the Gentiles, and called themselves holy, and the Gentiles sinners, was, that they had the law of Moses. They made their boast of the law. But the apostle shows them, that this was so far front making them better, that it condemned them, and was an occasion of their being sinners in a higher

degree, and more aggravated manner and more effectually and dreadfully dead in sin.

It cannot be justly objected here, that this apostle did, in fact, use this language, and call the gentiles sinners, in contradistinction to the Jews, in what he said to Peter, ~~and~~ Galatians 2:15, 16. "We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ." It is true, that the apostle here refers to this distinction, as what was usually made by the self-righteous Jews, between themselves and the Gentiles; but not in such a manner as to adopt, or favor it; but on the contrary, so as plainly to show his disapprobation of it; "Though we were born Jews, and by nature are of that people which are wont to make their boast of the law, expecting to be justified by it, and trust in themselves that they are righteous, demising others, calling the Gentiles sinners, in distinction from themselves; yet we being now instructed in the gospel of Christ know better; we now know that a man is not justified by the works of the law; that we are all justified only by faith in Christ, in whom there is no difference, no distinction of Greek or Gentile, and Jew, but all are one in Christ Jesus." And this is the very thing he there speaks of, which he blamed Peter for, that by his withdrawing and separating himself from the Gentiles, refusing to eat with them, etc. he had countenanced this self-exalting, self-distinguishing, separating spirit and custom of the Jews, whereby they treated the Gentiles, as in a distinguishing manner sinners and unclean and not fit to come near them who were a holy people.

**6.** The very words of the apostle in this place, show plainly, that he uses the term sinners, not as signifying Gentiles, in opposition to Jews, but as denoting the morally evil, in opposition to such as are righteous or good. This latter distinction between sinners and righteous is here expressed in plain terms. "Scarcely for a righteous than will one are; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die; but God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." By righteous men are doubtless meant the same that are meant by such a phrase, throughout this apostle's writings, throughout the New Testament, and throughout the Bible. Will any one pretend, that by the righteous man, for whom men would scarcely die, and by the good man, for whom perhaps some might even dare to die, is meant a Jew? Dr. T.



himself does not explain it so, in his exposition of this epistle; and therefore is not very consistent with himself, in supposing, that in the other part of the distinction the apostle means Gentiles, as distinguished from the Jews. The apostle himself had been laboring abundantly, in the preceding part of the epistle, to prove, that the Jews were sinners in opposition to righteous; that all had sinned, that all were under sin, and therefore could not be justified, could not be accepted as righteous, by their own righteousness.

**7.** Another thing which makes it evident that the apostle, when he speaks in this place of the sinners and enemies for whom Christ died, does not mean only the Gentiles, is that he includes himself among them, saying, while WE were sinners, and when WE were enemies.

Our author from time to time says, the apostle, though he speaks only of the Gentiles in their heathen state, yet puts himself with them, because he was the apostle of the Gentiles. But this is very unreasonable. There is no more sense in it, than there would be in a father ranking himself among his children, when speaking to his children of the benefits they have by being begotten by himself; and saying, We children. Or in a physician ranking himself with his patients, when talking to them of their diseases and cure, saying, We sick folks. Paul being the apostle of the Gentiles to save them from their heathenism is so far from being a reason for him to reckon himself among the heathen that on the contrary, it is the very thing that would render it in a peculiar manner unnatural and absurd for him so to do. Because, as the apostle of the Gentiles, he appears as their healer and deliverer from heathenism and therefore in that capacity, in a peculiar manner, appears in his distinction from the heathen, and in opposition to the state of heathenism. For it is by the most opposite qualities only, that he is fitted to be an apostle of the heathen and recoverer from heathenism. As the clear light of the sun is what makes it a proper restorative from darkness and, therefore, the sun being spoken of as such a remedy none would suppose to be a good reason why it should be ranked among dark things. Besides, the apostle, in this epistle, expressly ranks himself with the Jews when he speaks of them as distinguished from the Gentiles: as in chapter ~~3:9~~ 3:9. “What then? are we better than they?” That is, are we Jews better than the Gentiles?

It cannot justly be alleged in opposition to this, that the apostle Peter puts himself with the heathen,

“For the time part of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings banquetings and abominable idolatries.”  
(~~1~~ 1 Peter 4:3)

For the apostle Peter (who by the way was not an apostle of the Gentiles) here does not speak of himself as one of the heathen, but as one of the church of Christ in general, made up at those who had been Jews, proselytes, and heathens who were now all one body. of which body he was a member. It is this society, therefore, and not the Gentiles, that he refers to in the pronoun us. He is speaking of the wickedness that the members of this body or society had lived in before their conversion; not that every member had lived in all those vices here mentioned, but some in one, others in another. Very parallel is the passage with that of the apostle Paul to Titus, chapter ~~3~~ 3:3. “For we ourselves also” (i. e. we of the Christian church) “were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving, divers lusts and pleasures,” (some one lust and pleasure, others another,) “living in malice, envy, hateful, and hating one another,” etc. There is nothing in this, but what is very neutral. That the apostle, speaking to the Christian church, and of that church, confessing its former sins, should speak of himself as one of that society, and yet mention some sins that he personally had not been guilty of, and among others, heathenish idolatry, is quite a different thing from what it would have been; for the apostle, expressly distinguishing those of the Christians, which had been heathen, from those which had been Jews, to have ranked himself with the former, though he was truly of the latter.

If a minister in some congregation in England, speaking in a sermon of the sins of the nation, being himself of the nation, should say, “We have greatly corrupted ourselves, and provoked God by our deism; blasphemy, profane swearing, lasciviousness, venality,” etc. speaking in the first person plural, though he himself never had been a deist, and perhaps none of his hearers, and they might also have been generally free from other sins he mentioned; yet there would be nothing unnatural in his thus expressing himself. But it would be quite a different thing, if one part of the British

dominions, suppose our kings American dominions, had universally apostatized from Christianity to deism, and had long been in such a state, and if one who had been born and brought up in England among Christians, the country being universally Christian, should be sent among them to show them the folly and great evil of deism, and convert them to Christianity; and this missionary, when making a distinction between English Christians, and these deists, should rank himself with the latter, and say, WE American deist, WE foolish blind infidels, etc. This indeed would be very unnatural and absurd.

Another passage of the apostle, to the like purpose with that which we have been considering in the 5th of Romans, is that in ~~ROM~~ Ephesians 2:3

“And were by nature children of wrath, even as others.”

This remains a plain testimony to the doctrine of original sin, as held by those who used to be called orthodox Christians, after all the pains and art used to torture and pervert it. This doctrine is here not only plainly and fully taught, but abundantly so, if we take the words with the context; where Christians are once and again represented as being, in their first state, dead in sin, and as quickened and raised up from such a state of death, in a most marvellous display of free rich grace and love, and a exceeding greatness of God’s power, etc.

With respect to those words, we were by nature children of wrath, Dr. T. says, p. 112-114.) “The apostle means no more by this, than truly or really children of wrath; using a metaphorical expression, borrowed from the word that is used to signify a true and genuine child of a family, in distinction from one that is a child only by adoption.” In which it is, owned, that the proper sense of the phrase is, being a child by nature, and the same sense as a child by birth or natural generation; but only he supposes, that here the word is used metaphorically. The instance he produces as parallel, to confirm his supposed metaphorical sense of the phrase, as meaning only truly, really, or properly children of wrath, viz. the apostle Paul’s calling Timothy his own son in faith, is so far from confirming his sense, that it is rather directly against it. For doubtless the apostle uses the word here in its original signification, meaning his begotten son; being the adjective from offspring’s, or the verb, to beget, as much as to say, Timothy my begotten son in the faith. For as there are

two ways of being begotten, one natural, and the other spiritual, the first generation, and regeneration; so the apostle expressly signifies which of these he means in this place, Timothy my begotten son IN THE FAITH, in the same manner as he says to the Corinthians,

“In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.”

(~~4015~~ 1 Corinthians 4:15)

To say the apostle uses the word, in ~~4018~~ Ephesians 2:3. only as signifying real, true, and proper, is a most arbitrary interpretation, having nothing to warrant it in the whole Bible. The word is no where used in this sense in the New Testament.

Another thing which our author alleges to evade the force of this, is, that the word rendered nature, sometimes signifies habit contracted by custom, or an acquired nature. But this is not its proper meaning. And it is plain, the word in its common use, in the New Testament, signifies what we properly express in English by the word nature. There is but one place where there can be the least pretext for supposing it to be used otherwise; and that is ~~4014~~ 1 Corinthians 11:14.

“Doth not even nature itself teach you, that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?”

And even here there is, I think, no manner of reason for understanding nature otherwise than in the proper sense. The emphasis used, nature itself, shows that the apostle does not mean custom, but nature in the proper sense. It is true, it was long custom which made having the head covered a token of subjection, and a feminine appearance; as it is custom that makes any outward action or word a sign or signification of any thing. But nature itself; nature in its proper sense, teaches, that it is a shame for a man to appear with the established signs of the female sex, and with significations of inferiority, etc. As nature itself shows it to be a shame for a father to bow down or kneel to his own child or servant, or for men to bow to an idol, because bowing down is by custom an established token or sign of subjection and submission. Such a sight therefore would be unnatural, shocking to a man’s very nature. So nature would teach, that it is a shame for a woman to use such and such lascivious words or gestures,

though it be custom that establishes the unclean signification of those gestures and sounds.

It is particularly unnatural and unreasonable to understand the phrase, in this place, any otherwise than in the proper sense, on the following accounts.

1. It may be observed, that both the words, in their original signification, have reference to birth or generation. So the word which signifies to beget or bring forth young, or to bud forth, as a plant, that brings forth young buds and branches. And so the word which signifies to bring forth children. —
2. As though the apostle took care by the word used here, to signify what we are by birth, he changes the word he used before for children. In the preceding verse he was speaking of the children of disobedience; but here, is a word derived, as observed, to bring forth a child, and more properly signifies a begotten or born child. —
3. It is natural to suppose that the apostle here speaks in opposition to the pride of some, especially the Jews, (for the church in Ephesus was made up partly of Jews, as well as the church in Rome,) who exalted themselves in the privileges they had by birth, because they were born the children of Abraham, and were Jews by nature as the phrase in, <sup><KPS></sup>Galatians 2:15. In opposition to this proud conceit, he teaches the Jews, that notwithstanding this they were by nature children of wrath, even as others, i. e. as well as the Gentiles, which the Jews had been taught to look upon as sinners, and out of favor with (rod by nature, and born children of wrath. —
4. It is more plain, that the apostle uses the word nature in its proper sense here, because he sets what they were by nature in opposition to what they are by grace. In this verse, the apostle shows what they are by nature, viz. children of wrath; and in the following verses he shows, how very different their state is by grace; saying, verse 5. "By grace ye are saved;" repeating it again, verse 8. "By grace ye are saved." But if, by being children of wrath by nature, were meant no more than only their being really and truly children of wrath, as Dr. T. supposes, there would be no opposition in the signification of these phrases, for in this

sense they were by nature in a state salvation, as much as by nature children of wrath; for they were truly, really, and properly in a state of salvation.

If we take these words with the context, the whole abundantly proves, that by nature we are totally corrupt, without any good thing in us. For if we allow the plain scope of the place, without attempting to hide it by doing extreme violence to the apostle's words, the design here is strongly to establish this point; that what Christians have that is good in them, or in their state, is in no part of it naturally in themselves, or from themselves, but is wholly from divine grace all the gift of God, and his workmanship, the effect of his power; his free and wonderful love. None of our good works are primarily from ourselves, but with respect to them all, we are God's workmanship, created unto good works, as it were out of nothing. Not so much as faith itself, the first principle of good works in Christians, is of themselves, but that is the gift of God. Therefore the apostle compares the work of God, in forming Christians to true virtue and holiness, not only to a new creation, but a resurrection, or raising from the dead. Verse 1. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." And again, verse 5. "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." In speaking of Christians being quickened with Christ, the apostle has reference to what he had said before, in the latter part of the foregoing chapter, of God manifesting the exceeding greatness of his power towards christian converts in their conversion, agreeable to the operation of his mighty power, when he raised Christ from the dead. So that it is plain by every thing in this discourse, the apostle would signify, that by nature we have no goodness; but are as destitute of it as a dead corpse is of life. And that all goodness, all good works, and faith the principle of all, are perfectly the gift of God's grace, and the work of his great, almighty, and exceeding excellent power. I think, there can be need of nothing but reading the chapter, and minding what is read, to convince all who have common understanding, of this; whatever any of the most subtle critics have done, or ever can do, to twist, rack, perplex, and pervert the words and phrases here used.

Dr. T. here again insists, that the apostle speaks only of the Gentiles in their heathen state, when he speaks of those that were dead in sin, and by nature children of wrath; and that though he seems to include himself

among those, saving, WE were by nature children of wrath, WE were dead in sins; yet he only puts himself among them because he was the apostle of the Gentiles. The gross absurdity of this may appear from what was said before. But besides the things which have been already observed, there are some things which make it peculiarly unreasonable to understand it so here. It is true, the greater part of the church of Ephesus had been heathens, and therefore the apostle often has reference to their heathen state, in this epistle. But the words in this ~~chapter~~ chapter 2:3. plainly show, that he means himself and other Jews in distinction from the Gentiles; for the distinction is fully expressed. After he had told the Ephesians, who had been generally heathen, that they had been dead in sin, and had walked according to the course of this world, etc. (verse 1, and 2.) he makes a distinction and says, “among whom we also had our conversation, etc. and were by nature children of wrath, even as others.” Here first he changes the person; whereas, before he had spoken in the second person, “ye were dead, — ye in time past walked,” etc. now he changes style, and uses the first person, in a most manifest distinction, among whom WE ALSO, that is, we Jews, as well as ye Gentiles: not only changing the person, but adding a particle of distinction, also; which would be nonsense, if he meant the same without distinction. And besides all this, more fully to express the distinction, the apostle further adds a pronoun of distinction; WE also, even as OTHERS, or we as well as others: most evidently having respect to the notions, so generally entertained by the Jews, at their being much better than the Gentiles, in being Jews by nature, children of Abraham, and children of God; when they supposed the Gentiles to be utterly cast off, as born aliens, and by nature children of wrath: in opposition to this, the apostle says, “We Jews, after all our glorying in our distinction, we by nature children of wrath, as well as the rest of the world.” And a yet further evidence that the apostle here means to include the Jews, and even him self, is the universal term he uses, Among whom also we all had our conversation, etc. Though wickedness was supposed by the Jews to be the course of this world, as to the generality of mankind, yet they supposed themselves an exempt people, at least the Pharisees, and the devout observers of the law of Moses and traditions of the elders whatever might be thought of publicans and harlots. But in opposition to this, the apostle asserts, that they all were no better by nature than others,

but were to be reckoned among the children of disobedience, of children of wrath.

Besides if the apostle chooses to put himself among the Gentiles, because he was the apostle of the Gentiles, I would ask, why does he not do so in the 11th verse of the same chapter, where he speaks of the Gentile state expressly? “Remember that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh.” Why does he here make a distinction between the Gentiles and himself? Why did he not say, let us remember, that we being in time past Gentiles! And why does the same apostle, even universally, make the same distinction, speaking either in the second or third person and never in the first, where he expressly speaks of the Gentilism of those to whom he wrote, or of whom he speaks, with reference to their distinction from the Jews? So every where in this same epistle; as in chapter ~~AND~~ 1:12, 13. where the distinction is made just in the same manner as here, by the change of the person, and by the distinguishing particle, also: “That we should be to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ, (the first believers in Christ being of the Jews, before the Gentiles were called, in whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.” And in all the following part of this second chapter, as verse 11, 17, 19, and 22. in which last verse the same distinguishing particle again is used; “In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

Though I am far from thinking our author’s exposition of the 7th chapter of Romans to be in any wise agreeable to the true sense of the apostle, yet it is needless here to stand particularly to examine it; because the doctrine of original sin may be argued not the less strongly, though we should allow the thing wherein he mainly differs from SUCH as he opposes in his interpretation, viz. that the apostle does not speak in his own name, or to represent the state of a true Christian, but as representing the state of the Jews under the law. For even on this supposition, the drift of the place will prove, that every one who is under the law, and with equal reason every one of mankind, is carnal, sold under sin, in his first state, and till delivered by Christ. For it is plain, that the apostle’s design is to show the insufficiency of the law to give life to any one whatsoever. This appears by what he says when he comes to draw his conclusion, in the continuation of this discourse; chapter ~~AND~~ 8:3. “For what the law could not



do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son,” etc. Our author supposes what is here spoken of, viz. “that the law cannot give life, because it is weak through the flesh,” is true with respect to every one of mankind. And when the apostle gives this reason, in that it is weak through the flesh, it is plain, that by the flesh, which here he opposes to the spirit, he means the same thing which in the preceding part of the same discourse, in the foregoing chapter, he had called by the name flesh, verse 5, 14, 18. and the law of the members, verse 23. and the body of death, verse 24. This is what, through this chapter, he insists on as the grand hindrance why the law could not give life? just as he does in his conclusion, chapter 8:3. Which, in his last place, is given as a reason why the law cannot give life to any of mankind. And it being the same reason of the same thing, spoken of in the same discourse, in the former part of it — this last place being the conclusion, of which that former part is the premises — and inasmuch as the reason there given is being in the flesh, and being carnal, sold under sin: therefore, taking the whole of the apostle’s discourse, this is justly understood to be a reason why the law cannot give life to any of mankind; and consequently, that all mankind are in the flesh, and are carnal, sold under sin, and so remain till delivered by Christ: and consequently, all mankind in their first original state are very sinful; which was the thing to be proved.

## CHAPTER 4

*Containing Observations on <sup>4852</sup>Romans 5:12, to the End.*

### SECTION 1.

*Remarks on Dr. T's way of explaining this text.*

THE following things are worthy of notice, concerning our author's exposition of this remarkable passage.

**I.** He greatly insists, that by death in this place no more is meant than that death which we all die, where this present life is extinguished, and the body returns to That no more is meant in the 12, 14, 15, and 17th verses, (p. 27.) he declares as evidently, clearly, and infallibly so because the apostle is still discoursing on the same subject; plainly implying, that infallibly the apostle means no more by death, throughout this paragraph on the subject. But as infallible as this is, if we believe what Dr. T. says elsewhere, it must needs be otherwise: for (p. 120. S.) speaking, of those words in Romans 6 23. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord," he says, "Death in this place is widely different from the death we now die; as it stands there opposed to eternal life, which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ it manifestly signifies eternal death, the second death, or that death which they shall hereafter die, who live after the flesh." But the death (in the conclusion of the paragraph we are upon) that comes by Adam, and the life that comes by Christ, (in the last verse of the chapter,) is apposed to eternal life just in the same manner as in the last verse of the next chapter: "That as sin has reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." So that by our author's own argument in this place also, is manifestly widely different from the death we now die, as it stands here opposed to eternal life, through Jesus Christ; and signifies eternal death, the second death. And yet this is a part of the same discourse, begun in the 12th verse; as reckoned by Dr. T. himself in his division of paragraphs, in his paraphrase and notes on the epistle. So that if we will follow him, and admit his reasonings in the various parts of his book, here is manifest proof, against infallible evidence! So that it is


true; the apostle throughout this whole passage on the same subject, by death, evidently, clearly, and infallibly means no more than that death we now die, when this life, is extinguished; and yet by death, in some part of this passage, is meant something widely different from the death we now die MANIFESTLY eternal death, the second death.

But had our author been so consistent with himself; in laying it down as certain and infallibly, that because the apostle has a special respect to temporal death, in the 14th verse, “Death reigned from Adam to Moses,” therefore he means no more in the several consequent parts of this passage, yet he is doubtless too confident and positive in this matter. This is no more evident, clear, and infallibly, than that Christ meant by perishing-in <sup>CHR</sup> Luke 13:5. When he says, I tell you, Nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish no more than such a temporal death, as came on those who died by the fall of the tower of Siloam, spoken of in the preceding words of the same speech; and no more infallible, than that by life, Christ means no more than this temporal life, in each part of that one sentence —

“He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it” (<sup>CHR</sup> Matthew 10:39)

because in the first part of each clause he has respect especially to temporal life.

The truth of the case with respect to what the apostle here intends by the word death is this, viz. The whole of that death which be, and the Scripture every where, speaks of as the proper wages and punishment of sin, including death temporal, spiritual, and eternal, though in some parts of this discourse he has a more special respect to one part of this whole, in others to another. as his argument leads him, without any more variation than is quite common in the same discourse. That life, which the Scripture speaks of as the reward of righteousness. is a whole containing several parts viz. The life of the body, union of soul and body, and the most perfect sensibility, activity, and felicity of both, which is the chief thing. In like manner the death, which the Scripture speaks of as the punishment of sin is a whole including the death of the body and the death of the soul, and the eternal, sensible perfect destruction and misery of both. It is this latter whole that the apostle speaks of by the name of death in this

discourse, in Romans 5 though in some sentences he has a more special respect to one part, in others to another: and this, without changing the signification of the word. For having respect to several things included in the extensive signification of the word, is not the same thing as using the word in several distinct signification's. As for instance, the appellative, man, or the proper name of any particular man, is the name of a whole, including the different parts of soul and body. And if any one in speaking of James or John, should say, he was a wise man, and a beautiful man in the former part of the sentence, respect would be had more especially to his soul, in the latter to his body, in the word man: but yet without any proper change of the signification of the name to distinct senses. In  John 21:7. it is said, Peter was naked, and in the following part of the same story it is said, Peter was grieved. In the former proposition, respect is had especially to his body, in the latter to his soul: but yet here is no proper change of the meaning of the name, Peter. And as to the apostle's use of the word death in the passage now under consideration, on the supposition that he in general means the whole of that death which is the wages of sin, there is nothing but what is perfectly natural in supposing that-in order to evince that death, the proper punishment of sin comes on all mankind in consequence of Adam's sin-he should take notice of that part of this punishment which is visible in this world, and which every body therefore sees does in fact come on all mankind, (as in verse 14.) And is it not equally natural from thence to infer, that all mankind are exposed to the whole of that death which is the proper punishment of sin, whereof temporal death is a part and a visible image of the whole, and (unless chanced by divine grace) an introduction to the principal, and infinitely the most dreadful, part?

**II.** Dr. T.'s explanation of this passage makes wholly insignificant those first words, By one man sin entered into the world, and leaves this proposition without any sense at all. The apostle had been largely and elaborately representing, how the whole world was full of sin, both among Jews and Gentiles, and all exposed to death and condemnation. It is plain, that in these words he would tell us how this came to pass, namely, that the sorrowful event came by one man, even the first man. That the world was full of sin, and full of death, were two great and notorious facts, deeply affecting the interests of mankind; and they seemed very wonderful

facts, drawings the attention of the more thinking part of mankind every where, who often asked this question, Whence comes evil, moral and natural evil? It is manifest, the apostle here means to tell us, how these came into the world, and came to prevail in it as they do. But all that is meant, according to Dr. T.'s interpretation, is, "He begun transgression." As if all that the apostle meant, was, to tell us who happened to sin first; not how such a malady came upon the world, or how any one in the world, besides Adam himself, came by such a distemper. The words of the apostle, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin," show the design to be, to tell us how these evils came, as affecting the state of the world; and not only as reaching one man in the world. If this were not plain enough in itself, the words immediately following demonstrate it; "And so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." By sin bring in the world, the apostle does not mean being in the world only in that one instance of Adam's first transgression, but being abroad in the world, among the inhabitants of the earth, in a wide extent, and continued series of wickedness; as is plain in the first words of the next verse, "For until the law, sin was in the world." And therefore when he gives us an account how it came to be in the world, or, which is the same thing, how it entered into the world, he does not mean only coming in one instance.

If the case were as Dr. T represents, that the sin of Adam, either in its pollution or punishment, reached none but himself, any more than the sin of any other man, it would be no more proper to say, that by one man sin entered into the world, than If-were it inquired, how mankind came into America, and there had anciently been a ship of the Phenician's wrecked at sea, and a single man of the crew was driven on this continent, and here died as soon as he reached the shore — it should be said, By that one man mankind came into America.

Besides, it is not true, that by one man, or by Adam, sin entered into the world, in Dr. T.'s sense: for it was not he but Eve that began transgression. By one man Dr. T. understands Adam, as the figure of Christ. And it is plain, that it was for his transgression, and not Eve's, that the sentence of death was pronounced on mankind after the fall, <sup>GEN</sup>Genesis 3:19. It appears unreasonable to suppose the apostle means to include Eve when he speaks of Adam for he lays great stress on it, that it was BY ONE, repeating it several times.

**III.** In like manner this author brings to nothing the sense of the causal particles, in such phrases as these, so often repeated, “Death by sin,” verse 12. “If through the offense of one, many be dead,” verse 15. “by one that sinned, judgment was by one to condemnation.” verse 16. “By one man’s offense; death reigned by one,” verse 17.

“By the offense of one, judgment came upon all,” etc. verse 18. “By one man’s disobedience,” verse 19. These casual particles, so variously repeated, unless they make mere nonsense of the discourse, signify some connection and dependence, by some sort of influence of that sin of ye man, or some tendency to that effect, which is so often said to come BY it. But according to Dr. T. there can be no real dependence or influence in the case, of any sort whatsoever. There is no connection by any natural influence of that one act to make all mankind mortal. Our author does not pretend to account for this effect in any such manner, but in another most diverse, viz. A gracious act of God, laying mankind under affliction, toil, and death, from special favor and kindness. Nor can there be any dependence of this effect on that transgression of Adam, by my moral influence, as deserving such a consequence, or exposing to it on any moral account: for he supposes, that mankind are not in this way exposed to the least degree of evil. Nor has this effect any legal dependence on that sin or any connection by virtue of any antecedent constitution, which God had established with Adam: for he insists, that in that threatening, “In the day thou eatest thou shalt die,” there is not a word said of his posterity, (p. 8.) And death on mankind, according to him, cannot come by virtue of that legal constitution with Adam because the sentence by which it came was after the annulling and abolishing that constitution, (p. 113. S.) And it is manifest, that this consequence cannot be through and kind of tendency of that sin to such an effect; because the effect comes only as a benefit, and is the fruit of mere favor: but sin has no tendency, either natural or moral to benefits, and divine favors. And thus that sin of Adam could neither be the efficient cause, nor the procuring cause; neither the natural, moral, nor legal cause; nor an exciting and moving cause, any more than Adam’s eating of any other tree of the garden. And the only real relation that the effect can have to that sin, is a relation as to time, viz. that it is after it. And when the matter is closely examined, the whole amounts to no more than this, that God is pleased, of his mere good will and pleasure, to bestow a greater

favor upon us, than he did upon Adam in innocence, offer that sin of his eating the forbidden fruit; which sin we are no more concerned in, than in the sin of the king of Pegu, or the emperor of China.

**IV.** It is altogether inconsistent with the apostle's scope, and the Import of what he says, to suppose that the death of which he here speaks, as coming on mankind by Adam's sin, comes not as a punishment, but only as a favor. It quite makes void the opposition, in which the apostle sets the consequences of Adam's sin, and the consequences of the grace and righteousness of Christ. They are set in opposition to each other, as opposite effects, arising from opposite causes, throughout the paragraph: one, as the just consequence of an offense; the other, a free gift, verse 15-18. Whereas, according to the scheme, there is no such opposition in the case; both are benefits, and both are free gifts. A very wholesome medicine to save from perishing, ordered by a kind father, or a shield to preserve from an enemy, bestowed by a friend, is as much a free gift as pleasant food. The death that comes by Adam, is set in opposition to the life and happiness that comes by Christ, as being the fruit of sin, and judgment for sin: when the latter is the fruit of divine grace verse 15, 17, 20, 21.

Whereas, according to our author, both came by grace. Death comes on mankind by the free kindness and love of God, much more truly and properly than by Adam's sin. Dr. T. speaks of it as coming occasion of Adams sin: but as I have observed, it is an occasion without any influence. Yet the proper CAUSE is Gods grace. So that the true cause is wholly good. Which, by the way, is directly repugnant to the apostle's doctrine in

**Romans 7:13.** Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good." Where the apostle utterly rejects any such suggestion, as though that which is good were the proper cause of death; and signifies that sin is the proper cause, and that which is good, only the accretion. But according to this author, the reverse is true: that which is good in the highest sense, even the love of God, and a divine gracious constitution, is the proper cause of death, and sin only the occasion.

But to return, it is plain, that death by Adam, and life and happiness by Christ, are here set in opposition: the latter being spoken of as good, the other as evil; one as the effect of righteousness the other of an offense, one of the fruit of obedience, the other of disobedience; one as the fruit of

God's favor in consequence of what was pleasing and acceptable to him, but the other the fruit of his displeasure, in consequence of what was displeasing and hateful to him; the latter coming by justification, the former by the condemnation of the subject. But according to the scheme of our author, there can be no opposition in any of these respects: the death here spoken of, neither comes as an evil, nor from an evil cause; either an evil efficient cause, or procuring cause, nor at all as any testimony of God's displeasure to the subject, but as properly the effect of his favor, no less than that which is spoken of as coming by Christ; yea, as much as an act of JUSTIFICATION of the subject; as he understands and explains the word justification; for both are by a great of favor, and are in stances of mercy and goodness. And he abundantly insists upon its that "ANY grant of favor, ANY instance of mercy and goodness, whereby God delivers and exempts from any kind of danger, suffering, or calamity, or confers ANY favor blessing, or privilege, is called justification in the scripture-sense and use of the word."

Moreover, our author makes void the grand and fundamental opposition to illustrate which is the chief scope of this whole passage between the first and second, Adam; in the death that comes by one, and the life and happiness by the other. For, according to his doctrine, both come by Christ and Adam; both by his grace, righteousness, and obedience: the death to which God sentenced mankind (<sup>(CORR)</sup>Genesis 3:19.) being a great deal more properly and truly by Christ, than by Adam. For, according to him, that sentence was not pronounced on the basis of the covenant with Adam; because that was abrogated, and entirely set aside, as he largely insists for many pages together, (p. 113-120. S.) "This covenant with Adam was dis-annulled immediately after Adam sinned. Even before God passed sentence upon Adam, grace was introduced." "The death that mankind are the subject of now, stands under the covenant of grace. — In the counsel and appointment of God, it stood in this very light, even before the sentence of death was pronounced upon Adam: and consequently, death is no proper and legal punishment of sin. And he often insists, that it comes only as a favor and benefit and standing, as he says, under the covenant of grace, which is by Christ, therefore is truly one of the benefits of the new covenant, which comes by Christ, the second Adam. For he himself is decided, to use his own "That all the grace



of the gospel is dispensed to us, IN, BY, or THROUGH the Son of God.” “Nothing is clearer (says he) from the whole current of Scripture, than that all the mercy and love of God, and all the blessings of the gospel, from first to last, are IN, By, and THROUGH Christ, and particularly by his blood, by the redemption that is in him. This can bear no dispute among Christians.” What then becomes of all this discourse of the apostle’s, about the great difference and opposition between Adam and Christ, as death is by one, and eternal life and happiness by the others This grand distinction between the two Adams, it seems and the other instances of opposition and difference here insisted on — as between the effects of sin and righteousness, the consequences of obedience and disobedience, of the offense and the free gift, judgment and grace, condemnation and justification — all come to nothing. And this whole discourse of the apostle, wherein he seems to labor much as if it were to set forth some very grand and most important distinction and opposition in the state of things, as derived from the two great heads of mankind, proves nothing, but a multitude of words without meaning, or rather a heap of inconsistencies.

**V.** Our author’s own doctrine entirely makes void what he supposes to be the apostle’s argument, in the 13th and 14th verses, in these words; “For until the law, sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed where there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression.”

What he supposes the apostle would prove here, is, that the mortality of mankind comes only by Adam’s sin, and not by men’s personal sins, because there was no law threatening death to Adam’s posterity for personal sins, before the law of Moses; but death, or the mortality of Adam’s posterity, took place many ages before the law was given; therefore death could not be by any law threatening death for, personal sins, and consequently could be by nothing but Adam’s sin. On this I would observe,

**1.** That which he supposes the apostle to take for a truth in this argument, viz. That there was no law Of God in being, by which men were exposed to death for personal sin, during the time from Adam to Moses’s, is neither true, nor agreeable to this apostle’s own doctrine.

**First,** The assertion is not true. For the law of nature, written in men's hearts, was then in being, and was a law by which men were exposed to death for personal sin. That there was a divine establishment, fixing the death and destruction of the sinner as the consequence of personal sin, which was well known before the givings of the law by Moses, is plain by many passages in the book of Job, as fully and clearly implying a connection between such sin and such a punishment, as any passage in the law of Moses: such as that in ~~ROM~~ Job 24:19.

**“Drought and heat consume the snow-waters so doth the grave them that have sinned.”**

(Compare verse 20, and 24.) Also chapter ~~ROM~~ 36:6. “He preserveth not the life of the wicked.” Chapter ~~ROM~~ 21:29-32. “Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do se not know their tokens? That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction; they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.” Verse 32. “He shall be brought to the grave.”

**Secondly.** To suppose that there is no law in being, by which men are exposed to death for personal sins, when a revealed law of God is not in being, is contrary to our apostles own doctrine in this epistle.

~~ROM~~ Romans 2:12, 14, 15.

“For as many as have sinned without law (i. e. the revealed law) shall perish without law.” But how they can be exposed to die and perish, who have not the law of Moses, nor any revealed law, the apostle shows us in the 14th and 15th verses, viz. in that they have the law of nature, by which they fall under sentence to this punishment. “For when the Gentile, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law to themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness.”-Their conscience not only bore witness to the duty prescribed by this law, but also to the punishment before spoken of, at that which they who sinned without law, were liable to suffer, viz. that they should perish in which the apostle is yet more express, chapter 1:32. speaking more especially of the heathen, “Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things, are worthy of death.” Dr. T. often calls the law the rule of right and this rule of right sentenced those sinners to death, who were not under the law of Moses, according to this author's own paraphrase of this

verse, in these word), “The heathen were not ignorant of the rule of right, which God had implanted in the human nature, and which shows that they which commit such crimes, are deserving of death.” And he himself supposes Abraham, who lived between Adam and Moses, to be under law, by which he would have, been exposed to punishment without hope, were it not for the promise of grace.- Paraph. on ~~ROM~~ Romans 4:15.

So that in our author’s way of explaining the passage before us, the grand argument which the apostle insists upon here to prove his main point, viz. that death does not come by men’s personal sins, but by Adam’s sin, because it came before the law was given, that threatened death for personal sin: I say, this argument which Dr. T. supposes so clear and stronger is brought to nothing more than a mere shadow without substance, the very foundation of the argument having no truth. To say, there was no such law actually expressed in any standing revelation, would be mere trifling. For it no more appears, that God would not bring temporal death for personal sins without a standing revealed law threatening it, than that he would not bring eternal death before there was a revealed law threatening that: which yet wicked men that lived in Noah’s time, were exposed to, as appears by ~~1P~~ 1 Peter 3:19, 20 and which Dr. T. supposes all mankind are exposed to by their personal sins, and he himself says, “Sin in its own unalterable nature leads to death.” Yea, it might be argued with as much strength of reason, that God could bring on men no punishment at all for any sin, that was committed from Adam to Moses, because there was no standing revealed law then extant threatening any punishment. It may here be properly observed, that our author supposes, the shortening of man’s days, and hastening of death, entered into the world by the sin of the antediluvians in the same sense as death and mortality entered into the world by Adam’s sin. But where has there any standing revealed law for that, though the event was so universal? If God might bring this on all mankind, on occasion of other men’s sins, for which they deserved nothing without a revealed law, what could there be to hinder God bringing death on men for their personal sins, for which their own consciences tell them they deserve death without a revealed law?

**2.** If from Adam to Moses there had been no law in being, of any kind, revealed or natural, by which men could be properly exposed to temporal death for personal sin, yet the mention of Moses’s law would have been

wholly impertinent, and of no signification in the argument, according to our author. He supposes that what the apostle would prove, is, that temporal death comes by Adam; and not by any law threatening such a punishment for personal sin; because this death prevailed before the law of Moses was in being, which is the only law threatening death for personal sin. And yet he himself supposes, that the law of Moses, when it was in being, threatened no such death for personal sin. For he abundantly asserts, that the death which the law of Moses threatened for personal sin, was eternal death, as has been already noted: and he says in express terms, that eternal death is of a nature widely different from the death we now die; as was also observed before.

How impertinently therefore does Dr. T. make an inspired writer argue, when, according to him, the apostle would prove, that this kind of death did not come by any law threatening this kind of death, because it came before the existence of a law threatening another kind of death, of a nature widely different! How is it to the apostle's purpose, to fix on that period, the time of giving Moses's law, as if that had been the period wherein men began to be threatened with this punishment for their personal sins, when in truth it was no such thing? And therefore it was, no more to this purpose to fix on that period, from Adam to Moses than from Adam to David, or any other period whatsoever Dr. T. holds, that even now, since the law of Moses has been given, the mortality of mankind, or the death we now die, does not come by that law; but that it always comes only by Adam. And if it never comes by that law, we may be sure it never was threatened in that law.

**3.** If we should allow the argument in Dr. T.'s sense of it, to prove that death does not come by personal sin, yet it will be whole without force to prove the main point even that it must come by Adam's sin: for it might come by God's sovereign and gracious pleasure, as innumerable other divine benefits do. If it be ordered, agreeable to our author's supposition, not as a punishment, nor as a calamity, but only as a favor what necessity of any settled constitution, or revealed sentence, in order to bestow such a favor, more than either favors, particularly more than that great benefit, which he says entered into the world by the sin of the antediluvians, the shortening men's lives so much after the flood? Thus the apostle's arguing

by Dr. T.'s explanation of it, is fumed into mere trifling, a vain and impertinent use of words, without any real force

**VI.** The apostle here speaks of that great benefit which we have by Christ, as the antitype of Adam, under the notion of the fruit of GRACE. I do not mean only that super-abounding of grace wherein the benefit we have by Christ goes beyond the damage sustained by Adam, but that benefit, with regard to which Adam was the figure of him that was to come, and which is as it were the counterpart of the suffering by Adam, and which repairs the loss we have by him. This here spoken of as the fruit of the free grace of God; (as appears by verse 35-18, 20, 21.) which according to our author, is the restoring of mankind to that life which they lost in Adam and he himself supposes this restoration of life by Christ to be what grace does for us, and calls it the free gift of God, and the grace and favor of the lawgiver. And speaking of this restoration, he breaks out in admiration of the unspeakable riches of this grace.

But it follows from his doctrine, that there is no grace at all in this benefit, and it is no more than a mere act of justice, being only a removing of what mankind suffer, being innocent. Death, as it commonly comes on mankind, and even on infants, (as has been observed,) is an extreme, positive calamity, to bring which on the perfectly innocent, unremedied, and without any thing to countervail it, we are sufficiently taught, is not consistent with the righteousness of the judge of all the earth. What grace therefore, worthy of being so celebrated, would there be in affording remedy and relief, after there had been brought on innocent mankind that which is (as Dr. T. himself represents) the dreadful and universal destruction of their nature; being a striking demonstration how infinitely hateful sin is to God! What grace in delivering from such shocking ruin, them who did not deserve the least calamity! Our author says "We could not justly lose communion with God by Adam's sin." If so, then we could not justly lose our lives, and be annihilated, after a course of extreme pains and agonies of body and mind, without any restoration, which would be an eternal loss of communion with God, and all other good, besides the positive suffering. We apostle, throughout this passage, represent the death which is the consequence of Adam's transgression, as coming in a way of judgment and condemnation for sin; but deliverance and life through Christ, as by grace, and the free gift of God. Whereas, on the

contrary, by Dr. T.'s scheme, the death that comes by Adam, comes by grace. great grace; it being a great benefit, ordered in fatherly love and kindness, and on the basis of a covenant of Grace: but in the deliverance and restoration by Christ, there is grace at all. So things are turned topsy-turvy, the apostle's scope and scheme entirely inverted and confounded.

**VII.** Dr. T. explains the words, judgment, condemnation, justification, and righteousness, as used in this place in a very unreasonable manner.

I will first consider the sense he puts upon the two former, judgment and condemnation. He often calls this condemnation a judicial act, and a sentence of condemnation. But, according to his scheme, it is a judicial sentence of condemnation passed upon them who are perfectly innocent, - and viewed by the judge, even in passing the condemnatory sentence, as having no guilt of sin, or any fault at all chargeable upon them - and a judicial proceeding, passing sentence arbitrarily, without any law or rule of right before established. For there was no proceeding law threatening death, that he or any one else ever pretended to have been established, but only this, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." And concerning this he insists, that there is not a word said in it of Adam's posterity. So that the condemnation spoken of, is a sentence of condemnation to death, for, or in consequence of, the sin of Adam, without any law by which that sin could be imputed to bring any such consequence, contrary to the apostle's plain scope. And not only so, but, over and above all this, it is a judicial sentence of condemnation to that which is no calamity, nor is considered as such in the sentence; but a condemnation to a great favor!

The apostle uses the words judgment and condemnation in other places; they are no strange and unusual terms with him: but never are they used by him in this sense, or any like it; nor are they ever used thus any where else in the New Testament. This apostle, in this epistle to the Romans, often speaks of condemnation, using the same or similar terms and phrases as here, but never in the above said sense. This will be plain to every one who casts his eye on those places. And if we look into the former part of this chapter, the apostle's discourse makes it evident, that he is speaking of a condemnation, which is no testimony of favor to the innocent; but of God's displeasure towards those to whom he is not reconciled, but looks

on as offenders and enemies, and holds as the objects of his wrath, from which we are delivered by Christ. (See verse 6-11.)

And even viewing this discourse itself, in the very paragraph we are upon, if we may judge any thing by language there is every thing to lead us to suppose, that the apostle uses words there, as he does elsewhere, properly, and as implying a supposition of sin, chargeable on the subject, and exposing to punishment. He speaks of condemnation as what comes by sin, a condemnation to death, which seems to be a most terrible evil, and capital punishment, even in what is temporal and visible and this in the way of judgment and execution of justice, in opposition to grace or favor and gift or a benefit coming by favor. And sin, offense, transgression, and disobedience are, over and over again, spoken of as the ground of the condemnation, and of the capital suffering, for ten verses successively that is, in every verse in the whole paragraph.

The words, justification and righteousness, are explained by Dr. T. in a manner no less unreasonable. He understands justification, in verse 18. and righteousness in verse 19. in such a sense, as to suppose they belong to all, and are actually to be applied to all mankind, good and bad, believers and unbelievers; to the worst enemies of God, remaining such, as well as his peculiar favorites, and many that never had any sin imputed to them meaning thereby no more than what is fulfilled; Universal resurrection from the dead, at the last day! Now this is a most arbitrary, forced sense. Though these terms are used all over the New Testament, yet nothing like such an use of them is to be found in any one instance. The words justify, justification, and righteousness, as from God to men, are never used but to signify a privilege belonging only to some, and that which is peculiar to distinguished favorites. This apostle in particular, above all the other writers of the New Testament, abounds in the use of these terms, so that we have all imaginable opportunity to understand his language and know the sense in which he uses these words; but he never elsewhere uses them in the sense supposed here, nor is there any pretense that he does. Above all, this apostle abounds in the use of these terms in this epistle.

JUSTIFICATION is the subject he had been upon through all the preceding part of the epistle. It was the grand subject of all the foregoing chapters, and the preceding part of this chapter, where these terms are continually repeated. And the word, justification, is constantly used to signify

something peculiar to believers, who had been sinners; implying some reconciliation and forgiveness of sin, and special privilege in nearness to God, above the rest of the world. Yea, the word is constantly used thus, according to Dr. T's own explanations, in his paraphrase and notes on this epistle: And there is not the least reason to suppose but that he is still speaking of the same justification, which he kind dwelt upon from the beginning to this place. He speaks of justification and righteousness here, just in the same manner as he had done in the preceding part of the epistle. He had all along spoken of justification as standing in relation to sin, disobedience to God, and offense against him, and so he does here. He had before been speaking of justification through free grace, and so he does here. He before had been speaking of justification through righteousness, as in Christ JESUS, and so he does here. And if we look into the former part of this very chapter, we shall find justification spoken of just in the same sense as in the rest of the epistle; which is also supposed by our author in his exposition. It is still justification by faith, justification of them who had been sinners, justification attended with reconciliation, justification peculiar to them who had the love of God shed abroad in their heart. The apostle's foregoing discourse on justification by grace through faith-and what he kind so greatly insisted on as the evidence of the truth of this doctrine; even the universal sinfulness of mankind in their original state-is plainly what introduces this discourse in the latter part of this 5th chapter; where he shouts how all mankind came to be sinful and miserable and so to, need this grace of God, and righteousness of; Christ. And therefore we cannot, without the most absurd violence, suppose any other than that he is still speaking of the same justification.

And as to the universal expression used in the 18th verse, "by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life;" it is needless here to go into the controversy between the remonstrants and anti-remonstrant, concerning universal redemption, and their different interpretations of this place. If we take the words even as the Arminians do; yet, in their sense of them, the free gift comes on all men to justification only conditionally, i.e. *provided they believe, repent, etc.* But in our author's sense. it actually comes on all, whether they believe and repent, or not; which certainly cannot be inferred from the universal expression, as here used. Dr. T. himself supposes, the main



design of the apostle in this universal phrase, all men, is to signify that the benefits of Christ shall come on Gentiles as well as Jews. And he supposes that the Many and the ALL, here signify the same; but it is quite certain, that all the benefits here spoken of, which the apostle says are to the many, does not actually come upon all mankind, as particularly the abounding, of grace, verse 15. “The grace of God, and the gift by grace, hath abounded unto the many.”

This abounding of grace our author explains thus; “a rich overplus of grace, in erecting a new dispensation, furnished with a glorious fund of light, means, and motives,” (p. 44.) But will any pretend, that all mankind have actually been partakers of this new fund of light, etc. How were the many millions of Indians, on the American side of the globe, partakers of it, before the Europeans came hither? Yea, Dr. T. himself supposes, that It is only free for all that are willing to accept of it. The agreement between Adam as the type or figure of him that was to come, and Christ as the anti-type, appears full and clear, if we suppose that ALL, who are IN CHRIST (to use the common scripture phrase) have the benefit of his obedience, even as ALL who are IN ADAM have the sorrowful fruit of his disobedience. The Scripture speaks of believers as the seed or posterity of Christ. (~~400~~ Galatians 3:29.) They are in Christ by grace as Adam’s posterity are in him by nature. See also ~~435~~ 1 Corinthians 15:45-49. The spiritual seed are those which this apostle often represents as CHRIST’S body: and the here spoken of as made righteous by Christ’s obedience, are doubtless the same with the words which he speaks of in chapter 12:5. We being many, are one body, or, we, the many. And again, ~~407~~ 1 Corinthians 10:17. And the same which the apostle had spoken of in the preceding chapter. (~~408~~ Romans 4:18. compared with ~~415~~ Genesis 15:5.

Dr. T. insists much on ~~432~~ 1 Corinthians 15:21, 22. “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead, for as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive,” to confirm his suppositions, that the apostle in the 5th of Romans, speaking of the death and condemnation which come by Adam, has respect only to the death we all die. when this life ends: and that by the justification and life which come by Christ, he has respect only to the general resurrection at the last day. But it is observable, that his argument is wholly built on these two suppositions, viz. First, that the resurrection meant by the apostle, ~~431~~ 1 Corinthians

15:is the resurrection of all mankind; both just and unjust. Secondly, That the opposite consequences of Adam's sin, and Christ's obedience, in ~~ROM~~ Romans 5:are the very same, neither more nor less, than are spoken of there But there are no grounds for supposing either of these things to be true.

**1.** There is no evidence, that the resurrection there spoken of, relates both to the just and unjust; but abundant evidence of the contrary. The resurrection of the wicked is seldom mentioned in the New Testament. and rarely included in the meaning of the word, it being esteemed not worthy to be called a rising to life, being only for a great increase of the misery and darkness of eternal death: and therefore by the resurrection is most commonly meant a rising to life and happiness." The saints are called the children of the resurrection, as Dr. T Observes in his note on ~~ROM~~ Romans 8:11. And it is exceeding evident, that it is the resurrection to life and happiness, which the apostle is speaking of in ~~1COR~~ 1 Corinthians 15:21, 22 As appears by each of the three foregoing verse". Verse 18. "Then they which are fallen asleep in Christ (i. e. the saints) are perished." Verse 19. "If in this life only we (Christians or apostles) have hope in Christ, (and have no resurrection and eternal life to hope for,) we are of all men most miserable." Verse 20. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and is become the first-fruit. of them that slept." He is the forerunner and first-fruits only with respect to them that are his; who are to follow him, and partake with him in the glory and happiness of his resurrection: but he is not the first-fruits of them that shall come forth to the resurrection of damnation. It also appears by the verse immediately following, verse 23. "But every man in his own order; Christ the first-fruits, and afterwards they that are Christ's, at his coming." The same is plain by what is said in verse 29-32. and by all that is said from the 35th verse to the end of the chapter, for twenty-three verses together: it there expressly appears, that the apostle is speaking only of a rising to glory, with a Glorious body, as the little grain thee is sown, being quickened, rises a beautiful flourishing plant. He there speaks of the different degrees of glory among them that shall rise, and compares it to the different degrees of glory among the celestial luminaries. The resurrection he treats of, is expressly, being, raised in incorruption, in glory, in power; with a spiritual body, having the image of the second man, the spiritual and heavenly Adam: a resurrection

wherein this corruptible shall put on incorruption and thy mortal put on immortality, and death be swallowed up in victory, and the saints gloriously triumph over that last enemy. Dr. T. himself says what is in effect owning that the resurrection here spoken of is only of the righteous, for it is expressly a resurrection. (verse 53, and 42.)

But Dr. T. says, These are never attributed to the wicked in Scriptures. So that when the apostle says here, “As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive,” it is as much as if he had said, As in Adam we all die, and our bodies are sown in corruption, in dishonor, and in weakness: so in Christ we all (we Christians, whom I have been all along speaking of ) shall be raised in power, glory, and incorruption, spiritual and heavenly, conformed to the second Adam. For as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly, verse 49. Which clearly explains and determines his meaning in verse 21, 22.

**2.** There is no evidence, that the benefit by the second Adam, spoken of in Romans 5: is the very same (containing neither more nor less) as the resurrection spoken of in 1 Corinthians 15: It is no evidence of it, that the benefit is opposed to the death that comes by the first Adam, in like manner in both places. The resurrection to eternal life though it be not the whole of that salvation and happiness which comes by the second Adam, yet is it that wherein this salvation is principally obtained. The time of the saints’ glorious resurrection is often spoken of as the proper time of their salvation, The day of their redemption, the time of their adoption, glory, and recompense. All that happiness which is given before, is only a prelibation and earnest of their great reward. Well therefore may that consummate salvation bestowed on them, be set in opposition to the death and ruin which comes by the first Adam, in like manner as the whole of their salvation is opposed to the same in Romans 5. Dr. T. himself observes, That the revival and resurrection of the body, is frequently put for our advancement to eternal life. It being the highest part, it is often put for the whole. This notion as if the justification, righteousness, and life spoken of in Romans 5 implied the resurrection of damnation is not only without ground from Scripture, but contrary to reason. For those are there spoken of as great benefits, by the grace and free gift of God: but this is the contrary, in the highest degree possible; the most consummate calamity. To obviate this, our author supposes the resurrection of all to be

a great benefit in itself; though turned into a calamity by the sin and folly of obstinate sinners, who abuse God's goodness. But the far greater part of mankind, since Adam, have never had opportunity to abuse this goodness, it having never been made known to them. Men cannot abuse a kindness, which they never had either in possession, promise, offer, or some intimation: but a resurrection is made known only by divine revelation which few comparatively have enjoyed. So that as to such wicked men as die in lands of darkness, if their resurrection comes at all by Christ, it comes from him, and to them, only as a curse, and not a blessing; for it never comes to them at all by any conveyance, grant, promise, or offer, or any thing by which they can claim it, or know anything of it, till it comes as an infinite calamity, past all remedy.

**VIII.** In a peculiar manner is there an unreasonable violence used Ill our author's explanation of the words sinner's and sinned, in the paragraph before us. He says, "These words, By one man's disobedience many were made sinners, mean neither more nor less, than that by one man's disobedience, the many were made subject to death, by the judicial act of God:" And he says in the same place, "By death, most certainly, is meant no other than the death and mortality common to all mankind." And those words, verse 12. "For that all have sinned," he thus explains, "All men became sinners, as all mankind are brought into a state of suffering." Here I observe,

**1.** The main thing, by which he justifies such interpretations, is, that sin, in various instances, is used for suffering, in the Old Testament. To which I reply; though it be true, that the original word signifies both sin, I and a sin-offering-and though this, and some other Hebrew words which signify sin, iniquity, and wickedness, are sometimes put for the effect or punishment of iniquity, by a metonymy of the cause for the effect-yet it does not appear, that these words are ever used for suffering, where I that suffering is not a punishment, or a fruit of God's anger for sin. And therefore none of the instances he mentions, come up to his purpose. When Lot is commanded to leave Sodom, that he might not be consumed in the iniquity of the city, meaning in that fire which was the effect and punishment of the iniquity of the city; this is quite another thing, than if that fire came on the city in general, as no punishment at all, nor as any fruit of a charge of iniquity, but as a token of God's favor to the

inhabitants. For according to Dr. T. the death of mankind is introduced only as a benefit, from a covenant of grace. And especially is this quite another thing, than if, in the expression used, the iniquity had been ascribed to Lot, and God, instead of saving; Lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city had said Lest thou be consumed in thine iniquity, or, Lest thou sin, or be made a sinner. Whereas the expression is such, as expressly removes the iniquity spoken of from Lot, and fixes it on the city. The place cited by our author in <sup>2501</sup>Jeremiah 51 is exactly parallel. And as to what Abimelech says to Abraham, “What have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me, and on my kingdom, a great sin?” It is manifest, Abimelech was afraid that God was angry for what he had done to Sarah; or would have been angry with him, if he had done what he was about to do, as imputing, sin to him for it. Which is a quite different thing from calling some calamity, sin, under no notion of its being any punishment of sin, nor in the least degree from God’s displeasure. And so with regard to every place our author cites in the margin, it is plain, that what is meant in each of them, is the punishment of sin, and not some suffering which is no punishment at all. And as to the instance he mentions in his Supplement, (p. 8.) the two that look most favorable to his design are those in <sup>1133</sup>Genesis 31:39. and <sup>1170</sup>2 Kings 7:9. With respect to the former, where Jacob says, that which; was torn of beast, I bare the loss of it. Dr. T. is pleased to translate it, I was the sinner; but properly rendered, it is, I expiated it; the verb in Pihel properly signifying to expiate, and the plain meaning is, I bore the blame of it, and was obliged to pay for it, as being supposed to be lost through my fault or neglect: which is a quite different thing from suffering without any supposition of fault. And as to the latter place, where the lepers say, this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till morning some mischief will befall us: in the Hebrew it is as iniquity will find us, that is, some punishment of our fault will come upon us. Elsewhere such phrases are used, as your iniquity will find you out, and the like. But certainly this is a different thing from suffering. without hurt, or supposition of fault. And it does not appear, that the verb in Hiphil, rendered to condemn, is ever put for amen, in any other sense than for sin, or guilt, or supposed guilt belonging to the subject condemned. This word is used in the participle of hiphil to signify CONDEMNING, in <sup>1175</sup>Proverbs 17:15.

“He that justifieth the wicked, and be that condemneth the just, even both are an abomination to the Lord.”

This Dr. T. observes, as if it were to his purpose, when he is endeavoring to show, that in this place (~~ROM~~ Romans 5.) the apostle speaks of God himself as condemning the just, or perfectly innocent, in a parallel signification of terms. Nor is an instance produced, wherein the verb sin, which is used by the apostle when he says, all have sinned, is any where used in our authors sense, for beings, brought into a state of suffering, and that not as a punishment for sin, or as any thing arising from God's displeasure; much less for being the subject of what comes only as the fruit of divine love, and as a benefit of the HIGHEST NATURE. Nor can any thing like this sense of the verb be found in the whole Bible.

**2.** If there had been any thing like such an use of the words sin and sinner, as our author supposes, in the Old Testament, it is evident that such an use of them is quite alien from the language of the New Testament. Where can an instance be produced of any thing like it, in any one place besides what is pretended in this? and particularly in any of this apostle's writings? He have enough of his writings, by which to learn his way of speaking about sin, condemnation, punishment, death, and suffering. he wrote much more of the New Testament than any other person. He very often has occasion to speak of condemnation: but where does he express it by such a phrase as being, made sinners ? Especially how far is he elsewhere from using such a phrase, to signify being condemned without guilt, or any imputation or supposition of guilt? Vastly more still is it remote from his language, to use the verb sin, and to say, man sinneth, or has sinned, though hereby meaning nothing more nor less, than that he, by a judicial art, is condemned, according to a dispensation of grace, to receive a great favor! he abundantly uses the words sin and sinner, his writings are full of such terms; but where else does he use them in such a sense? He has much occasion in his epistles to speak of deaths temporal and eternal; to speak of suffering of all kinds, in this world, and the world to come: but where does he call these things or denominate innocent men sinners, meaning, that they are brought into a state of suffering? If the apostle, because he was a Jew, was so addicted to the Hebrew idiom, as thus in one paragraph to repeat this particular Hebraism, which, at most, is comparatively rare even in the Old Testament; is it not strange, that never

any thing like it should appear any where else in his writings ? and especially, that he should never fall into such a war of speaking in his epistle to the Hebrews, written to Jews only, who were most used to the Hebrew idiom? And why does Christ never use such language in any of his speeches, though he was born and brought up among the Jews, and delivered almost all his speeches to Jews only? And why do none of the other New-Testament writers ever use it, who were all born and educated Jews, (excepting, perhaps Luke,) and some of them wrote especially for the benefit of the Jews?

It is worthy to be observed, what liberty is taken and boldness is used with this apostle. Certain words are abundantly used by him elsewhere in this and other epistles, when speaking, as here, of Christ's redemption and atonement, the general sinfulness of mankind, the condemnation of sinners, the justification by Christ, death as the consequence of sin, and restoration to life by Christ, yet no where are any of these words used, but in a sense very remote from what is suppose! by Dr. T. however, in this place, it seems, these terms must have a distinguished singular sense annexed to them! A new language must be coined for the apostle, to which he is evidently quite unused, for the sake of evading, this clear, precise, and abundant testimony of his, to the doctrine of original sin.

**3.** To put such a sense on the word sin, in this place, is not only to make the apostle greatly disagree with himself in the language he uses every where else, but also in this very passage. He often here uses the word sin, and other words plainly of the same import, such as transgression, disobedience, offense. Nothing can be more evident, than that these are used as several names of the same thing; for they are used interchangeably, and put one for another. And these words are used no less than seventeen times in this one paragraph. Perhaps we shall find no place in the whole Bible, in which the word sin, and other words plainly synonymous; are used so often in so little compass: and in all these instances, in the proper sense as signifying moral evil, and even so understood by Dr. T. himself, (as appears by his own exposition,) but only in these two places, (verse 12, 19.) where, in the midst of all, to evade a clear evidence of the doctrine of original so, another meaning must be found out, and it must be supposed that the apostle uses the word in a sense entirely different,

signifying something that neither implies nor supposes any moral evil at all in the subject.

Here it is very remarkable, how the gentleman who so greatly insisted upon it, that the word death must needs be understood in the same sense throughout this paragraph; yea, that it is evidently, clearly, and infallibly so, Inasmuch as the apostle is still discoursing on the same subject; yet can, without the least difficulty, suppose the word sin, to be used so differently in the very same passage, wherein the apostle is discoursing on the same thing. Let us take that One instance in verse 12. “Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Here, by sin, implied in the word sinned, in the end of the sentence, our author understands something perfectly and altogether diverse from what is meant by the word sin, twice in the former part of the very same sentence, of which this latter part 15 the explication. And a sense entirely different from the use of the word twice in the next sentence, wherein the apostle is still most plainly discoursing on the same subject, as is not denied. And so our author himself understands verse 14. Afterwards (verse 19.) the apostle uses the word sinners, which our author supposes to be in a somewhat different sense still. So that here is the utmost violence of the kind that can be conceived of, to make out a scheme against the plainest evidence, in changing the meaning of a word backward and forward in one paragraph, all about one thing, and in different parts of the same sentence, occurring in quick repetitions, with a variety of other synonymous words to fix its signification. To which we may add, the continued use of the word in all the preceding and subsequent parts of this epistle; in none of which places is it pretended, but that the word is used in the proper sense, by our author in his paraphrase and notes on the whole epistle.

But indeed we need go no further than verse 12. What the apostle means by sin, in the latter part of the verse, is evident, by comparing it with the former. part; the test clause being exegetical of the first. “Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that (or unto which) all have sinned.” Here sin and death are so spoken of in the former and in the latter part that the same things are clearly meant by the terms in both parts. Besides, to interpret sinning, here, by falling under the suffering of death, is Yet the more violent and



unreasonable, because the apostle in this very place once and again distinguishes between sin and death, plainly speaking of one as the effect, and the other the cause. So in the 21st verse “that as sin hath reigned unto death.” and in the 12th verse, “sin entered into the world, and death by sin.”

And this plain distinction holds through all the discourse, as between death and the offense, verse 15. and verse 17. and between the offense and condemnation, verse 18.

**4.** Though we should omit the consideration of the manner in which the apostle uses the words, sin, sinned, etc. in other places, and in other parts of this discourse, yet Dr. T.’s interpretation of them would be very absurd.

The case stands thus: according to his exposition, we are said to have sinned by an active verb, as though we had actively sinned; Yet this is not spoken truly and properly, but it is put figuratively for our becoming sinners passively, our being named or constituted sinners. Yet again, not that we do truly become sinners passively, or are really made sinners, by any thing that God does; this also is only a figurative or tropical representation: and the meaning is only, we are condemned, and treated As If we were sinners. Not indeed that we are properly condemned for God never truly condemns the innocent: but this also is only a figurative representation of the thing. It is but as it were condemning; because it is appointing to death, a terrible evil, as it were a punishment. But then, in reality, here is no appointment to a terrible evil, or any evil at all; but truly to a benefit a great benefit, and so in representing death as a punishment, another figure is used, and an exceeding bold one; for, as we are appointed to it, it is so far from being an evil or punishment, that it is really a favor, and that of the highest nature appointed by mere grace and love, though it seems to be a calamity.

Thus we have tropes and figures multiplied, one upon another; and all in that one word, sinned, according to the manner, as it is supposed, in which the apostle uses it. We have a figurative representation, not of a reality but of a figurative representation. Neither is this a representation of a reality, but of another thing that still is but a figurative representation of something else: yea, even this something else is still but a figure, and one

that is very harsh and far-fetched. So that here we have a figure to represent a figure, even a figure of a figure, representing some very remote figure, which most obscurely represent the shine intended; if the most terrible evil can indeed be said at all to represent the contrary good of the highest kind. And now, what cannot be made of any place of Scripture, in such a way as this ? And is there any hope of ever deciding any controversy by the Scripture, in the way of using such a license in order to force it to a compliance with our own schemes? If the apostle indeed uses language after so strange a manner in this place, it is perhaps such an instance, as not only there is not the like in all the bible besides, but perhaps in no writing whatsoever. And this, not in any parabolical, visionary, or prophetic description, in which difficult and obscure representations are wont to be made, nor in a dramatic or poetical representation; in which a great license is often taken, and bold figures are commonly to be expected. But it is in a familiar letter, wherein the apostle is delivering gospel-instruction, as a minister of the New Testament: and wherein, as he professes, he delivers divine truth without the vail of ancient figures and similitude's, and uses great plainness of speech. And in a discourse that is wholly didactic, narrative, and argumentative; evidently setting, himself to explain the doctrine he is upon, in the reason and nature of it, with a great variety of expressions, turning it as it were on every side, to make his meaning plain, and to fix in his readers the exact notion of what he intends. Dr. T. himself observes, "This apostle takes great care to guard and explain every part of his subject: and I may venture to say. he has left no part of it unexplained or unguarded. Never was an author more exact and cautious in this than he. Sometimes he writes notes on a sentence liable to exception, and wanting explanation." Now I think, this care and exactness of the apostle no where appears more than in the place we are upon. Now I scarcely know another instance equal to this, of the apostle's care to be well understood, by being very particular, explicit, and precise, setting the matter forth in every light, going over and over again with his doctrine, clearly to exhibit, and fully to settle and determine the thing at which he aims.

## SECTION 2

*Some observations on the connections, scope, and sense of this remarkable paragraph, <sup>482</sup>Romans 5:12, etc. With some reflections on the evidence which we here have of the I doctrine of original sin.*

THE connection of this remarkable paragraph with the foregoing discourse in this epistle, is not obscure and difficult nor to be sought for at a distance. It may be plainly seen, only by a general glance on what goes before, from the beginning of the epistle: and indeed what is said immediately before in the same chapter, leads directly to it. The apostle in the preceding part of this epistle had largely treated of the sinfulness and misery of all mankind Jews as well as Gentiles. He had particularly spoken of the depravity and ruin of mankind in their natural state, in the foregoing part of this chapter; representing them as being sinners, ungodly, enemies, exposed to divine wrath and without strength. This naturally leads him to observe how this so great and deplorable an event came to pass how this universal sin and ruin came into the world. And with regard to the Jews in particular, though they might allow the doctrine of original sin in profession, they were strongly prejudiced against what was implied in it, or evidently followed from it, with regard to themselves. In this respect they were prejudiced against the doctrine of universal sinfulness, and exposedness to wrath by nature, looking on themselves as by nature holy, and favourites of God's because they were the children of Abraham, and with them the apostle had labored most in the foregoing part of the epistle, to convince them of their being by nature as sinful, and as much the children of wrath, as the Gentiles it was therefore exceeding proper, and what the apostle's design most naturally led him to, that they should take off their eves from their father Abraham, their father in distinction from other nations, and direct them to their father Adam, who was the common father of mankind, equally of Jews and Gentiles. And when he had entered on this doctrine of the derivation of sin and death, to all mankind from Adam, no wonder if he thought it needful to be somewhat particular in it, seeing he wrote to JEWS and Gentiles: the former of which had been brought up under the prejudices of a proud opinion of themselves, as a holy people by nature, and the latter had been educated in total ignorance.

Again, the apostle had, from the beginning of the epistle, been endeavoring to evince the absolute dependence of all mankind on the free grace of GOD for salvation, and the greatness of this Grace - and particularly in the former part of this chapter. The greatness of this grace he shows especially by two things.

(1.) The universal corruption and misery of mankind, as in all the foregoing chapters, and in several preceding verses of this chapter, (verse 6-10.)

(2.) The greatness of the benefits which believers receive, and the greatness of the glory for which they hope.

So especially in verse 1-5, and 11th of this chapter And here, ver: 12, to the end, he still pursues the same design of magnifying the grace of God, in the favor, life, and happiness which believers in Christ receive speaking here of the grace of God, the gift by grace, the abounding of grace and the reign of grace. And he still sets forth the freedom and riches of grace by the same two arguments, viz. The universal sinfulness and ruin of mankind, all having sinned, all being naturally exposed to death, judgment and condemnation; and the exceeding greatness of the benefit received, being far greater than the misery which comes by the first Adam, and abounding beyond it. And it is by no means consistent with the apostle's scope, to suppose, that the benefit which we have by Christ, as the antitype of Adam, here mainly insisted on, is without any grace at all, being only a restoration to life of such as never deserved death.

Another thing observable in the apostle's grand scope from the beginning of the epistle, is, at he endeavors to show the greatness and absoluteness of dependence on the redemption and righteousness of CHRIST, for justification and life that he might magnify and exalt the Redeemer; in which design his whole heart was up, and may he looked upon as the main design of the whole epistle. And this is what he had been upon in the preceding part of this chapter, inferring it from the same argument, even the utter sinfulness and ruin of all men. And he is evidently still on the same thing from the 12th verse to the end: speaking of the same justification and righteousness, which he had dwelt on before, and not another totally diverse. No wonder, when the apostle is treating so fully and largely of our restoration, righteousness, and life by Christ, that he is

led by it to consider our fall, sin, death, and ruin by Adam, and to observe wherein these two opposite heads of mankind agree, and wherein they differ, in the manner of conveyance of opposite influences and communications from each.

Thus, if the place be understood, as it used to be understood by orthodox divines, the whole stands in a natural, easy, and clear connection with the preceding part of the chapter, and all the former part of the epistle, and in a plain agreement with the express design of all that the apostle had been saving; and also in connection with the words last before spoken, as introduced by the two immediately preceding verses, where he is speaking of our justification, reconciliation, and salvation by Christ; which leads the apostle directly to observe, how, on the contrary, we have sin and death by Adam. Taking this discourse of the apostle in its true and plain sense, there is no need of great extent of learning, or depth of criticism, to find out the connection. But if it be understood in Dr. T.'s sense, the plain scope and connection are wholly lost, and there was truly need of skill in criticism, and the art of discerning, beyond or at least different from that of former divines, and a faculty of seeing what other men's sight could not reach, in order to find out the connection.

What has been already observed, may suffice to show the apostle's general scope in this place. But yet there seem to be some other things to which he alludes in several expressions. As particularly the Jews had a very superstitious and extravagant notion of their law delivered by Moses, as if it were the prime, grand, and indeed only role of God's proceeding with mankind as their judge, both in their justification and condemnation, or from whence all, both sin and righteousness, was imputed, and had no consideration of the law of nature, written in the hearts of the Gentiles, and of all mankind. Herein they ascribed in finitely too much to their particular law, beyond the true design of it. They made their boast of the law, as if their being distinguished from all other nations by that great privilege, the giving of the law, sufficiently made them a holy people, and God's children. This notion of theirs the apostle evidently refers to, chapter ~~2~~2:13, 17-19. and indeed through that whole chapter. They looked on the law of Moses as intended to be the only rule and means of justification; and as such, trusted in the works of the law, especially circumcision; which appears by the third chapter. But as for the Gentiles,

they looked on them as by nature sinners, and children of wrath; because born of uncircumcised parents, and aliens from their law, and who themselves did not know, profess, and submit to the law of Moses, become proselytes, and receive circumcision. What they esteemed the sum of their wickedness, and condemnation, was, that they did not turn Jews, and act as Jews. To this notion the apostle has a plain respect, and endeavors to convince them of its falseness, in chapter 2:12-16. And he has a manifest regard again to the same thing here. (Chapter ~~4~~<sup>5</sup>:12-14.) Which may lead us the more clearly to see the true sense of those verses, about the sense of which is the main controversy, and the meaning of which being determined, it will settle the meaning of every other controverted expression through the whole discourse.

Dr. T. misrepresents the apostle's argument in these verses; which, as has been demonstrated, is in his sense altogether vain and impertinent. He supposes, the think which the apostle mainly intends to prove, is, that death or mortality does not come on mankind by personal sin: and that he would prove it by this medium, that death resigned when there was no law in being which threatened personal sin with death. It is acknowledged, that this is implied, even that death came into the world by Adam's sin: yet this is not the main thing the apostle designs to prove. But his main point evidently is, that sin and guilt, and just exposedness to Goliath and ruin, came into the world by Adam's sin; as righteousness, justification, and a title to eternal life come by Christ. Which point be confirms by this consideration, that from the fiery time when Adam sinned, sin, guilt, and desert of ruin, became universal in the world, long before the law given by Moses to the Jewish nation had any being.

The apostle's remark, that sin entered into the world by one man, who was the father of the whole human race, was an observation which afforded proper instruction for the Jews, who looked on themselves as an holy people, because they had the law of Moses, and were the children of Abraham, an holy father; while they looked on other nations as, by nature unholy and sinners, because they were not Abraham's children. He leads them up to a higher ancestor than this patriarch, even to Adam, who being equally the father of Jews and Gentiles, both alike come from a sinful father; from whom Built and pollution were derived alike to all mankind. And this the apostle proves by an argument, which of all that could

possibly be invented, tended the most briefly and directly to convince the Jews; even by this reflection, that death had come equally on all mankind from Adam's time, and that the posterity of Abraham were equally subject to it with the rest of the world. This was apparent in fact, a thing they all knew. And the Jews had always been taught that death which began in the destruction of the body, and of this present life) the proper punishment of sin. This they were taught in Moses's history of Israel, and God's first threatening of punishment for sin, and by the constant doctrine of the law and the prophets; as already observed.

And the apostle's observation-that sin was in the world long before the law was given, and was as universal in the world from the times of Adam, as it had been among the heathen since the law of Moses-showed plainly, that the Jews were quite mistaken in their notion of their particular law and that the law which is the original and universal rule of righteousness and judgment for all mankind, was another law, of far more ancient date, even the law of nature. This began as early as the human nature began, and was established with the first father of mankind, and in him with the whole race. The positive precept of abstaining from the forbidden fruit, was given for the trial of his compliance with this law of nature; of which the main rule is supreme regard to God and his will. And the apostle proves that it must be thus, because if the law of Moses had been the highest rule of judgment, and if there had not been a superior, prior, divine rule established, mankind in general would not have been judged and condemned as sinners, before that was given, (for "sin is not imputed, when there is no law,") as it is apparent in fact they were, because death reigned before that time, even from the time of Adam.

It may be observed, that the apostle, both in this epistle, and in that to the Galatians, endeavors to convince the Jews of these two things, in opposition to the notions and prejudices they had entertained concerning their law.

(1.) That it never was intended to be the covenant, or method by which they should actually be justified.

(2.) That it was not the highest and universal rule or law, by which mankind in general and particularly the heathen world, were condemned.

And he proves both by similar arguments.-He proves, that the law of Moses was not the covenant, by which any of mankind were to obtain justification, because that covenant was of older date, being expressly established in the time of Abraham, and Abraham himself was justified by it. This argument the apostle particularly handles in the third chapter of Galatians, particularly in verse 17-19. and especially in ~~ROM~~ Romans 4:13-15. He proves also, that the law of Moses was not the prime rule of judgment, by which mankind in general, and particularly the heathen world, were condemned. And this he proves also the same way, viz. but something superadded to both, superadded to the latter, to illustrate and confirm it, that the offense might abound; and superadded to the former, to be as a schoolmaster, to prepare men for its benefits, and to magnify divine grace in it, that this might much more abound.

The chief occasion of obscurity and difficulty, attending the scope and connection of the various clauses of this discourse, particularly in the 13th and 14th verses, is that there are two things (although closely connected) which the apostle has in view at ones. He would illustrate the grand, point he had been upon from the beginning, even justification through Christ's righteousness alone, by showing now we are originally in a sinful miserable state, how we derive tints sin and misery from Adam, and how we are delivered and justified by Christ as a second Adam. At the same time he would confute those foolish and corrupt notions of the Jews, about their nature, and their law, which were very inconsistent with these doctrines. And he here endeavors to establish, at once, these two things in opposition to those Jewish notions.

**(1.)** That it is our natural relation to Adam, and not to Abraham, which determines our native moral state: and that, therefore, being natural children of Abraham, will not make us by nature holy in the sight of God, since we are the natural seed of sinful Adam. Nor does the Gentiles being not descended from Abraham. denominate them sinners, any more than the Jews, seeing both alike are descended from Adam.

**(2.)** That the law of Moses is not the prime and general law and rule of judgment for mankind, to condemn them and denominate them sinners; but that the state they are in with regard to a higher, more ancient, and universal law, determines them in general to be sinners in the sight of



God, and liable to be condemned as such. Which observation is, in many respects, to the apostle's purpose; particularly in this respect, that if the Jews were convinced, that the law, which was the prime rule of condemnation, was given to all, was common to all mankind, and that all fell under condemnation through the violation of that law by the common father of all, both Jews and Gentiles, then they would be led more easily and naturally to believe, that the method of justification, which God had established, also extended equally to all mankind: and that the Messiah, by whom we have this justification, is appointed, as Adam was, for a common head to all, both Jews and Gentiles. — The apostle aiming to confute the Jewish notion, is the principal occasion of those words in the 13th verse, “for until the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed, when there is no law.”

As to the import of that expression, “even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression,” not only is the thing signified, in Dr. T's sense of it, not true; or if it had been trite, would have been impertinent, as has been shown: but his interpretation is, otherwise, very much strained and unnatural. According to him, “by sinning after the similitude of Adam's transgression,” is not meant any similitude of the act of sinning, nor of the command sinned against, nor properly any circumstance of the sin, but only the similitude of a circumstance of the command, viz. the threatening with which it is attended. A far-fetched thing, truly, to be called a similitude of sinning! Besides, this expression in such a meaning, is only a needless, impertinent, and awkward repetition of the same thing, which it is supposed the apostle had observed in the foregoing verse, even after he had proceeded another step in the series of his discourse. As thus, in the foregoing verse the apostle had plainly laid down his argument, (as our author understands it,) by which he would prove, that death did not come by personal sin, viz. because death reigned before and law, threatening death for personal sin, was in being: so that the sin then committed was against no law, threatening death for personal sin. Having laid this down, the apostle leaves this part of his argument, and proceeds another step, nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses: and then returns, in a strange unnatural manner, and repeats that argument or assertion again, but only more obscurely than before, in these words, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's

transgression; i. e. over them, that had not sinned against a law threatening death for personal sin. Which is just the same them as if the apostle had said, “they that sinned before the law, did not sin against a law threatening death for personal sin for there was no such law for any to sin against at that time: nevertheless death reigned at that time, even over such as did not sin against a law threatening death for personal sin.” Which latter clause acts nothing to the premises, and tends nothing to illustrate what was said before, but rather to obscure and darken it. The particle even, when prefixed in this manner, is used to signify something additional, some advance in the sense or argument; implying, that the words following express something more, or express the same thing more fully, plainly, or forcibly. But to unite two clauses by such a particle, in such a manner, when there is nothing besides a flat repetition, with no superadded sense or force, but rather a greater uncertainty and obscurity, would be very unusual, and indeed very absurd.

I can see no reason why we should be dissatisfied with that explanation of this clause, which has more commonly been given, viz. That by them who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, are meant infants; who, though they have indeed sinned in Adam, yet never sinned as Adam did, by actually transgressing in their own persons, unless it be, that this interpretation is too old, and too common. It was well understood by those to whom the apostle wrote, that vast numbers had died in infancy, within that period of which he speaks, particularly in the time of the deluge. And it would be strange, that the apostle should not have the case of such infants in his mind; even supposing his scope were what our author supposes, and he had only intended to prove that death did not come on mankind for their personal sin. How directly would it have served the purpose of proving this’ to have mentioned so great a part of mankind who are subject to death, and who, all know, never committed any sin in their own persons! How much more plain and easy the proof of the point by that, than to go round about, as Dr. T. supposes, and bring in a thing so dark and uncertain as this, that God never would bring death on all mankind for personal sin (though they had personal sin) without an express revealed constitution; and then to observe, that there was no revealed constitution of this nature from Adam to Moses-which also seems to be an assertion without any plain evidence-and then to infer, that

it must needs be so, that it could come only on occasion of Adam's sin, though not for his sin, or as any punishment of it; which inference also is very dark and unintelligible.

If the apostle in this place meant those who never sinned by their personal act, it is not strange that he should express this by their not sinning after the similitude of Adam's transgression. We read of two ways of men being like Adam, or in which a similitude to him is ascribed to men: one is, being begotten or born in his image or likeness, ~~xxx~~ Genesis 5:3. Another is, transgressing: God's covenant or law, like him, Hosea 6 7. They, like Adam, (so, in the Hebrews and Vulg. Lat.) have transgressed the covenant. Infants have the former similitude, but not the latter. And it was very natural, when the apostle would infer that infants become sinners by that one act and offense of Adam to observe, that they had not renewed the act of sin themselves, by any second instance of a like sort. And such might be the state of language among Jews and Christians at that day, that the apostle might have no phrase more aptly to express this meaning. The manner in which the epithets, personal and actual, are used and applied now in this case, is probably of later date, and more modern use.

And the apostle having the case of infants in view, in this expression, makes it mole to his purpose to mention death reigning before the law of Moses was given. For the Jews looked on all nations besides themselves, as sinners, by virtue of their law; being made so especially by the law, of circumcision, given first to Abraham, and completed by Moses, making the want of circumcision a legal pollution, utterly disqualifying for the privileges of the sanctuary. This law, the Jews supposed, made the very infants of the Gentiles to be sinners, polluted and hateful to God; they being uncircumcised, and born of uncircumcised parents. But the apostle proves, against these notions of the Jews, that the nations of the world do not become sinners by nature, and sinners from infancy, by virtue of their law, in this manner, but by Adam's sin: inasmuch as infants were treated as sinners long before the law of circumcision was given, as well as before they had committed actual sin.

What has been said, may, as I humbly conceive, lead us to that which is the true scope and sense of the apostle in these three verses; which I will endeavor more briefly to represent in the following paraphrase.

“The things which I have largely insisted on, viz. the evil that is in the world, the general wickedness, guilt, and ruin of mankind, and the opposite good, even justification and life, as only by Christ, lead me to observe the, likeness of the manner in which they are each of them introduced. For it, was by one man that the general corruption and guilt which I have spoken of, came into the world, and condemnation and death by sin: and this dreadful punishment and ruin came on all mankind by the great law of works, originally established with mankind in their first father, and by his one offense, or breach of that law; all thereby becoming sinners in God’s sight, and exposed to final destruction.

“It is manifest that it was in this way the world became sinful and guilty; and not in that way which the Jews suppose, viz. That their law, given by Moses, is the grand universal rule of righteousness and judgment for mankind, and that it is by being Gentiles, uncircumcised, and aliens from that law, that the nations of the world are constituted sinners and unclean. For before the law of Moses was given, mankind were all looked upon by the great Judge as sinners, by corruption and guilt derived from Adam’s violation of the original law of works; which shows, that the original universal rule of righteousness is not the law of Moses; for if so, there would have been no sin imputed before that was given; because sin is not imputed, when there is no law.

“But that at that time sin was imputed, and men were by their judge reckoned as sinners, through guilt and corruption derived from Adam, and condemned for sin to death, the proper, punishment of sin, we have a plain proof; in that it appears in fact all mankind, during that whole time which preceded the law of Moses, were subjected to that temporal death, which is the visible introduction and image of that utter destruction which sin deserves, not excepting even infant, who could be sinners no other way then by virtue of Adam’s transgression, having never in their own persons actually sinned as Adam did; nor could at that time be made polluted by the law of Moses, as being uncircumcised, or born of uncircumcised parents.”

Now, by way of reflection on the whole, I would observe, that though there are two or three expressions in this paragraph, ~~and~~ Romans 5:12, etc. the design of which is attended with some difficulty and obscurity, as particularly in the 13th and 14th verses, yet the scope and sense of the discourse in general is not obscure, but on the contrary very clear and manifest; and so is the particular doctrine mainly taught in it. The apostle sets himself with great care to make it plain, and precisely to fix and settle the point he is upon. And the discourse is so framed, that one part of it greatly clears and fixes the meaning of other parts, and the whole is determined by the clear connection It stands in with other parts of the epistle, and by the manifest drift of all the preceding part of it.

The doctrine of original sin is not only here taught, but most plainly, explicitly, and abundantly taught. This doctrine is asserted, expressly or implicitly, in almost every verse, and in some of the verses several times. It is fully implied in that first expression in the 12th verse “By one man sin entered into the world.” The passage implies, that sin became universal in the world, as the apostle had before largely shown it was; and not merely (which would be a trifling observation) that one man, who was made first, sinned first, before other men sinned, or that it did not so happen that many men began to sin just together at the same moment. The latter part of the verse “and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that (or, if you will, unto which) all have sinned,” shows, that in the eye of the Judge of the world, in Adam’s first sin, all sinned; not only in some sort, but all sinned so as to be exposed to that death, and final destruction, which is the proper wages of sin. The same doctrine is taught again twice over in the 14th verse. It is there observed, as a proof of this doctrine, that “death reigned over them which had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression,” i. e. by their personal act, and therefore could be exposed to death, only by deriving, guilt and pollution from Adam, in consequence of his sin. And it IS taught again in those words, who is the figure of him that was to come. The resemblance lies very much in this circumstance, viz. our deriving sin guilt, and punishment by Adam’s sin, as we do righteousness, justification, and the reward of life, by Christ’s obedience; for so the apostle explains himself. The same doctrine is expressly taught again, verse 15. “Through the offense of one, many be dead.” And again twice in the 16th verse, “it was by one that

sinned:" i. e. It was by Adam' that guilt and punishment (before spoken of) came on mankind: and in there words, "judgment was by one to condemnation." It is again plainly and fully laid down in the 17th verse "By one mall's offense, depth reigned by one." So again in the 18th verse, "By the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Again very plainly in the 19th verse, "By one man's disobedience, many were made sinners."

Here is every thing to determine and fix the meaning of all the important terms used, as, the abundant use of them in all parts of the New Testament; and especially in this apostle's writings, which make up a very great part of the New Testament, and his repeated use of them in this epistle in particular, and in the former part of this very chapter, and also the light that one sentence in this paragraph casts on another, which fully settles their meaning: as, with respect to the words justification, righteousness, and condemnation and above all, in regard of the word sin, which is the most important of all, with relation to the doctrine and controversy we are upon. Besides the constant use of this term every where else through the New Testament, through the epistles of this apostle, this epistle in particular, and even the former part of this chapter, it is often repeated in this very paragraph, and evidently used in the very sense that is denied to belong to it in the end of verse 12. and verse 19. though owned every where else: and its meaning is fully determined by the apostle varying the term; using together with it, to signify the same thing, such a variety of other synonymous words such as offense, transgression, disobedience. And further, to put the matter out of all controversy, it is particularly, expressly, and repeatedly distinguished from that which our opposers would explain it by, viz. condemnation and death. And what is meant by sin entering into the world, in verse 12. is determined by a like phrase of sin being in the world in the next verse. — And that by the offense of one, so often spoken of here, as bringing death and condemnation on all, the apostle means the sin of one derived in its guilt and pollution to mankind in general, (over and above all that has been already observed,) is determined by those words in the conclusion of this discourse, verse 20. "Moreover, the law entered, that the offense might abound: but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." These words plainly show, that the OFFENCE spoken of often, the offense of one

man, became the sin of all. For when he says, “The law entered, that the offense might abound” his meaning cannot be that the offense of Adam, merely as his personally should abound; but, as it exists in its derived guilt, corrupt influence, and evil fruits, in the sin of mankind in general, even as a tree in its root and branches.

What further confirms the certainty of the proof of original sin, which this place affords, in this, that the utmost art cannot pervert it to another sense. What a variety of the most artful methods have been used by the enemies of this doctrine, to wrest and darken this paragraph of Holy Writ, which stands so much in their way, as it were to force the Bible to speak a language agreeable to their mind! flow have expressions been strained, words and phrases racked! What strange figures of speech have been invented, and with violent hands thrust into the apostle’s mouth; and then with a bold countenance and magisterial airs obtruded on the world, as from him! — But blessed be God, we have his words as he delivered them, and the rest of the same epistle, and his other writings to compare with them, by which his meaning stands in too strong and glaring a light to be hid by any of the artificial mists which they labor to throw upon it.

It is really no less than abusing the Scripture and its readers, to represent this paragraph as the most obscure of all the places of Scripture, that speak of the consequences of Adam’s sin; and to treat it as if there was need first to consider other places as more plain. Whereas, it is most manifestly a piece in which these things are declared, the most plainly, particularly, precisely, and of set purpose, by that great apostle, who has most fully explained to us those doctrines in general which relate to the redemption by Christ, and the sin and misery we are redeemed from. And it must be now left to the reader’s judgment, whether the Christian church has not proceeded reasonably, in looking on this as a place of Scripture most clearly and fully treating of these things, and in using its determinate sense as a help to settle the meaning of many other passages of Sacred Writ.

As this place in general is very full and plain, so the doctrine of the corruption of nature, as derived from Adam, and also the imposition of his first sin, are both clearly taught in it. The imputation of Adam’s one transgression, is indeed most directly and frequently asserted. We are here

assured, that by one man's sin, death passed on all; all being adjudged to this punishment, as having sinned (so it is implied) in that one man's sin. And it is repeated, over and over, that all are condemned, many are dead, many made sinners, etc. by one man's offense, by the disobedience of one, and by one offense. And the doctrine of original depravity is also here taught, when the apostle says, "By one man sin entered into the world;" having a plain respects (as hath been shown) to that universal corruption and wickedness, as well as guilt, of which he had before largely treated.



# PART 3

*The Evidence Given Us, Relative to the Doctrine of Original Sin in What the Scriptures Reveal, Concerning the Redemption by Christ.*

## CHAPTER 1.

*The Evidence of Original Sin, From the Nature;  
of Redemption, in the Procurement of it.*

According to Dr. T.'s scheme, a very great part of mankind are the subjects of Christ's redemption, who live and die perfectly innocent, who never have had, and never will have, any sin charged to their account, and never are exposed to any punishment whatsoever, viz. all that die in infancy. They are the subjects of Christ redemption, as he redeems them from death, or as they by his righteousness have justification, and by his obedience are made righteous, in the resumption of the body, in the sense of ~~ROM~~ Romans 5:18, 19. And all mankind are thus the subjects of Christ's redemption, while they are perfectly guiltless, and exposed to no punishment, as by Christ they are entitled to a resurrection. Though, with respect to such persons as have sinned, he allows it is in some sort by Christ and his death, that they are saved from sin, and the punishment of it.

Now let us see whether such a scheme well consists with the scripture account of the redemption by Jesus Christ.

**I.** The representations of the redemption by Christ every where in Scripture, lead us to suppose, that all whom he came to redeem are sinners; that his salvation as to the term from which, (or the evil to be redeemed from,) in all, is sin, and the deserved punishment of sin. It is natural to suppose, that when he had his name Jesus, or Savior, given him by God's special and immediate appointment, the salvation meant by that name should be his salvation in general; and not only a part of his salvation, and with regard only to some of them whom he came to save. But this name was given him to signify "his saving his people from their

sins,” <sup><402></sup>Matthew 1:21. And the great doctrine of Christ’s salvation is, that “he came into the world to save sinners,” <sup><5015></sup>1 Timothy 1:15. And that “Christ hath once suffered, the just for the unjust” <sup><4088></sup>1 Peter 3:18. “In this was manifested the love of God towards us, (towards such in general as have the benefit of God’s love in giving Christ,) that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, that he sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins,” <sup><5049></sup>1 John 4:9, 10. Many other texts might be mentioned, which seem evidently to suppose, that all who are redeemed by Christ are saved from SIN. We are led by what Christ himself said, to suppose, that if any are not sinners, they have no need of him as a Redeemer, any more than a man in health of a physician, <sup><4017></sup>Mark 2:17. And that, in order to our being the proper subjects of the mercy of God through Christ, we must first be in a state of sin, is implied in <sup><402></sup>Galatians 3:22.

“But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise  
by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”

To the same effect is <sup><5113></sup>Romans 11:32.

These things are greatly confirmed by the scripture doctrine of sacrifices. It is abundantly plain, both from the Old and New Testament that these were types of Christ’s death, and were for sin, and supposed sin in those for whom they were offered. The apostle supposes, that in order to any having the benefit of the eternal inheritance by Christ, there must of necessity be the death of the testator; and gives that reason for it, “That without shedding, of blood there is no remission,” <sup><5085></sup>Hebrews 9:15, etc. And Christ himself, in representing the benefit of his blood, in the institution of the Lord’s supper, under the notion of the blood of a testament, calls it, “The blood of the New Testament shed for the remission of sins,” <sup><4028></sup>Matthew 26:28. But according to the scheme of our author, many have the eternal inheritance by the death of the testator, who never had any need of remission.

**II.** The Scripture represents the redemption by Christ as a redemption from deserved destruction, and that, not merely as it respects some particulars, but as the fruit of God’s love to mankind.

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;” (~~AR~~ John 3:16)

implying, that otherwise they must perish or be destroyed. But what necessity of this, if they did not deserve to be destroyed? Now, that the destruction here spoken of, is deserved destruction, is manifest, because it is there compared to the perishing of such of the children of Israel as died by the bite of the fiery serpents, which God in his wrath, for their rebellion, sent amongst them. And the same thing clearly appears by the last verse of the same chapter, “He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him,” or, is left remaining on him: implying, that all in general are found under the wrath of God and that they only of all mankind who are interested in Christ, have this wrath removed and eternal life bestowed, the rest are left with the wrath of God still remaining on them. The same is clearly illustrated and confirmed by ~~AR~~ John 5:24.

“He that believeth, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life.”

in being passed from death to life is implied, that before, they were all in a state of death: and they are spoken of as being so by a sentence of condemnation; and if it be a just condemnation, it is a deserved condemnation.

**III.** It will follow on Dr. T.’s scheme, that Christ’s redemption, with regard to a great part of them who are the subjects of it, is not only a redemption from no sin, but from no calamity, and so from no evil of any kind. For as to death, which infants are redeemed from, they never were subjected to it as a calamity, but purely as a benefit. It came by no threatening or curse denounced upon or through Adam; the covenant with him being utterly abolished, as to all its force and power on mankind, (according to our author,) before the sentence of mortality. Therefore trouble and death could be appointed to innocent mankind no other way than on account of another covenant, the covenant of grace; and in this channel they come only as favors, not as evils. Therefore they could need no remedy, for they had no disease. Even death itself, which it is supposed Christ saves them from, is only a medicine; and one of the

greatest of benefits. It is ridiculous to talk of persons' needing a medicine, or a physician, to save them from an excellent medicine; or of a remedy from a happy remedy! If it be said, though death be a benefit, yet it is so because Christ changed it, and turns it into a benefit, by procuring a resurrection: I would ask, what can be meant by turning or changing it into a benefit, when it never was otherwise, nor could ever justly be otherwise? Infants could not at all be brought under death as a calamity, for they never deserved it. And it would be only an abuse (be it far from us, to ascribe such a thing to God) in any being, to offer any poor sufferers a Redeemer from a calamity which he had brought upon them, without the least desert of it on their part.

But it is plain, that mortality was not at first brought on mankind as a blessing, by the covenant of grace through Christ; and that Christ and grace do not bring mankind under death, but find them under it.

“We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead.”

( 2 Corinthians 5:14)

“The Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost.”

( Luke 19:10)

The grace which appears in providing a deliverer from any state, supposes the subject to be in that state prior to his deliverance. In our author's scheme, there never could be any sentence of death or condemnation, that requires a Savior from it; because the very sentence itself, according to the true meaning of it, implies and makes sure all that good, which is requisite to abolish and make void the seeming evil to the innocent subject. So that the sentence itself is in effect the deliverer; and there is no need of another to deliver from that sentence. Dr. T. insists upon it, that “nothing come upon us in consequence of Adam's sin, in any SENSE, KIND, or DEGREE, inconsistent with the original blessing pronounced on Adam at his creation; and nothing but what is perfectly consistent with God's blessing, love, and goodness, declared to Adam as soon as he came out of his Maker's hands.” If the case be so, it is certain there is no evil or calamity at all for Christ to redeem us from; unless things agreeable to the divine goodness, love, and blessing, are things from which we need redemption.”

**IV.** It will follow, on our author's principles, not only with respect to infants, but even adult persons, that redemption is needless, and Christ is dead in vain. Not only is there no need of Christ's redemption in order to deliverance from any consequences of Adam's sin, but also in order to perfect freedom from personal sin, and all its evil consequences. For God has made other sufficient provision for that, viz. a sufficient power and ability, in all mankind, to do, all their duty, and wholly to avoid sin. Yea, he insists upon it, that "when men have not sufficient power to do their duty, they have no duty to do. We may safely and assuredly conclude, (says he,) that mankind in all parts of the world have SUFFICIENT power to do the duty which God requires of them; and that he requires of them NO MORE than they have SUFFICIENT powers to do." And in another place, "God has given powers EQUAL to the duty which he expects." And he expresses a great dislike at. R. R.'s supposing, that our propensities to evil, and temptation", are too strong to be EFFECTUALLY and CONSTANTLY resisted; or that we are unavoidably sinful IN A DEGREE; that our appetites and passions will be breaking out, notwithstanding our everlasting watchfulness. These things fully imply, that men have in their own natural ability sufficient means to avoid sin, and to be perfectly free from it, and so, from all the bad consequences of it. And if the means are sufficient, then there is no need of more; and therefore there is no need of Christ dying, in order to it. What Dr. T. says, (p. 72. S.) fully implies, that it would be unjust in God to give mankind being in such circumstances, as that they would be more likely to sin, so as to be exposed to final misery, than otherwise. Hence then, without Christ and his redemption, and without any grace at all, MERE JUSTICE makes sufficient provision for our being free from sin and misery by our own power.

If all mankind, in all parts of the world, have such sufficient power to do their whole duty, without being sinful in any degree, then they have sufficient power to obtain righteousness by the law: and then, according to the apostle Paul, Christ is dead in twin.

"If righteousness come by law, Christ is dead in vain;"

( ~~RE~~ Galatians 2:21)

To as without the article, by law, or the rule of right action, as our author explains the phrase. And according to the sense in which he explains this

very place, “it would have frustrated, or rendered useless, the grace of God, if Christ died to accomplish what was MIGHT have been effected by law itself, without his death.” So that it most clearly follows from his own doctrine, that Christ is dead in vain, and the grace of God is useless. The same apostle says, if there had been a law which COULD have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law, ~~ROM~~ Galatians 3:21. i. e. (still according to Dr. T.’s own sense,) if there was a law, that man, in his present state, had sufficient power perfectly to fulfill. For Dr. T. supposes the reason why the law could not give life, to be “not because it was weak in itself, but through the weakness of our flesh, and the infirmity of the human nature in the present state.” But he says, “We are under a mild dispensation of GRACE, making allowance for our infirmities.” By our infirmities, we may upon good grounds suppose he means that infirmity of human nature, which he gives as the reason why the law cannot give life. But what grace is there in making that allowance for our infirmities, which justice itself (according to his doctrine) most absolutely requires, as he supposes divine justice exactly proportions our duty to our ability?

Again, if it be said, that although Christ’s redemption was not necessary to preserve men from beginning to sin and getting into a course of sin, because they have sufficient power in themselves to avoid it; yet it may be necessary to deliver men, after they have by their own folly brought themselves under the dominion of evil appetites and passions. I answer, if it be so, that men need deliverance from those habits and passions, which are become too strong for them, yet that deliverance, on our author’s principles, would be no salvation from sin. For the exercise of passions which are too strong for us, and which we cannot overcome, is necessary: and he strongly urges, that a necessary evil can be no moral evil. It is true, it is the effect of evil, as it is the effect of a bad practice, while the man had power to have avoided it. But then according to Dr. T. that evil cause alone is sin, for he says expressly, “The cause of every effect is alone chargeable with the effect it produceth, or which proceedeth from it.” And as to that sin which was the cause, the man needed no Savior from that, having had sufficient power in himself to have avoided it. So that it follows by our author’s scheme, that none of mankind, neither infants nor adult persons, neither the more nor less vicious, neither Jews nor Gentile,

neither heathens nor Christians, ever did or ever could stand in any need of a Savior: and that, with respect to all, the truth is, Christ is dead in vain.

If any should say, although all mankind in all ages have sufficient ability to do their whole duty, and so may by their own power enjoy perfect freedom from sin, yet God foresaw that they would sin, and that after they had sinned, they would need Christ's death. I answer, it is plain, by what the apostle says in those places which were just now mentioned, (~~402~~ Galatians 2:21. and 3:21.) that God would have esteemed it needless to give his Son to die for men, unless there had been a prior impossibility of their having righteousness by any law; and that, if there had been a law which **COULD** have given life, this other way by the death of Christ would not have been provided. And this appears to be agreeable to our author's own sense of things, by his words which have been cited, wherein he says' "It would have **FRUSTRATED** or rendered **USELESS** the grace of God, if Christ died to accomplish what was or **MIGHT HAVE BEEN** effected by law itself, without his death."

**V.** It will follow on Dr. T.'s scheme, not only that Christ's redemption is needless or saving from sin, or its consequences, but also that it does no good that way, has no tendency to any diminution of sin in the world. For as to any infusion of virtue or holiness into the heart, by divine power through Christ or his redemption, it is altogether inconsistent with this author's notions. With him, in wrought virtue, if there were any such thing, would be no virtue; not being the effect of our own will, choice and design, but only of a sovereign act of God's power. And therefore, all that Christ does to increase virtue, is only increasing our talents, our light, advantages, means, and motives; as he often explains the matter. But sin is not at all diminished. For he says, our duty must be inmeasured by our talents; as, a child that has less talents, has less duty; and therefore must be no more exposed to commit sin, than he that has greater talents, because he that has greater talents has more duty required, in exact proportion. If so, he that has but one talent, has as much advantage to perform that one degree of duty which is required of him, as he that has five talents, to perform his five degrees of duty, and is no more exposed to fail of it. And that man's guilt, who sins against greater advantages, means, and motives, is greater in proportion of his talents. And therefore it will follow, on Dr. T.'s principles, that men stand no better chance, have no more eligible or

valuable probability of freedom from sin and punishment, or of contracting but little guilt, or of performing required duty, with the great advantages and talents implied in Christ's redemption, than without them when all things are computed, and put into the balances together, the numbers, degrees, and aggravations of sin exposed to, degrees of duty required, etc. So that men have no redemption from sin, and no new means of performing duty, that are valuable or worth any thing at all. And thus the great redemption by Christ in every respect comes to nothing, with regard both to infants and adult persons.



## CHAPTER 2

### *The Evidence of the Doctrine of Original Sin From What the Scripture Teaches of the Application of Redemption.*

THE truth of the doctrine of original sin is very clearly manifest from what the Scripture says of that change of state, which it represents as necessary to an actual interest in the spiritual and eternal blessings of the Redeemer's kingdom.

In order to this, it speaks of it as absolutely necessary for every one that he be regenerated, or born again.

“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be begotten again, or born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (~~418B~~ John 3:3)

Dr. T. though he will not allow that this signifies any change from a state of natural propensity to sin, yet supposes that the new birth here spoken of, means a man's being brought to a divine life, in a right use and application of the natural powers, in a life, at true holiness: and that it is the attainment of those habits of virtue and religion, which gives, us the real character of true Christians, and the children of God, and that it is putting on the new nature of right action.

But in order to proceed in the most sure and safe manner, in understanding what is meant in Scripture by being born again, and so in the inferences we draw from what is said of the necessity of it, let us compare scripture with scripture, and consider what other terms or phrases are used, where respect is evidently had to the same change. And here I would observe the following things.

**I.** If we compare one scripture with another, it will be sufficiently manifest, that by regeneration, or being begotten or born again, the same change in the state of the mind is signified with that which the scripture speaks of as affected in true REPENTANCE and CONVERSION. I put repentance and conversion together, because the scripture puts them together, ~~418B~~ Acts 3:19. and because they plainly signify much the same thing. The word repentance, signifies a change of the mind, as the word

conversion, means a change or turning from sin to God. And that this is the same change with that which is called regeneration (excepting that this latter term especially signifies the change, as the mind is passive in it) the following things may show.

In the change which the mind undergoes in repentance and conversion, is attained that character of true Christians which is necessary to the eternal privileges of such.

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” (Acts 3:19)

And thus it is in regeneration; as is evident from what Christ says to Nicodemus, and as is allowed by Dr. T.

The change of the mind in repentance is that in which saving faith is attained. (Mark 1:15. The kingdom of God is at hand, repent ye, and believe the gospel.” And so it is in being born again, or born of God; as appears by (John 1:12,13. “But as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born not of blood, etc. but of God.” Just as Christ says concerning conversion,

“Verily, verily, I say unto you except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 18:3)

so does he say concerning being born again, in what he spake to Nicodemus.

By the change men undergo in conversion, they become as little children; which appears in the place last cited: and so they do by regeneration. (1 Peter 1:23. and 2:2.) “Being born again. — Wherefore as new-born babes, desire,” etc. It is no objection, that the disciples, to whom Christ spake in (Matthew 18:3. were converted already: this makes it not less proper for Christ to declare the necessity of conversion to them, leaving it with them to try themselves, and to make sure their conversion: in like manner as he declared to them the necessity of repentance, in (Luke 13:3, 5. “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” The change effected by

repentance is expressed and exhibited by baptism. Hence it is called the baptism of repentance. (<sup><4081></sup>Matthew 3:11. <sup><4082></sup>Luke 3:3. <sup><4083></sup>Acts 13:24. and <sup><4084></sup>19:4.) And so is regeneration, or being born again, expressed by baptism, as is evident by such representations of regeneration as those: <sup><4085></sup>John 3:5 “Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit.” <sup><4086></sup>Titus 3:5. “He saved us by the washing of regeneration.” — Many other things might be observed, to show that the change men pass under in their repentance and conversion, is the same with that of which they are the subjects in regeneration. — But these observations may be sufficient.

**II.** The change which a man undergoes when born again, and in his repentance and conversion, is the same that the scripture calls the CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART. This may easily appear by considering, that as regeneration is that in which are attained the habits of true virtue and holiness, as has been shown, and as is confessed; so is circumcision of heart.

“And the Lord thy God will circumcise thing heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.” (<sup><4087></sup>Deuteronomy 30:6)

Regeneration is that whereby men come to have the character of true Christians; as is evident, and as is confessed; and so is circumcision of heart: for by this men become Jews inwardly, or Jews in the spiritual and christian sense (and that in the same as being true Christians,) as of old, proselytes were made Jews by circumcision of the flesh. <sup><4088></sup>Romans 2:28, 29. “For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God.”

That circumcision of the heart, is the same with conversion, or turning from sin to God, is evident by <sup><4089></sup>Jeremiah 4:1-4. “If thou wilt return, O Israel, return onto me. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and put away, the foreskins of your heart.” And <sup><4090></sup>Deuteronomy 10:16. “Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.” Circumcision of the heart is the same change of the heart that men experience in repentance, as is evident by <sup><4091></sup>Leviticus 26:41. “If their

uncircumcised heart be humbled, and they accept the punishment of their iniquity.

The change effected in regeneration, repentance, and conversion, is signified by baptism, as has been shown, and so is circumcision of the heart signified by the same thing. None will deny, that it was this internal circumcision, which of old was signified by external circumcision; nor will any deny, now under the New Testament, that inward and spiritual baptism, or the cleansing of the heart, is signified by external washing or baptism. But spiritual circumcision and spiritual baptism are the same thing; both being putting off the body of the sins of the flesh; as is very plain by <sup><sup>SOM</sup>Colossians 2:11-13. "In whom also ye are circumcised, with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him," etc.

**III.** This inward change, called regeneration, and circumcision of the heart, which is wrought in repentance and conversion, is the same with that spiritual RESURRECTION so openly spoken of, and represented as a dying unto sin, and a living unto righteousness. — This appends with great plainness in that last cited place, <sup><sup>SOM</sup>Colossians 2: "In whom also ye are circumcised, with the circumcision made without hands, — buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, etc. And you, being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him; having forgiven you all trespasses." The same appears by <sup><sup>SOM</sup>Romans 6:3-5. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life," etc. verse 11. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." In which place also it is evident, and by the whole context, that this spiritual resurrection is that change, in which persons are brought to habits of holiness and to the divine life, by which Dr. T. describes the thing obtained in being born again.

That a spiritual resurrection to a new, divine life, should be called a being born again, is agreeable to the language of Scripture. So those words in the 2nd Psalm, “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee,” are applied to Christ’s resurrection, ~~4133~~ Acts 13:33. So in ~~5018~~ Colossians 1:18. Christ is called the first born from the dead; and in ~~6005~~ Revelation 1:5. The first BEGOTTEN of the dead; The saints, in their conversion or spiritual resurrection, are risen with Christ, and are begotten and born with him.

“Who hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible.”

(~~4100~~ 1 Peter 1:3)

This inheritance is the same thing with that KINGDOM of HEAVEN, which men obtain by being born again, according to Christ’s words to Nicodemus; and that same inheritance of them that are sanctified, spoken of as what is obtained in true CONVERSION. ~~4133~~ Acts 26:18. “To turn them (or convert them) from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sin, and inheritance among them that are sanctified, through faith that is in me.” Dr. T.’s own words, in his note on ~~6104~~ Romans 1:4. speaking of that place in the 2nd Psalm, are very worthy to be here recited. He observes how this is applied to Christ’s resurrection and exaltation, in the New Testament, and then has this remark, “note, begetting is conferring a new and happy state: a son is a person put into it. Agreeably to this good men are said to be the sons of God, as they are the sons of the resurrection to eternal life, which is represented as a being BEGOTTEN or BORN AGAIN, REGENERATED. So that I think it is abundantly plain, that the spiritual resurrection spoken of in Scripture, by which the saints are brought to a new divine life, is the same with that being born again, which Christ says is necessary for every one, in order to his seeing the kingdom of God

**IV.** This change, of which men are the subjects, when they are born again, and circumcised in heart, when they repent, and are converted, and spiritually raised from the dead, is the same change which is meant when the Scripture speaks of making the HEART and SPIRIT NEW, or giving a new, heart and spirit.

It is almost needless to observe, how evidently this is spoken of as necessary to salvation, and as the change in which are attained the habits

of true virtue and holiness, and the character of a true saint, as has been observed of regeneration, conversion, etc. and how apparent it is, that the change is the same. Thus repentance, the change of the mind, is the same as being changed to a NEW mind, or a NEW heart and spirit. Conversion is the turning, of the heart; which is the same thing as changing it so, that there shall be another heart, or a new heart, or a new spirit. To be born again, is to be born anew; which implies a becoming NEW, and is represented as becoming new-born babes. But none supposes it is the body, that is immediately and properly new, but the mind, heart, or spirit. And so a spiritual resurrection is the resurrection of the spirit, or rising to begin a NEW existence and life, as to the mind, heart, or spirit. So that all these phrases imply, having a new heart, and being renewed in the spirits according to their plain signification.

When Nicodemus, expressed his wonder at Christ declaring it necessary, that a man should be born again in order to see the kingdom of God, or enjoy the privileges of the kingdom of the Messiah, Christ says to him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? i. e. “Art thou one who is set to teach others the things written in the law and the prophets, and knowest not a doctrine so plainly taught in your Scriptures, that such a change is necessary to a partaking of the blessings of the Messiah’s kingdom?” But what can Christ refer to, unless such prophecies as that in ~~2882~~ Ezekiel 36:25-27.? Where God, by the prophet, speaking of the days of the Messiah’s kingdom, says, “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. — A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you — and I will put my Spirit within you” Here God speaks of having a new heart and spirit, by being washed with water, and receiving the Spirit of God, as the qualification of God’s people, that shall enjoy the privileges of the Messiah’s kingdom. How much is this like the doctrine of Christ to Nicademas, of being born again of water, and of the Spirit! We have another like prophecy in ~~3119~~ Ezekiel 11:19. — Add to this, that regeneration, or a being born again, and the renewing (or making new) by the Holy Ghost, are spoken of as the same thing,

“By the washing of, generation and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

(~~3188~~ Titus 3:5)

**V.** It is abundantly manifest, that being born again, spiritually rising from the dead to newness of life, receiving a new heart, and being renewed in the spirit of the mind, are the same thing with that which is called putting off the OLD MAN, and putting on the NEW MAN.

The expressions are equivalent, and the representations are plainly of the same thing. When Christ speaks of being born again, two births are supposed: a first and a second, an OLD birth and a NEW one: and the thing born is called man. So what is born in the first birth is the old man; and what is brought forth in the second birth, is the new man. That which is born in the first birth (says Christ) is flesh: it is the carnal man, wherein we have borne the image of the earthly Adam, whom the apostle calls the first man. That which is born in the new birth, is spirit, or the spiritual and heavenly man: wherein we proceed from Christ the second man, the new man, who is made a quickening Spirit, and is the Lord from heaven, and the Head of the new creation. — In the new birth, men are represented as becoming new-born babes, which is the same thing as becoming new men.

And how apparently is what the Scripture says of the spiritual resurrection of the Christian convert, equivalent and of the very same import with putting off the old man and putting on the new man. So in Romans 6 the convert is represented as dying,, and being buried with Christ; which is explained in the 6th verse by this, that the old man it crucified, that the body of sin might be destroyed. And in the 4th verse, converts in the change are spoken of as rising, to newness of life. Are not these things plain enough? The apostle in effect tells us, that when he speaks of spiritual death and resurrection, he means the same thing as crucifying and burying the old man, and rising as a new man.

And it is most apparent, that spiritual circumcision, and spiritual baptism, and the spiritual resurrection, are all the same with putting off the old man, and putting on the new man. This appears by <sup>Colossians 2:11, 12.</sup> “In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism wherein also ye are risen with him.” Here it is manifest, that the spiritual circumcision, baptism, and resurrection, all signify that change wherein men put off the body of the sin of the flesh: but that is the same thing, in this apostle’s language, a,

putting off the old man; as appears by <sup><606></sup>Romans 6:6. “Our old man is crucified, that the body of sin may be destroyed.” And that putting off the old man is the same with putting off the body of sin, appears further by <sup><402></sup>Ephesians 4:22-24. and <sup><308></sup>Colossians 3:8-10. As Dr. T. confesses, “that to be born again, is that wherein are obtained the habits of virtue, religion, and true holiness;” so how evidently is the same thing predicated of that change, which is called putting off the old man, and putting on the new man! <sup><402></sup>Ephesians 4:22-24. “That ye put off the old man, which is corrupt, etc and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

And it is most plain, that this putting off the old man, etc. is the very same thing with making, the heart and spirit time. It is apparent in itself, the spirit is called the man, in the language of the apostle it is called the inward man, and the hidden man. ( <sup><602></sup>Romans 7:22. <sup><406></sup>2 Corinthians 4:16. <sup><604></sup>1 Peter 3:4.) And therefore, putting off the old man, is the same thing with the removal of the old heart, and the putting on of the one man, is the receiving of a new heart, and a new Spirit. Yea. putting on the new man is expressly spoken of as the same thing with receiving a new spirit, or being, renewed in spirit <sup><402></sup>Ephesians 4:22-24. “That ye put off the old man — and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that ye put on the new man.”

From these things it appears, how unreasonable, and contrary to the utmost degree of scriptural evidence, is Dr. T.’s way of explaining the old man, and the new man, as though thereby was meant nothing personal; but that by the old man was meant the heathen state, and by the new man the Christian dispensation, or state of professing Christians, or the whole collective body of professors of Christianity, made up of Jews and Gentiles; when all the color he has for it is, that the apostle once calls the christian church a new man. ( <sup><405></sup>Ephesians 2:15.) It is very true, in the Scriptures often, both in the Old Testament and the New, collective bodies, nations, peoples, and cities, are figuratively represented by persons: particularly the church of Christ is represented as one holy person, and has the same appellatives as a particular saint or believer, and so is called a child, a son of God, ( <sup><602></sup>Exodus 4:22. <sup><601></sup>Galatians 4:1, 2 ) a servant of God, ( <sup><348></sup>Isaiah 41:8, 9 and <sup><341></sup>44:1.) The daughter of God; and spouse of Christ, ( <sup><650></sup>Psalms 45:10, 13, 14. <sup><607></sup>Revelation 19:7.)



Nevertheless, would it be reasonable to argue, that such appellations, as a servant at God, child of God, etc. are always or commonly to be taken as signifying only the church of God in general, or threat collective bodies, and not to be understood in a personal sense? But certainly this would not be more unreasonable than to urge, that by the old and the new man, as the phrases are mostly used in Scripture, is to be understood nothing but the great collective bodies of pagans and of Christians, or the heathen and the christian world, as to their outward profession, and the dispensation they are under. It might have been proper, in this case, to have considered the unreasonableness of that practice which our author charges on others, and finds so much fault with in them, “That they content themselves with a few scraps of Scripture which though wrong understood, they make the test of truth, and the ground of their principles, in contradiction to the whole tenor of revelation.”

**VI.** I observe once more, it is very apparent, that beings born again, and spiritually raised from death to a state of new existence and life, having a new heart coated in us, being renewed in the spirit of our mind, and being the subjects of that change by which we put off the old man, and put on the new men, is the same thing with that which in Scripture is called being CREATED ANEW, or made NEW CREATURES.

Here, to pass over many other evidences which might be mentioned, I would only observe, that the representations are exactly equivalent. These several phrases naturally and most plainly signify the same effect. In the first birth or generation, we are created, or brought into existence; it is then the whom man first receives being: the soul is then formed, and then our bodies are fearfully and wonderfully made, being curiously wrought by our Creator. So that a new-born child is a new creature. So, when a man is born again, be it created again, in that new birth, there is a new creation, and therein he becomes as a new-born babe. or a NEW CREATURE. So, in a resurrection, there is a new creation. When a man is dead, that which was made in the first creation is destroyed: when that which was dead is raised to life, the mighty power of the author of life is exerted the second time, and the subject restored to a new existence, and a new life, as by a new creation. So giving a new heart is called CREATING a clean heart, ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 51:10. where the word, translated create, is the same that is used in the first verse, in Genesis. And when we read in Scripture of the new creature,

the creature that is called NEW IS MAN; and therefore the phrase, new man, is evidently equipollent with new creature; and putting off the old man, and putting on the lieu' man, is spoken of expressly as brought to pass by a work of creation. <sup><SIB></sup>Colossians 3:9, to. "Ye have put off the old man and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him." So <sup><H02></sup>Ephesians 4:22-24. "That ye put off the old man, which is corrupt, etc. and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." These things absolutely fix the meaning of <sup><H17></sup>2 Corinthians 5:17.

**"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away behold, all things are become new."**

On the whole, the following reflections may be made:

- 1.** That it is a truth of the utmost certainly, with respect to every man born of the race of Adam, by ordinary generation, that unless he be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. This is true, not only of the heathen, but of them that are born of the professing people of God, as Nicodemus, and the Jews, and every man born of the flesh. This is most manifest by Christ's discourse in <sup><H18></sup>John 3:3-11. So it is plain by <sup><H17></sup>2 Corinthians 5:17. That every man who is in Christ, is a NEW CREATURE.
- 2.** It appears from this, together with what has been proved above, that it is most certain with respect to every one of the human race, that he can never have any interest in Christ, or see the kingdom of God, unless be the subject of that CHANGE in the temper and disposition of his heart, which is made in repentance and conversion, circumcision of heart, spiritual baptism, dying to sin and rising to a new and holy life; and unless he has the old heart taken away, and a new heart and spirit given and puts off the old man, and puts on the new man, and old things are passed away, and all things made new.
- 3.** From what is plainly implied in these things, and from what the Scripture most clearly teaches of the nature of them, it is certain, that every man is born into the world in a state of moral pollution. For SPIRITUAL BAPTISM is a cleansing from moral filthiness. (<sup><H02></sup>Ezekiel 36:25. compared with <sup><H16></sup>Acts 2:16. and <sup><H18></sup>John 3:5.) So the washing of

regeneration, or the NEW BIRTH, is a change from a state of wickedness. (~~500B~~ Titus 3:3-5.) Men are spoken of as purified in their regeneration. (~~4012~~ 1 Peter 1:22, 23. See also ~~4173~~ 1 John 2:29. and ~~4181~~ 3:1, 3.) And it appears, that every man in his first or natural state is a sinner; for otherwise he would then need no REPENTANCE, no CONVERSION, no turning from sin to God. And it appears, that every man in his original state has a heart of stone, for thus the Scripture calls that old heart, which is taken away, when a NEW HEART and NEW SPIRIT is given. (~~2419~~ Ezekiel 11:19. and ~~2766~~ 36:26.) And it appears, that man's nature, as in his native state, is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and of its own motion exerts itself in nothing but wicked deeds. For thus the Scripture characterizes the OLD MAN, which is put off, when men are renewed in the spirit of their minds, and put on the NEW MAN (~~4002~~ Ephesians 4:22-24. ~~500B~~ Colossians 3:8-10.) In a word, it appears, that man's nature, as in its native state, is a body of sin, which must be destroyed, must die, be buried, and never rise more. For thus the OLD MAN is represented, which is crucified, when men are the subjects of a spiritual RESURRECTION. ~~4181~~ Romans 6:4-6. Such a nature, such a body of sin as this, is put off in the spiritual RENOVATION, wherein we put on the NEW MAN and are the subjects of the spiritual CIRCUMCISION. ~~4002~~ Ephesians 4:21-23.

It must now be left with the reader to judge for himself, whether what the Scripture teaches of the APPLICATION of Christ's redemption, and the change of state and nature necessary to true and final happiness, does not afford clear and abundant evidence to the truth of the doctrine of original sin.

# PART 4

## *Containing Answers To Objections*

### CHAPTER 1

#### *Concerning The Objections, That To Suppose Men Born In Sin, Without Their Choice. Or Any Previous Act Of Their Own, Is To Suppose What Is Inconsistent With The Nature Of Sin.*

SOME of the objections made against the doctrine of original sin, which have reference to particular arguments used in defense of it, have been already considered in the handling of those arguments. What I shall therefore now consider, are such objections as I have not yet had occasion to notice.

There is no argument Dr. T. insists more upon, than that which is taken from the Arminian and Pelagian notion of freedom of will, consisting in the will's self-determination, as necessary to the being of moral good or evil. He openly urges, that if we come into the world infected with sinful and depraved dispositions, then sin must be natural to us; and if natural, then necessity; and if necessary, then no sin, nor any thing we are blamable for, or that can in any respect be our fault, being what we cannot help and he urges, that sin must proceed from our own choice, etc.

Here I would observe in general, that the forementioned notion of freedom of will, as essential to moral agency, and necessary to the very existence of virtue and sin, seems to be a grand favourite point with Pelagians and Arminians and all divines of such characters, in their controversies with the orthodox. There is no one thing more fundamental in their schemes of religion: on the determination of this one leading point depends the issue of almost all controversies we have with such divines. Nevertheless it seems a needless task for me particularly to consider that matter in this place; having already largely discussed it, with all the main grounds of this notion, and the arguments used to defend it, in a late book on this subject, to which I ask leave to refer the reader. It is very necessary, that the

modern prevailing doctrine concerning this point, should be well understood, and therefore thoroughly considered and examined: for without it there is no hope of putting an end to the controversy about original sin, and innumerable other controversies that subsist, about many of the main points of religion. I stand ready to confect to the forementioned modern divines, if they can maintain their peculiar notion of freedom, consisting in the self-determining power of the will, as necessary to moral agency, and can thoroughly establish it in opposition to the arguments lying against it, then they have an impregnable castle, to which they may repair, and remain invincible, in all the controversies they have with the reformed divines, concerning original sin, the sovereignty of grace, election, recondemtion, conversion, the efficacious operation of the Holy Spirit, the nature of saving faith, perseverance of the saints and other principles of the like kind. However, at the same time, I think this will be as strong a fortress for the Deists, in common with them; as the great doctrines, subverted by their notion of freedom, are so plainly and abundantly taught in the Scripture. But I am under no apprehensions of any danger, which the cause of Christianity, or the religion of the reformed, is in, from any possibility of that notion being ever established, or of its being ever evinced that there is not proper, perfect, and manifold demonstration lying against it. But as I said, it would be needless for me to enter into a particular disquisition of this point here; from which I shall easily be excused by any reader who is willing to give himself the trouble of consulting what I have already written. And as to others, probably they will scarce be at the pains of reading the present discourse; or at least would not, if it should be enlarged by a full consideration of that controversy.

I shall at this time therefore only take notice of some gross inconsistencies that Dr. T. has been guilty of, in his handling this objection against the doctrine of original sin. In places which have been cited, he says, that sin must proceed from our own choice: and that if it does not, it being necessary to us, it cannot be sin, it cannot be our fault, or what we are to blame for: and therefore all our sin must be chargeable on our choice, which is the cause of sin: for he says, the cause of every effect is alone chargeable with the effect it product and which proceedeth from it. Now here are implied several gross contradictions. He greatly insists, that nothing can be

sinful, or have the nature of sin, but what proceeds from our choice. Nevertheless he says, "Not the effort, but the cause alone is chargeable with blame." Therefore the choice, which is the cause, is alone blamable, or has the nature of sin, and not the effect of that choice. Thus nothing can be sinful, but the effect of choice; and yet the effect of choice never can be sinful, but only the cause, which alone is chargeable with all the blame.

Again, the choice, from which sin proceeds, is itself sinful. Not only is this implied in his saying, "The cause alone is chargeable with all the blame;" but he expressly speaks of the choice as faulty, and calls that choice wicked, from which depravity and corruption proceeds. Now if the choice itself be sin, and there be no sin but what proceeds from a sinful choice, then the sinful choice must proceed from another antecedent choice; it must be chosen by a foregoing act of will, determining itself to that sinful choice, that so it may have that which he speaks of as absolutely essential to the nature of sin, namely, that it proceeds, from our choice, and does not happen to us necessarily. But if the sinful choice itself proceeds from a foregoing choice, then also that foregoing choice must be sinful, it being the cause of sin, and so alone chargeable with the blame. Yet if that foregoing choice be sinful, then neither must that happen to us necessarily. But must likewise proceed from choice, another act of choice preceding that: for we must remember, that "Nothing is sinful but what proceeds from our choices." And then, for the same reason, even this prior choice, last mentioned, must also be sinful, being chargeable with all the blame of that consequent evil choice, which was in effect. And so we must go back till we come to the very first volition, the prime or original act of choice in the whole chain. And this to be sure must be R.R.'s sinful choice, because this is the origin or primitive cause of all the train of evils which follow; and according to our author, must therefore be "alone chargeable with all the blame." And yet so it is, according to him, this "cannot be sinful," because it does not "proceed from our own choice," or any foregoing act of our will; it beings by the supposition, the very first act of will in the case. And therefore it must be necessary, as to us, having no choice of ours to be the cause of it.

In p. 232. he says, "Adam's sin was from his own disobedient will: and so must every man's sin, and all the sin in the world be, as well as his." By them, it seems, he must have a "disobedient will" before he sins; for the

cruise must be before the effect: and yet that disobedient will itself is sinful; otherwise it could not be called disobedient. But the question is, How do men come by the disobedient will, this cause of all the sin in the world? It must not come necessarily, without men's choice; for it so, it is not sin, nor is there any disobedience in it. Therefore that disobedient will must also come from a disobedient will; and so on, in infinitum. Otherwise it must be supposed, that there is some sin in the world, which does not come from a disobedient will: contrary to our author's dogmatical assertions.

In p. 166. S. he says, "Adam could not sin without a sinful inclination. "Here he calls that inclination itself sinful, which is the principle from whence sinful acts proceed; as elsewhere he speaks of the disobedient will from whence all sin comes: and he allows, that "the law reaches to all the latent principle of sin;" meaning plainly, that it forbids, and threatens punishment for, those latent principles. Now these latent principles of sin, these sinful inclinations, without which, according to our author, there can be no sinful act, cannot all proceed from a sinful choice; because that would imply great contradiction. For, by the supposition, they are the principles from whence a sinful choice comes, and whence all sinful acts of will proceed; and there can be no sinful act without them. So that the, first latent principles and inclinations, from whence all sinful acts proceed, are sinful; and yet they are not sinful, because they do not proceed from a wicked choice, without which, according to him, "nothing can be sinful."

Dr. T. speaking of that proposition of the Assembly of Divines, wherein they assert, that man is by nature utterly corrupt, etc. thinks himself well warranted, by the supposed great evidence of these his contradictory notions, to say "Therefore sin is not natural to us; and therefore I shall not scruple to say, this proposition in the Assembly of Divines is FALSE." But it may be worthy of consideration, whether it would not have greatly become him, before he had clothed himself with so much assurance, and proceeded, on the foundation of these his notions, so magisterially to charge the Assembly proposition with falsehood, to have taken care that his own propositions, which he has set in opposition to them, should be a little more consistent; that he might not have contradicted himself, while contradicting them; lest some impartial judges, observing his inconsistency,

should think they had warrant to declare with equal assurance, that “they should not scruple to say, Dr. T.’s doctrine is FALSE.”



## CHAPTER 2

*Concerning The Objection. Against The Doctrine Of Native Corruption, That To Suppose Men Receive Their First Existence In Sin, Is To Make Him Who Is The Author Of Their Being, The Author Of Their Depravity.*

ONE argument against a supposed native, sinful depravity, which Dr. T. greatly insists upon, is, “that this does in effect charge him, who is the author of nature, who formed us in the scarab, with being the author of a sinful corruption of nature; and that it is highly unjust to the God of our nature, whose hands have formed and fashioned us, to believe our nature, to be originally corrupted, and that in the worst sense of corruption.

With respect to this, I would observe, in the first place, that this writer, in handling this grand objection, supposes something to belong to the doctrine objected against, as maintained by the divines whom he is opposing, which does not belong to it, nor follow from it. As particularly, he supposes the doctrine of original sin to imply, that nature must be corrupted by some positive influence; “something, by some means or other, infused into the human nature, some quality! or other, not from the choice of our minds, but like a taint, tincture, or infliction, altering the natural constitution, faculties. and dispositions of our souls. That sin and evil dispositions are **IMPLANTED** in the fetus in the womb.” Whereas truly our doctrine neither implies nor infers any such thing. In order to account for a sinful corruption of nature, yea, a total native depravity of the heart of man, there is not the least need of supposing any evil quality, infused, implanted, or wrought into the nature of man, by any positive cause, or influence whatsoever, either from God, or the creature; or of supposing, that man is conceived and born with a fountain of evil in his heart, such as is any thing properly positive. I think, a little attention to the nature of things will be sufficient to satisfy any impartial considerate inquirer, that the absence of positive good principles, and so the withholding of a special divine influence to impart and maintain those good principles — leaving the common natural principles of self-love, natural appetite, etc. to themselves, without the government of superior divine principles — will certainly be followed with the corruption; yea, the total corruption of the

heart, without occasion for any positive influence at all: and that it was thus in fact that corruption of nature came on Adam, immediately on his fall, and comes on all his posterity, as sinning in him, and falling with him.

The case with man was plainly this: When God made man at first he implanted in him two kinds of principles. There was an inferior kind, which maybe called NATURAL, being the principles of mere human nature; such as self love, with those natural appetites and passions, which belong to the nature of man, in which his love to his own liberty, honor, and pleasure, were exercised: these, when alone; and left to themselves, are what the Scriptures sometimes call FLESH. Besides these, there were superior principles, that were spiritual, holy, and divine, summarily comprehended in divine love; wherein consisted the spiritual image of God, and man's righteousness and true holiness; which are called in Scripture the divine nature. These principles may, in some sense, be called SUPERNATURAL, being (however concreated or connate, yet) with as are above those principles that me essentially implied in, or necessarily resulting from, and inseparably connected with, mere human nature, and being such as immediately depend on man's union and communion with God, or divine communications and influences of God's Spirit: which though withdrawn, and man's nature forsaken of these principles, human nature would be human nature still, man's nature, as such, being entire without these divine principles, which the Scripture sometimes calls SPIRIT, in contradistinction to flesh. These superior principles were given to possess the throne, and maintain an absolute dominion in the heart, the other to be wholly subordinate and subservient. And while things continued thus, all was in excellent order, peace, and beautiful harmony, and in a proper and perfect state. These divine principles thus reigning, were the dignity, life, happiness, and glory of man's nature. When man sinned and broke God's covenant and fell under his curse, these superior principles left his heart: for indeed God then left him; that communion with God on which these principles depended, entirely ceased; the Holy Spirit, that divine inhabitant, forsook the house. Because it would have been utterly improper in itself, and inconsistent with the constitution God had established, that he should still maintain communion with man, and continue by his friendly, gracious, vital influences, to dwell with him and in him, after he was become a rebel, and had incurred God's wrath and

curse. Therefore immediately the superior divine principles wholly ceased, so light ceases in a room when the candle is withdrawn; and thus man was left in a state of darkness, woful corruption, and ruin nothing but flesh without spirit. The inferior principles of self-love, and natural appetite, which were given only to serve, being alone, and left to themselves, of course became reigning principles; having no superior principles to regulate or control them, they became absolute masters of the heart. The immediate consequence of which was a fatal catastrophe, a turning of all things upside down, and the succession of a state of the most odious and dreadful confusion. Man immediately set up him-self, and the objects of his private affections and appetites, as supreme; and so they took the place of God. These inferior principles are like fire in a house; which, we say, is a good servant, but a bad master; very useful while kept in its place, but if left to take possession of the whole house, soon brings all to destruction. Man's love to his own honor, separate interest, and private pleasure, which before was wholly subordinate unto love to God, and regard to his authority and glory, now disposes and impels him to pursue those objects, without regard to God's honor, or law; because there is no true regard to these divine things left in him. In consequence of which, he seeks those objects as much when against God's honor and law as when agreeable to them. God still continuing strictly to require supreme regard to himself, and forbidding all undue gratifications of these inferior passions — but only in perfect subordination to the ends, and agreeableness to the rules and limits, which his holiness, honor, and law prescribe — hence immediately arises enmity in the heart, now wholly under the power of self-love; and nothing but war ensues, in a constant course, against God. As, when a subject has once renounced his lawful sovereign, and set up a pretender in his stead, a state of enmity and war against his rightful king necessarily ensues. It were easy to show, how every lust, and depraved disposition of man's heart, would naturally arise from this private original, if here were room for it. Thus it is easy to give an account, how total corruption of heart should follow on man's eating the forbidden fruit, though that was but one act of sin, without God putting any evil into his heart, or implanting any bad principle, or infusing any corrupt taint, and so becoming the author of depravity. Only God's withdrawing, as it was highly proper and necessary that he should, from rebel-man, and his

natural principles being left to themselves, is sufficient to account for his becoming entirely corrupt, and bent on sinning against God.

And as Adam's nature became corrupt, without God's implanting or infusing of any evil thing into it, so does the nature of his posterity. God dealing with Adam as the head of his posterity, (as has been shown,) and treating them as one, he deals with his posterity as having all sinned in him. And therefore, as God withdrew spiritual communion, and his vital gracious influence, from the common head, so he withholds the same from all the members, as they come into existence, whereby they come into the world mere flesh, and entirely under the government of natural and inferior principles; and so become wholly corrupt, as Adam did.

Now, for God so far to have the disposal of this affair as to withhold those influences, without which, nature will be corrupt, is not to be the author of sin. But, concerning this, I must refer the reader to what I have said of it in my discourse on the Freedom at the Will. Though, besides what I have there said, I may here observe, that if for God so far to order and dispose the being of sin, as to permit it, by withholding the gracious influences necessary to prevent it, is for him to be the author of sin then some things which Dr. T. himself lays down, will equally be attended with this very consequence. For, from time to time he speaks of God giving men up to the vilest lusts and affections, by permitting, or leaving them. Now, if the continuance of sin, and in increase and prevalence, may be in consequence of God's disposal, in withholding needful grace, without God being the author of that continuance and prevalence of sin, then, by parity of reason, may the being, of sin, in the race of Adam, be in consequence of Godly disposal, by his withholding that grace which is needful to prevent it, without his being the author of sin.

If here it should be said, that God is not the author of sin, in giving up to sin those who have already made themselves sinful, because when men have once made themselves sinful, their continuing so, and sin prevailing in them, and becoming more and more habitual, will follow in a course of nature: I answer, let that be remembered which this writer so greatly urges, in opposition to them who suppose original corruption comes in a course of nature, use. That the course of nature is nothing without God. He utterly rejects the notion of the "course of nature's being a proper active

cause, which will work, and go on by itself, without God, if he lets or permits it.

But affirms, “That the course of nature, separate from the agency of God, is no cause or nothing; and that the course of nature should continue itself, or go on to operate by itself, any more than at first produce itself, is absolutely impossible.” These strong expressions are his. Therefore, to explain the continuance of the habits of sin in the same person, when once introduced, yea, to explain the very being of any such habits, in consequence of repeated acts, our author must have recourse to those same principles, which he rejects as absurd to the utmost degree, when alleged to explain the corruption of nature in the posterity of Adam. For, that habits, either good or bad, should continue, after being once established, or that habits should be settled and have existence in consequence of repeated acts, can be owing only to a course of nature, and those laws of nature which God has established.

That the posterity of Adam should be born without holiness, and so with a depraved nature, comes to pass as much by the establish course of nature, as the continuance of a corrupt disposition in a particular person, after he once has it; or as much as Adam’s continuing unholy and corrupt, after he had once lost his holiness. For Adam’s posterity are from him, and as it were in him, and belonging to him, according to an established course of nature, as much as the branches of a tree are, according to a course of nature, from the tree, in the tree, and belonging to the tree; or, (to make use of the comparison which Dr. T. himself chooses from time to time, as proper to illustrate the matter,) just as the acorn is derived from the oak. And I think, the acorn is as much derived from the oak, according to the course of nature, as the buds and branches. It is true, that God, by his own almighty power, creates the soul of the infant; and it is also true, as Dr. T. often insists, that God, by his immediate power, forms and fashions the body of the infant in the womb; yet he does both according to that course of nature, which he has been pleased to establish. The course of nature is demonstrated, by late improvements in philosophy, to be indeed what our author himself says it is, viz. Nothing but the established order of the agency and operation of the author of nature. And though there be the immediate agency of God in bringing the soul into existence in generation, yet it is done according to the method and order established by

the author of nature, as much as his producing the bud, or the acorn of the oak; and as much as his continuing a particular person in being, after he once has existence. God's immediate agency in bringing the soul of a child into being, is as much according to an established order, as his immediate agency in any of the works of nature whatsoever. It is agreeable to the established order of nature that the good qualities wanting in the tree, should also be wanting in the branches and fruit. It is agreeable to the order of nature, that when a particular person is without good moral qualities in his heart, he should continue without them, till some new cause or efficiency produces them. And it is as much agreeable to an established course and order of nature, that since Adam, the head of mankind, the root of that great tree with many branches springing from it, was deprived of original righteousness, the branches should come forth without it. Or, if any dislike the word nature, as used in this last case and instead of it choose to call it a constitution, or established order of successive events, the alteration of the name will not in the least alter the state of the present argument. Where the name nature, is allowed without dispute, no more is meant than an established method and order of events, settled and limited by divine wisdom.

If any should object to this, that if the want of original righteousness be thus according to an established course of nature, then why are not principles of holiness, when restored by divine grace, also communicated to posterity; I answer, The divine law and establishments of the author of nature, are precisely settled by him as he pleaseth, and limited by his wisdom. Grace is introduced among the race of man by a new establishment; not on the ground of God's original establishment, as the head of the natural world, and author of the first creation; but by a constitution of a vastly higher kind; wherein Christ is made the root of the tree, whose branches are his spiritual seed, and is the head of the new creation; of which I need not stand now to speak particularly.

But here I desire it may be noted, that I do not suppose the natural depravity of the posterity of Adam is owing to the course of nature only; it is also owing to the just judgment of God. But yet I think, it is as truly and in the same manner owing to the course of nature, that Adam's posterity come into the world without original righteousness, as that Adam himself continued without it, after he had once lost it. That Adam

continued destitute of holiness, when he had lost it, and would always have so continued, had it not been restored by a Redeemer, was not only a natural consequence, according to the course of things established by God, as the author of nature; but it was also a penal consequence, or a punishment of his sin. God, in righteous judgment, continued to absent himself from Adam after he became a rebel; and withheld from him now those influences of the Holy Spirit, which he before had. And just thus I suppose it to be with every natural branch of mankind: all are looked upon as sinning in and with their common root; and God righteously withholds special influences and spiritual communications from all, for this sin. But of the manner and order of these things, more may be said in the next chapter.

On the whole, this grand objection against the doctrine of men being born corrupt, that it makes him who gave us our being, to be the cause of the king of corruption, can have no more force in it, than a like argument has to prove, that if men by a course of nature continue wicked, or remain without goodness, after they have by vicious acts contracted vicious habits, and so made themselves wicked, it makes him, who is the cause of their CONTINUANCE in being, and the came of the CONTINUANCE of the course of nature, to be the cause of their CONTINUED wickedness. Dr. T. say, “God would not take that thing that is hateful to him, because, by the very terms, he would hate to make such a thing.” But if this be good arguing in the case to which it is applied, may I not as well say, God would not CONTINUE a thing in being that is HATEFUL to him; because, by the very, terms, he would HATE TO CONTINUE such a thing in being? I think, the very terms do as much (and no more) infer one of these propositions, as the other. In like manner, the rest that he says on that head may be shown to be unreasonable, by only substituting the word continue, in the place of male and propagate. I may fairly imitate his way of reasoning thus: to say, God continues us according to his own original decree, or law of continuation, which obliges him to continue us in a manner he abhors, is really to make bad worse: for it is supposing him to be defective in wisdom, or by his own decree or law to lay such a constraint upon his own actions, that he cannot do what he would, but is continually doing what he would not, what he hates to do, and what he condemns in us; viz. continuing us sinful when he condemns us for

continuing ourselves sinful.” If the reasoning be weak in the one case, it is no less so in the other.

If any shall still insist, that there is a difference between God so disposing things, as that depravity of heart shall be continued, according to the settled course of nature, in the same person, who has by his own fault introduced it; and his so disposing as that men, according to a course of nature, should be born with depravity, in consequence of Adam’s introducing of sin, by his act which we had no concern in, and cannot be justly charged with: on this I would observe, that it is quite going off the objection, which we have been upon, from God’s agency, and flying to another. It is then no longer insisted on, that simply for him, from whose agency the course of nature and our existence derive, so to dispose things as that we should have existence in a corrupt state, is for him to be the author of sin: but the plea now advanced is, that he is not proper and just for such an agent so to dispose, in this case, and only consequence of Adam’s sin; it not being just to charge Adam’s sin to his posterity. And this matter shall be particularly considered, in answer to the next objection; to which I now proceed.



## CHAPTER 3

*That Great Objection Against The Imputation Of Adam's Sin To His Posterity, Considered. That Such Imputation Is Unjust And Unreasonable, Inasmuch As Adam And His Posterity Are Not One And The Same. With A Brief Reflection Subjoined Of What Some Have Supposed. Of God Imputing The Guilt Of Adam's Sin To His Posterity, But In An Infinitely Less Degree Than To Adam Himself.*

THAT we may proceed with the greater clearness in considering the man objections amidst supposing the guilt of Adam's sin to be imputed to his posterity; I would premise some observations with a view to the right stating of the doctrine; and then show its reasonableness, in opposition to the great clamor raised against it on this head.

I think, it would go far towards directing us to the more clear conception and right statement of this affair, were we steadily to bear this in mind: that God, in every step of his proceeding with Adam, in relation to the covenant or constitution established with him, looked on his posterity as being one with him. And though he dealt more immediately with Adam, it yet was as the head of the whom body, and the root of the whole tree, and in his proceedings with him, he dealt with all the branches, as if they had been then existing in their root.

From which it will follow, that both guilt, or exposedness to punishment, and also depravity of heart, came upon Adam's posterity just as they came upon him, as much as if be an they had all co-existed, like a tree with many branches; allowing only for the difference necessarily resulting from the place Adam stood in, as head or roof of the whole. Otherwise, it is as if, in every step of proceeding, every alteration in the root had been attended, at the same instant, with the same alterations throughout the whole tree, in each individual branch. I think, this will naturally follow on the supposition of there being a constituted oneness or identity of Adam and his posterity in this affair.

Therefore I am humbly of opinion, that if any have supposed the children of Adam to come into the world with a double guilt, one the guilt of Adam's sin, another the guilt arising from their having a corrupt heart,

they have not so well conceived of the maker. The guilt a man has upon his soul at first existence, is one and simple, viz. the guilt of the original apostacy, the guilt of the sin by which the special first rebelled against God. This, and the guilt arising from the depraved disposition of the heart, are not to be looked upon as too things, distinctly imputed and charged upon men in the sight of God. Indeed the guilt that arises from the corruption of the heart, as it remains a confirmed principle, and appears in its consequent operations, is a dissect and additional guilt: but the guilt arising from the first existing of a depraved disposition in Adam's posterity, I apprehend, is not distinct from their guilt of Adam's first sin. For so it was not in Adam himself. The first evil disposition or inclination of Adam to sin, was not gingerly distinct from his first act of sin, but was included in it. The external act he committed was no otherwise his, than as his heart was in it, or as that action proceeded from the wicked inclination of his heart. Nor was the guilt he had double, as for two distinct sins: one, the wickedness of his will in that affair; another, the wickedness of the external act, caused by it. His guilt was all truly from the act of his inward man; exclusive of which the motions of his body were no more than the motions of any lifeless instrument. His sin consisted in wickedness of heart, fully sufficient for and entirely amounting to, all that appeared in the act he committed.

The depraved disposition of Adam's heart is to be considered two ways.

**(1.)** As the first rising of an evil inclination in his heart, exerted in his first act of sin, and the ground of the complete transgression.

**(2.)** An evil disposition of heart continuing afterwards, as a confirmed principle that came by God's forsaking of him; which was a punishment of his first transgression. This confirmed corruption, by its remaining and continued operation, brought additional guilt on his soul.

In like manner, depravity of heart is to be considered two ways in Adam's posterity. The first existing of a corrupt disposition, is not to be looked upon as sin distinct from their participation of Adam's first sin. It is as it were the extended pollution of that sin, through the whole tree, by virtue of the constituted taken of the branches with the root; or the inherence of the sin of that head of the species in the members, in their consent and

concurrence with the head in that first act. But the depravity of nature remaining as an established principle in a child of Adam, and as exhibited in after-operations, is a consequence and punishment of the first apostacy thus participated, and brings new guilt. The first being of an evil disposition in a child of Adam, whereby he is disposed to approve the sin of his first father, so far as to imply a full and perfect consent of heart to it, I think, is not to be looked upon as a consequence of the imputation of that first sin any more than the full consent of Adam's own heart in the act of sinning; which was not consequent on the imputation, but rather prior to it in the order of nature. Indeed the derivation of the evil disposition to Adam's posterity or rather, the co-existence of the evil disposition, implied in Adam's first rebellion, in the root and branches, is a consequence of the union that the wise Author of the world has established between Adam and his posterity; but not properly a consequence of the imputation of his sin; nay, is rather antecedent to it, as it was in Adam himself. The first depravity of hearts, and the imputation of that sin, ate both the consequences of that established union but yet in such order, that the evil disposition is first and the charge of guilt consequent, as it was in the case of Adam himself.

The first existence of an evil disposition, amounting to a full consent to Adam's sin, no more infers God being the author of that evil disposition in the child, than in the father. The first arising or existing of that evil disposition in the heart of Adam, was by God's permission; who could have prevented it, if he had pleased, by giving such influences of his Spirit, as would have been absolutely effectual to hinder it; which, it is plain in fact, he did withhold: and whatever mystery may be supposed in the affair, yet no Christian will presume to say, it was not in perfect consistence with God's holiness and righteousness notwithstanding Adam had been guilt of no offense before. So root and branches being one, according to God's wise constitution, the case in fact is, that by virtue of this oneness answerable chances or effects through all the all the branches co-exist with the changes in the root: consequently an evil disposition exists in the hearts of Adam's posterity, equivalent to that which was exerted in his own heart, when he eat the forbidden fruit. Which God has no hand in, any otherwise, than in not exerting such an influence, as might

be effectual to prevent it; as appears by what was observed in the former chapter.

But now the grand objection is against the reasonableness of such a constitution, by which Adam and his posterity should be looked upon as one, and dealt with accordingly, in an affair of such infinite consequence; so that if Adam sinned, they must necessarily be made sinner by his disobedience, and come into existence with the same depravity of disposition, and be looked upon and treated as though they were partakers with him in his act of sin. I have not room here to rehearse all Dr. T.'s vehement exclamations against the reasonableness and justice of this. The reader may at his leisure consult his book, and see them in the places referred to below. Whatever black colors and frightful representations are employed on this occasion, all may be summed up in this, That Adam and his posterity are not one, but entirely distinct agents. But with respect to this mighty outcry made against the reasonableness of any such constitution, by which God is supposed to treat Adam and his posterity as one, I would make the following observations.

**I.** It signifies nothing to exclaim against plain fact. Such is the fact, the most evident and acknowledged fact, with respect to the state of all mankind, without exception of one individual among all the natural descendants of Adam, as makes it apparent, that God actually deals with Adam and his posterity as one, in reference to his apostacy, and its infinitely terrible consequences. It has been demonstrated, and shewn to be in effect plainly acknowledged, that every individual of mankind comes into the world in such circumstances, as that there is no hope or possibility of any other than their violating God's holy law, (if they ever live to act at all as moral agents,) and being thereby justly exposed to eternal ruing. And God either thus deals with mankind, because he looks upon them as one with their first father, and so tread them as sinful and guilty by his apostacy; or (which will not mend the matter) he, without viewing them as at all concerned in that affair, but as in every respect perfectly innocent, subject them nevertheless to this infinitely dreadful calamity. Adam by his sin was exposed to the calamities and sorrows of this life, to temporal death and eternal ruin; as is confessed. And it is ado in effect confessed, that all his posterity come into the world in such a state, as that the certain consequence is their being exposed, and justly so,

to the sorrow of this life, to temporal death, and eternal ruin, unless saved by grace. So that we see, God in fact deals with them together, or as one. If God orders the consequences of Adam's sin, with regard to his posterity's welfare — even in those things which are most important, and which in the highest degree concern their eternal interest — to be the same with the consequences to Adam himself, then he treats Adam and his posterity as one in that affair. Hence, however the matter be attended with difficulty, fact obliges us to get over it, either by finding out some solution, or by shutting our mouths; and acknowledging the weakness and scantiness of our understandings; as we must in other innumerable cases, where apparent and undeniable fact, in God's works of creation and providence, is attended with events and circumstances, the manner and reason of which are difficult to our understandings. — But to proceed.

**II.** We will consider the difficulties themselves, insisted on in the objections of our opposers. They may be reduced to there two: First, That such a constitution is injurious to Adam's posterity. Secondly, That it is altogether improper, as it implies falsehood, viewing and treating those as one, which indeed are not one, but entirely distinct.

FIRST difficulty, That appointing Adam to stand, in this great affair, as the moral head of his posterity, and so treating them as one with him, as standing or falling with him, is injurious to them. To which I answer, it is demonstrably otherwise, that such a constitution was so far from being injurious to Adam's posterity, any more than if every one had been appointed to stand for himself personally, that it eras, in itself considered, attended with a more eligible probability of a happy issue than the latter would have been: and so a constitution that truly expresses the goodness of its Author. For,

**1.** It is reasonable to suppose, that Adam was as likely, on account of his capacity and natural talents, to preserve in obedience, as his posterity, (taking one with another,) if they had all been put on the trial singly for themselves. And supposing that there was a constituted union or oneness of him and his posterity, and that he stood as a public person, or common head, all by this constitution would have been as sure to partake of the benefit of his obedience, as of the ill consequence of his disobedience, in case of his fall.

**2.** There was a greater tendency to a happy issue, in such an appointment, than if every one had been appointed to stand for himself; especially on two accounts.

**(1.)** That Adam had stronger motives to watchfulness than his posterity would have had; in that not only his own eternal welfare lay at stake, but also that of all his posterity:

**(2.)** Adam was in a state of complete manhood when his trial began. It was a constitution very agreeable to the goodness of God, considering the state of mankind, which was to be propagated in the way of generation, that their first father should be appointed to stand for all. For by reason of the manner of their coming into existence in a state of infancy, and their coming so gradually to matured state, and so remaining for a great while in a state of childhood and comparative imperfection, after they were become moral agents, they would be to fit to stand for themselves, than their first father to stand for them.

If any man, notwithstanding these things, shall say, that for his own part, if the affair had been proposed to him, he should have chosen to have had his eternal interest trusted in his own hands: it is sufficient to answer, that no man's vain opinion of himself, as more fit to be trusted than others, alters the true nature and tendency of things, as they demonstrably are in themselves. Nor is it a just objection, that this constitution has in event proved for the start of mankind. For it does not follow, that no advantage was given for a happy event, in such an establishment, because it was not such as to make it utterly impossible there should be any other event.

**3.** The goodness of God in such a constitution with Adam appears in this: that if there had been no gracious establishment at all, but God had proceeded only on the basis of mere justice, and had gone no further than this required, he might have demanded of Adam and all his posterity, that they should perform perfect perpetual obedience, without ever failing in the least instance, on pain of eternal death, and might have made this demand without the promise of any positive reward for their obedience. For perfect obedience is a debt, that every one owes to his Creator; and therefore is what his Creator was not obliged to pay him for. None is obliged to pay his debtor for discharging his just debt. — But such was evidently the constitution with Adam, that an eternal happy life was to be

the consequence of his persevering fidelity, to all such as were included within that constitution, (of which the tree of life was a sign,) as well as eternal death to be the consequence of his disobedience. — I come now to consider the

SECOND difficulty, — It being thus manifest, that this constitution, by which Adam and his posterity are dealt with as one, is not unreasonable on account of its being injurious and hurtful to the interest of mankind, the only thing remaining in the objection, against such a constitution, is the impropriety of it, as implying falsehood, and contradiction to the true nature of thing; as hereby they are viewed and treated as one, who are not one, but wholly distinct; and no arbitrary constitution can ever make that to be true, which in itself considered is not true.

This objection, however specious, is really founded on a false hypothesis, and wrong notion of what we call sameness or oneness, among created things; and the seeming force of the objection arises from ignorance or inconsideration of the degree, in which created identity or oneness with past existence, in general, depends on the sovereign constitution and law of the supreme Author and Disposer of the universe.

Some things are entirely distinct, and very diverse, which yet are so united by the established law of the Creator that by virtue of that establishment, they are in a sense one. Thus a tree, grown great, and a hundred years old, is one plant with the little sprout, that first came out of the ground from whence it grew, and has been continued in constant succession; though it is now so exceeding diverse, many thousand times bigger, and of a very different form, and perhaps not one atom the very same: yet God, according to an established law of nature, has in a constant succession communicated to it many of the same qualities, and most important properties, as if it were one. It has been his pleasure, to constitute an union in these respects, and for these purposes, naturally leading us to look upon all as one. — So the body of man at forty years of age, is one with the infant body which first came into the world, from whence it grew; though now constituted of different substance, and the greater part of the substance probably changed scores (if not hundreds) of times: and though it be now in so many respects exceeding diverse, yet God, according to the course of nature, which he has been pleased to establish, has caused, that

in a certain method it should communicate with that infantile body, in the same life, the same senses, the same features, and many the same qualities, and in union with the same soul, and so, with regard to these purposes, it is dealt with by him as one body. Again, the body and soul of a man are one, in a very different manner, and for different purposes. Considered in themselves, they are exceeding different beings, of a nature as diverse as can be conceived, and yet, by a very peculiar divine constitution, or law of nature which God has been pleased to establish, they are strongly united and become one, in most important respects, a wonderful mutual communication is established, so that both become different parts of the same man. But the union and mutual communication they have, has existence, and is entirely regulated and limited, according to the sovereign pleasure of God, and the constitution he has been pleased to establish.

And if we come even to the personal identity of created intelligent beings, though this be not allowed to consist wholly in what Mr. Locke supposes, i. e. Same consciousness; yet I think it cannot be denied, that this is one thing essential to it. But it is evident, that the communication or continuance of the same consciousness and memory to any subject, through successive parts of duration, depends wholly on a divine establishment. There would be no necessity, that the remembrance and ideas of what is past should continue to exist, but by an arbitrary constitution of the Creator. — If any should here insist, the; there is no need of having recourse to any such constitution, in order to account for the continuance of the same consciousness; and should say that the very nature of the soul is such as will sufficiently; account for it, its ideas and consciousness being retained, according to the course of nature: then let it be remembered, who it is that gives the soul this nature; and let that be remembered, which Dr. T- says of the course of nature, before observed; denying, that the course of nature is a proper active cause, which will work and go on by itself without God, if he lets and permit it; saying that the course of nature, separate from the agency of God, is no came, or nothing; and affirming, that it is absolutely impossible, the course of nature should continue itself or go on to operate by itself any more than produce itself; and that God, the original of all being, is the ONLY CAUSE of all natural effects. Here it is worthy also to be observed, what Dr. Turnbull says of the laws of nature, as cited from Sir Isaac Newton. “It is



the will of the mind that is the first cause, that gives subsistence and efficacy to all those laws, who is the efficient cause that produces the phenomena, which appear in analogy, harmony, and agreement, according to these laws.” And, “the same principles must take place in things pertaining to moral as well as natural philosophy.”

From these things it will clearly follow, that identity of consciousness depends wholly on a law of nature; and so, on the sovereign will and agency of GOD. And therefore, that personal identity, and so the derivation of the pollution and guilt of past sins in the same person, depends on an arbitrary divine constitution; and this, even though we should allow the same consciousness not to be the only thing which constitutes oneness of person, but should, besides that, suppose sameness of substance requisite. For, if same consciousness be one thing necessary to personal identity, and this depends on God’s sovereign constitution, it will still follow that personal identity depends on God’s sovereign constitution.

And with respect to the identity of created substance itself, in the different moments of its duration, I think we shall greatly mistake, if we imagine it to be like that absolute, independent identity of the FIRST BEING, whereby he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Nay, on the contrary, it may be demonstrated, that even this oneness of created substance, existing at different times, is a merely dependent identity; dependent on the pleasure and sovereign constitution of him who worketh all in all. This will follow from who is generally allowed, and is certainly true, that God not only created all things, and gave them being at first, but continually preserves them and upholds them in being. This being a matter of considerable importance, it may be worthy here to be considered with a little attention. Let us inquire therefore, in the first place whether it be not evident that God does continually, by his immediate power, uphold every created substance in being; and then let us see the consequence.

That God does, by his immediate power, uphold every created substance in being, will be manifest, if we consider that their present existence is a dependent existence, and therefore is an effect and must have some cause; and the cause must be one of these two; either the antecedent existence of the same substance, or else the power of the Creator. But it cannot be the

antecedent existence of the same substance. For instance, the existence of the body of the moon, at this present moment, cannot be the effect of its existence at the last foregoing moment. For not only was what existed the last moment, no active cause, but wholly a passive thing, but this also is to be considered that no cause can produce effects in a time and place in which itself is not. It is plain, nothing can exert itself, or operate, when and where it is not existing. But the moon's past existence was neither where nor when its present existence is. In point of time, what is past entirely ceases, when present existence begins; otherwise it would not be past. The past moment has ceased, and is gone, when the present moment takes place; and no more can exist with it, than any other moment that had ceased, twenty years ago. Nor could the past existence of the particles of this moving body produce effects in any other place, than where it then was. But its existence at the present moment, in every point of it, is in a different place, from where its existence was at the last preceding moment. From these things, I suppose, it will certainly follow, that the present existence, either of this, or any other created substance, cannot be an effect of its past existence. The existences (so to speak) of an effect, or thing dependent, in different parts of space or duration, though ever so near one to another, do not at all co-exist one with the other; and therefore are as truly different effects, as if those parts of space and duration were ever so far asunder. And the prior existence can no more be the proper cause of the new existence, in the next moment, or next part of space, than if it had been in an age before, or at a thousand miles distance, without any existence to fill up the intermediate time or space. Therefore the existence of created substances, in each successive moment, must be the effect of the immediate agency, will, and power of GOD.

If any shall insist upon it, that their present existence is the effect or consequence of past existence, according to the nature of things, that the established course of nature is sufficient to continue existence once given, I allow it. But then it should be remembered, what nature is in created things, and what the established course of nature is, that as has been observed already, it is nothing, separate from the agency of God; and that, as Dr. T. says, GOD, the original of all being, is the ONLY cause of all natural effects. A father, according to the course of nature, begets a child an oak, according to the course of nature, produces an acorn, or a bud, so

according to the course of nature the former existence of the trunk of the tree is followed by its new or present existence. In one case, and the other, the new effect is consequent on the former, only by the established laws and settled course of nature; which is allowed to be nothing but the continued immediate efficiency of GOD, according to a constitution that he has been pleased to establish. Therefore, according to what our author urges as the child and the acorn which come into existence according to the course of nature, in consequence of the prior existence and state of the parent and the oak, am truly immediately created by God, so must the existence of each created person and thing, at each moment, be from the immediate continued creation of God. It will certainly follow from these things, that God's preserving of created things in being, is perfectly equivalent to a continued creation, or to his creating those things out of nothing at each moment of their existence. If the continued existence of created things be wholly dependent on God's perservation, then those things would drop into nothing upon the ceasing of the present moment, without a new exertion of the divine power to cause them to exist in the following moment. If there be any who own, that God precedes things in being, and yet hold that they would continue in being without any further help from him, after they once have existence, I think, it is hard to know what they mean.

To what purpose can it be, to talk of God preserving things in being, when there is no need of his preserving them? Or to talk of their being dependent on God for continued existence. When they would of themselves continue to exist, without his help; nay, though he should wholly withdraw his sustaining power and influence?

It will follow from what has been observed, that God's upholding of created substance, or causing of its existence in each successive moment, is altogether equivalent to an immediate production out of nothing, at each moment. Because its existence at this moment is not merely in part from God but wholly from him: and not in any part, or degree, from its antecedent or existence. For, to suppose that its antecedent existence concurs with God in efficiency to produce some part of the effect, is attended with all the very same absurdities, which have been shown to attend the supposition of its producing it wholly. Therefore the antecedent existence is nothing, as to any proper influence or assistance in

the affair: and consequently God produces the effect as much from nothing as if there had been nothing before. So that this effect differs not at all from the first creation, but only circumstantially; as, in the first creation there had been no such act and effect of God's power before: whereas, his giving existence afterwards, follows preceding acts and effects of the same kind, in an established order.

Now, in the next place, let us see how the consequence of these things is to my present purpose. If the existence of created substance, in each successive moment, be wholly the effect of God's immediate power, in that moment, without any dependence on prior existence, as much as the first creation out of nothing, then what exists at this moment, by this power, is a new effect; and simply and absolutely considered, not the same with any past existence, though it be like it, and follows it according to a certain established method. And there is no identity or oneness in the case. But what depends on the arbitrary constitution of the Creator; who by his wise sovereign establishment so unites these successive new effects, that he treats them as one, by communicating to them like properties, relations, and circumstances, and so, leads us to regard and treat them as one. When I call this an arbitrary constitution, I mean, that it is a constitution, which depends on nothing but the divine will, which divine will depends on nothing but the divine wisdom. In this sense, the whole course of nature, with all that belongs to it, all its laws and methods, constancy and regularity, continuance and proceeding, is an arbitrary constitution. In this sense, the continuance of the very being of the world and all its parts, as well as the manner of continued being, depends entirely on an arbitrary constitution. For it does not at all necessarily follow, that because there was sound, or light, or color, or resistance, or gravity, or thought, or consciousness, or any other dependent thing the last moment, that therefore there shall be the like at the next. All dependent existence whatsoever is in a constant flux, ever passing and resuming; renewed every moment, as the colors of bodies are every moment renewed by the right that shines upon them; and all is constantly proceeding from GOD, as light from the sun. In him we live, and move, and he our being.

Thus it appears, if we consider matters strictly, there is no such thing as any identity or oneness in created objects, existing at different times, but what depends on God's sovereign constitution. And so it appear, that the

objection we are upon, made against a supposed divine constitution, whereby Adam and his posterity are viewed and treated as one, in the manner and for the purposes supposed — as if it were not consistent with truth, because no constitution can make those to be one, which are not one — is built on a false hypothesis: for it appears, that a divine constitution is what makes truth, in affairs of this nature. The objection supposes, there is a oneness in created beings, whence qualities and relations are derived down from past existence, distinct from, and prior to, any oneness that can be supposed to be founded on divine constitution. Which is demonstrably false, and sufficiently appears so from things conceded by the adversaries themselves: and therefore the objection wholly falls to the ground.

There are various kinds of identity and oneness, found among created things, by which they become one in different manners, respects, and degrees, and to various purpose; several of which differences have been observed; and every kind is ordered, regulated, and limited, in every respect, by divine constitution. Some things, existing in different times and places, are treated by their Creator as one in one respect, and others in another; some are united for this communication, and others for that; but all according to the sovereign pleasure of the fountain of all being and operation.

It appears, particularly, from what has been said, that all oneness, by virtue whereof pollution and guilt from past wickedness are derived, depends entirely on a divine establishment. It is this, and this only, that must account for guilt and an evil taint on any individual soul, in consequence of a crime committed twenty or forty years ago, remaining still, and even to the end of the world, and for ever. It is this that must account for the continuance of any such thing, and where, as consciousness of acts that are past; and for the continuance of all habits, either good or bad: and on this depends every thing that can belong to personal identity. And all communications, derivations, or continuation of qualities, properties, or relations, natural or moral, from what is past, as if the subject were one, depends on no other foundation.

And I am persuaded, that no solid reason can be given, why God — who constitutes all other created union or oneness according to his pleasure,

and for what purposes, communications, and effects he pleases — may not establish a constitution whereby the natural posterity of Adam, proceeding from him, much as the buds and branches from the stock or root of a tree, should be treated as one with him, for the derivation, either of righteousness, and communion in rewards, or of the loss of righteousness, and consequent corruption and guilt.

As I said before, all oneness in created things, whence qualities and relations are derived, depends on a divine constitution that is arbitrary, in every other respect, excepting that it is regulated by divine wisdom. The wisdom which is exercised in these constitutions, appears in there two things. First, in a beautiful analogy and harmony with other laws or constitutions, especially, relating to the same subject, and secondly, in the good ends obtained, or useful consequence, of such a constitution. If therefore there be any objection still lying against this constitution with Adam and his posterity, it must be, that it is not sufficiently wise in these respects. But what extreme arrogance would it be in us, to take upon us to act as judges of the beauty and wisdom of the laws and established constitutions of the supreme Lord and Creator of the universe! And not only so, but if this constitution, in particular, be well considered, its wisdom, in the two forementioned respects, may easily be made evident. There is an apparent manifold analogy, to other constitutions and laws, established and maintained through the whole system of vital nature in this lower world; all parts of which, in all successions, are derived from the first of the kind, as from their root, or fountain; each deriving from thence all properties and qualities, that are proper to the nature and capacity of the species: no derivative having any one perfection, unless it be what is merely circumstantial, but what was in its primitive. And that Adam's posterity should be without that original righteousness which Adam had lost, is also analogous to other laws and establishments, relating to the nature of mankind; according to which, Adam's posterity have no one perfection of nature, in any kind, superior to what was in him, when the human race began to be propagated from him.

And as such a constitution was fit and wise in other respects, so it was in this follows. Seeing the divine constitution concerning the manner of mankind coming into existence, was such as did so naturally unite them and make them in so many respects one, naturally leading them to a close

union in society, and manifold intercourse, and mutual dependence — things were wisely so established, that all should naturally be in one and the same moral state, and not in such exceeding different states, as that some should be perfectly innocent and holy, but others corrupt and wicked; some needing a Savior, but others needing none; some in a confirmed state of perfect happiness, but others in a state of public condemnation to perfect and eternal misery; some justly exposed to great calamities in this world, but others by their innocence raised above all suffering. Such a vast diversity of state would by no means have agreed with the natural and necessary constitution and unavoidable situation and circumstances of the world of mankind, all made of one blood, to dwell on all the face of the earth, to be unwed and blended in society, and to partake together in the natural and common goods and ends of this lower world.

Dr. T. urges, that sorrow and shame are only for personal sin; and it has often been urged, that repentance can be for no other sin. To which I would say, that the use of wards is very arbitrary; but that men's hearts should be deeply affected with grief and humiliation before God, for the pollution and guilt which they bring into the world with them, I think, is not in the least unreasonable. Nor is it a thing strange and unheard of, that men should be ashamed of things done by others, in whom they are nearly concerned. I am sure, it is not unspiritual; especially when they are justly looked upon in the sight of God, who sees the disposition of their hearts, as fully consenting, and concurring.

From what has been observed it may appear, there is no sure ground to conclude, that it must be an absurd and impossible thing, for the race of mankind truly to partake of the sin of the first apostacy, go as that this, in reality and propriety, shall become their sin; by virtue of a real union between the root and branches of mankind, (truly and properly availing to such a consequence,) established by the author of the whole system of the universe; to whose establishments are owing all propriety and reality of union, in any part of that system; and by virtue of the full consent of the hearts of Adam's posterity to that first apostacy. And therefore the sin of the apostasy is not theirs, merely because God imputes it to them; but it, truly and properly theirs, and on that ground God imputes it to them.

By reason of the established union between Adam and his posterity, the case is far otherwise between him and them, than it is between distinct parts or individuals of Adam's race; betwixt whom is no such constituted union: as, between children and other ancestors. Concerning whom is apparently to be understood that place, <sup><2800></sup>Ezekiel 18:1-20. Where God reproves the Jews, for the use they made of that proverb, "The fathers have eaten your grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge;" and tells them, that hereafter they shall no more have occasion to use this proverb; and that if a son sees the wickedness of his father, and sincerely disapprove it and avoids it, and he himself is righteous; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father; that all souls, both the soul of the father and the son are his, and that therefore the son shall not bear the iniquity of his fathers nor the father hear the iniquity of the son; but the soul that sinneth, it shall die, that the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. The thing denied, is communion in the guilt and punishment of the sins of others, that are distinct parts of Adam's race; and expressly, in that case, where there is no consent and concurrence, but a sincere disapprobation of the wickedness of ancestors. It is declared, that children who are adult and come to act for themselves, who are righteous, and do not approve of, but sincerely condemn, the wickedness of their fathers, shall not be punished for their disapproved and avoided iniquities. The occasion of what is here said, as well as the design and plan sense, shows, that nothing is intended in the lead degree inconsistent with what has been supposed concerning Adam's posterity sinning and falling in his apostacy. The occasion is, the people's murmuring at God's methods under the Mosaic dispensation, agreeable to that in <sup><2800></sup>Leviticus 26:39. "And they that are left of you, shall pine away in their iniquity in their enemies' land, and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them:" and other parallel places, respecting external judgments, which were the punishments most plainly threatened, and chiefly insisted on, under that dispensation, (which was, as it were, an external and radial covenant,) and particularly the people suffering such terrible judgments in Ezekiel's time, for the sins of Manasseh according to what God says by Jeremiah. (<sup><2800></sup>Jeremiah 15:4.) and agreeable to what is said in that confession, <sup><2800></sup>Lamentations 5:7. "Our fathers have sinned and are not, and we have borne their iniquities." In what is said here, there is a special respect to the gospel-dispensation; as



is greatly confirmed by comparing this place with ~~2819~~ Jeremiah 31:29-31. Under which dispensation, the righteousness of God's dealings with mankind would be more fully manifested, in the clear revelation then to be made of the method of God's judgment, by which the final state of wicked men is determined, which is not according to the behavior of their particular ancestors; but every one is dealt with according to the sin of his own wicked heart, or sinful nature and practice. The affair of derivation of the natural corruption of mankind in general, and of their consent to, and participation of, the primitive and common apostasy, is not in the least intermeddled with, by any thing meant in the true scope and design of this place in Ezekiel.

On the whole, if any do not like the philosophy or the metaphysics (as some perhaps may choose to call it) made use of in the foregoing reasonings; yet I cannot doubt, but that a proper consideration of what is apparent and undeniable in fact, with respect to the dependence of the state and course of things in the universe on the sovereign constitutions of the supreme Author and Lord of all — who gives account to none of any of his matters, and whose ways are past finding out will be sufficient, with persons of common modesty and sobriety, to stop their mouths from making peremptory decisions against the justice of God respecting what is so plainly and fully taught in his holy word, concerning the derivation of depravity and guilt from Adam to his posterity.

This is enough, one would think, for ever to silence such bold expressions as these — “If this be just, — if the Scriptures teach such doctrine, etc. then the Scriptures are of no use — understanding is no understanding, — and, what a GOD must he be, that can thus curse innocent creatures! — Is this thy GOD. O Christian!” — etc. It may not be improper here to add something (by way of supplement to this chapter, in which we have had occasion to say so much about the imputation of Adam's sin) concerning the opinions of two divines, of no inconsiderable note among the dissenters in England, relating to a partial imputation, of Adam's first sin.

One of them supposes, that this sin, though truly imputed to INFANTS, so that thereby they are exposed to a proper punishment, yet is not imputed to them in such a degree as that upon this account they should be liable to eternal punishment, as Adam himself was, but only to temporal death, or

annihilation: Adam himself, the immediate actor, being made infinitely more guilty by it, than his posterity. On which I would observe, that to suppose, God imputes not all the guilt of Adams sin, but only some little part of it, relieves nothing but one's imagination. To think of poor little infants, bearing such torments for Adam's sin, as they sometimes do in this world, and these torments ending in death and annihilation, may sit easier the imagination, than to conceive of their suffering eternal misery for it. But it does not at all relieve one's reason. There is no rule of reason, that can be supposed to lie against imputing a sin in the whole of it, which was committed by one, to another who did not personally commit it, but what will also lie against its being so imputed and punished in part. For all the reasons (if there be any) lie against the imputation; not the quantity or degree of what is imputed. If there be any rule of reason, that is strong and good, lying against a proper derivation or communication of guilt, from one that acted, to another that did not act then it lies against all that is of this nature. The force of the reasons brought against imputing Adam's sin to his posterity (if there be any force in them) lies in this, That Adam and his posterity are not one. But this lies as properly against charging a part of the guilt, as the whole. For Adam's posterity, by not being the same with him, had no more hand in a little of what was done, than the whole. They were as absolutely free from being concerned in that act partly, as they were wholly. And there is no reason to be brought, why one man's sin cannot be justly reckoned to another's account, who was not then in being, in the whole of it, but what will as properly lie against its being reckoned to him in any part so as that he should be subject to any condemnation or punishment on that account. If those reasons are good, all the difference is this; that to bring a great punishment on infant for Adam's sin, is a great act of injustice, and to bring a comparatively smaller punishment, is a smaller act of injustice; but not, that this is not as truly and demonstrably an act of injustice, as the other.

To illustrate this by an instance something parallel. It is used as an argument why I may not exact from one of my neighbors, what was due to me from Luther, that he and my debtor are not the same; and that their concerns, interests, and properties are entirely distinct. Now if this argument be good, it lies as truly against my demanding from him a part of the debt, as the whole. Indeed it is a greater act of injustice for me to take

from him the whole of it, than a part; but not more truly and certainly an act of injustice.

The other divine thinks, there is truly an imputation of Adam's sin, so that infants cannot be looked upon as innocent creatures; yet seems to think it not agreeable to the perfections of God, to make the state of infants in another world worse than a state of non-existence. But this to me appears plainly a giving up of that grand point of imputation, both in whole and in part. For it supposes it to be not right, for God to bring any evil on a child of Adam which is innocent as to personal sin, without paying for it, or balancing it with good; so that still the state of the child shall be as good as could be demanded in justice, in case of mere innocence. Which plainly supposes, that the child is not exposed to any proper punishment at all, or is not at all in debt to divine justice, on account of Adam's sin. For if the child were truly in debt, then surely justice might take something from him, without paying for it, or without giving that which makes its state as good, as mere innocence could in justice require. If he owes the suffering of some punishment, then there is no need that justice should requite the infant for suffering that punishment, or make up for it, by conferring some good, that shall countervail it, and in effect remove and disannul it; so that, on the whole, good and evil shall be at even balance, yea, so that the scale of good shall preponderate. If it is unjust in a judge, to order any quantity of money to be taken from another, without paying him again, and fully making it up to him, it must be because he had justly forfeited none at all.

It seems to me pretty manifest, that none can, in good consistence with themselves, own a real imputation of the guilt of Adam's first sin to his posterity, without owning that they are justly treated as sinners, truly guilty, and children of wrath, on that account; nor unless they allow a just imputation of the whole of the evil of that transgression; at least, all that pertains to the essence of that act, as a full and complete violation of the covenant, which God had established; even as much as if each one of mankind had the like covenant established with him singly, and had by the like direct and full act of rebellion, violated it for himself.

## CHAPTER 4

### *Wherein Several Other Objections Are Considered.*

DR. T. objects against Adam's posterity being supposed to come into the world under a forfeiture of God's blessing, and subject to his curse through his sin, — That at the RESTORATION of the world after the flood, God pronounced equivalent or greater BLESSINGS on Noah and his sons, than he did on Adam at his creation, when he said, be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, etc. — To this I answer, in the following remarks.

**1.** As has been already shown, that in the threatening denounced for Adam's sin, there was nothing which appears inconsistent with the continuance of this present life for a season, or with propagating his kind; so for the like reason, there appears nothing in that threatening, upon the supposition that it reached Adam's posterity, inconsistent with enjoying the temporal blessings, of the present life, as long as this is continued, even those temporal blessings which God pronounced on Adam at his first creation. For it must be observed, that the blessings which God pronounced on Adam when he created him, and before the trial of his obedience, were not the same with the blessings which were suspended on his obedience. The blessings thus suspended, were the blessings of eternal life; which, if he had maintained his integrity through his trial, would have been pronounced upon him afterwards; when God, as his judge, should have given him his reward. God might indeed, if he had pleased, immediately have deprived him of life, and of all temporal blessings, given him before. But those blessings pronounced on him before-hand, were not the things for the obtaining of which his trial was appointed. These were reserved till the issue of his trial should be seen, and then to be pronounced in the blessed sentence, which would have been passed upon him by his judge, when God came to decree to him his reward for his approved fidelity. The pronouncing of these latter blessings on a degenerate race, that had fallen under the threatening denounced, would indeed (without a redemption) have been inconsistent with the constitution which had been established. But giving them the former kind of blessings, which were not the things suspended on the trial, or

dependent on his, fidelity, (and these to be continued for a season,) was not at all inconsistent therewith.

**2.** It is no more an evidence of Adam's posterity being not included in the threatening denounced for his eating the forbidden fruit, that they still have the temporal blessings of fruitfulness, and a dominion over the creatures, continued to them; than it is an evidence of Adam being not included in that threatening himself, That he had these blessings continued to him, was fruitful, and had dominion over the creatures, after his fall equally with his posterity.

**3.** There is good evidence, that the benedictions God pronounced on Noah and his posterity, were granted on a new foundation; a dispensation diverse from any grant, promise, or revelation, which God gave to Adam, antecedently to his fall; even on the foundation of the covenant of grace, established in Christ Jesus; a dispensation, the design of which is to deliver men from the curse that came upon them by Adam's sin, and to bring them to greater blessings than ever he had. These blessings were pronounced on Noah and his seed, on the same foundation whereon afterwards the blessing was pronounced on Abraham and his seed, which included both spiritual and temporal benefits. — Noah had his name prophetically given him by his father Lamech, because by him and his seed deliverance should be obtained from the curse, which came by Adam's fall.

<sup><0639</sup>Genesis 5:29. "And he called his name Noah, (i. e. rests) saying, this same shall comfort us concerning our work, and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed. Pursuant to the scope and intent of this prophecy (which indeed seems to respect the same thing with the prophecy in <sup><0635</sup>Genesis 3:15) are the blessings pronounced on Noah after the flood. There is this evidence of these blessings being conveyed through the channel of the covenant of grace, and by the redemption through Jesus Christ, that they were obtained by sacrifice; or were bestowed as the effect of God's favor to mankind, which was in consequence of smelling a sweet savor in the sacrifice which Noah offered. And it is very evident by the epistle to the Hebrews, that the ancient sacrifices never obtained the favor of God, but only by virtue of the relation they had to the sacrifice of Christ. — Now that Noah and his family had been so wonderfully saved from the wrath of God, which had destroyed the rest of the world, and the world was as it were restored

from a ruined state, there was a proper occasion to point to the great salvation to come by Christ: as it was a common thing for God, on occasion of some great temporal salvation of his people, or restoration from a low and miserable state, to renew the intimations of the great spiritual restoration of the world by Christ's redemption. God deals with the generality of mankind, in their present state, far differently on occasion of the redemption by Jesus Christ, from what he otherwise would do, for, being capable subjects of saving mercy, they have a day of patience and race, and innumerable temporal blessings bestowed on them, which, as the apostle signifies, (~~4447~~ Acts 14:17.) are testimonies of God's reconcilableness to sinful men, to put them upon seeking after God.

But beside the sense in which the posterity of Noah in general partake of these blessings of domination over the creatures, etc. Noah himself, and all such of his posterity as have obtained like precious faith with that exercised by him in offering his sacrifice, which made it a sweet savor, and by which it procured these blessings, have dominion over the creatures, through Christ, in a more excellent sense than Adam in innocency, as they are made kings and priests unto God, and reign with Christ, and all thing, are theirs, by a covenant of grace. They partake with Christ in that dominion over the beasts of the earth, the fowls of the air, and fishes of the sea, spoken of in the 8th Psalm; which is by the apostle interpreted of Christ's dominion over the world, (~~4457~~ 1 Corinthians 15:27. and ~~5000~~ Hebrews 2:7.) And the time is coming, when the greater part of the posterity of Noah, and each of his sons, shall partake of this more honorable and excellent dominion over the creature, through him in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Neither is there any need of supposing that these blessings have their most complete accomplishment, till many ages after they were granted, any more than the blessing on Japhet, expressed in those words, God shall enlarge Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.

But that Noah's posterity have such blessings given them through the great Redeemer, who suspends and removes the curse which came through Adam's sin, surely is no argument, that they originally, as in their natural state, are not under the curse. That men have blessings through grace, is no evidence of their being not Justin exposed to the curse by nature; but it rather argues the contrary. For if they did not deserve the curse, they

would not depend on grace and redemption for the removal of it, and for bringing them into a state of favor with God.

Another objection, which our author strenuously urges against the doctrine of original sin, is, that it disparages the divine goodness in giving us our being; which we ought to receive with thankfulness, as a great gift of God's beneficence, and look upon as the first, original, and fundamental fruit of the divine liberality.

To this I answer, in the following observations:

**1.** This argument is built on the supposed truth of a thing in dispute; and so is a begging of the question. It is built on this supposition, that we are not properly looked upon as one with our first father, in the state wherein God at first created him, and in his fall from that state. If we are so, it becomes the whole race to acknowledge God's great goodness to them, in the state wherein mankind was made at first; in the happy state they were then in, and the fair opportunity they then had of obtaining confirmed and eternal happiness; and to acknowledge it as an aggravation of their apostasy, and to humble themselves, that they were so ungrateful as to rebel against their good Creator. Certainly, we may all do this with as much reason, as the people of Israel in Daniel's and Nehemiah's times who did with thankfulness acknowledge God's great goodness to their fathers, many ages before; and in their confessions they bewailed, and took shame to themselves, for the sins committed by their fathers, notwithstanding such great goodness. (See the 9th chapter of Daniel, and the 9th of Nehemiah.)

**2.** If Dr. T. would imply in his objection, that it doth not consist with the goodness of God, to give mankind being in a state of misery, what ever was done before by Adam, whether he sinned or did not sin. I reply, if it be justly so ordered, that there should be a posterity of Adam, which must be looked upon as one with him; then it is no more contrary to God's attribute of goodness to give being to his posterity in a state of punishment, than to continue the being of the same wicked and guilty person, who has made himself guilty, in a state of punishment. The giving of being, and the continuing of being, are both alike the work of God's power and will, and both are alike fundamental to all blessings of man's present and future existence. And if it be said, it cannot be justly so

ordered, that there should be a posterity of Adam, which should be looked upon as one with him, this is begging the question.

**3.** If our author would have us to suppose, that it is contrary to the attribute of goodness for God, in any ease by an immediate act of his power, to cause existence, and to cause new existence, which shall be an exceeding miserable existence, by reason of exposedness to eternal ruin, then his own scheme must be supposed contrary to the attribute of God's goodness: for he supposes that God will raise multitudes from the dead at the fast day (which will be giving new existence to their bodies, and to bodily life and sense) in order only to their suffering eternal destruction.

**4.** Notwithstanding we are so sinful and miserable, as we are by nature, yet we may have great reason to bless God, that he has given us our being under so glorious a dispensation of grace through Jesus Christ: by which we have a happy opportunity to be delivered from this sin and misery, and to obtain unspeakable eternal happiness. And because, through our own wicked inclinations, we are disposed so to neglect and abuse this mercy, as to fail of final benefit by it, this is no reason why we ought not to be thankful for it, even according to our author's own sentiments. What (says he.) if the whole world lies in wickedness, an few therefore shall be saved? Have men no reason to be thankful, because they are wicked and ungrateful, and abuse their being and God's bounty? Suppose our own evil inclinations do withhold us, viz. from seeking after happiness, of which under the light of the gospel we are placed within the nearer and easier reach, suppose, the whole Christian world should lie in wickedness, and but few Christians should be saved, is it therefore certainly true that we cannot reasonably thank God for the gospel? Well and though the evil inclinations, which hinder our seeking and obtaining happiness by so glorious an advantage, are what we are born with, yet if those inclinations are our fault or sin, that alters not the case: and to say, they are not our sin, is still begging the question. Yea, it will follow from several things asserted by our author, that notwithstanding men are born in such circumstances, as that they are under a very great improbability of ever becoming righteous, yet they may have reason to be thankful for their being. Thus particularly, Dr. T. asserts, that all men have reason of thankfulness for their being; and yet he supposes that the heathen world, taken as a collective body, were dead in sin, and could not deliver or held



themselves, and therefore stood in necessity of the christian dispensation. And not only so, but he supposes, that the christian world is now at length brought to the like deplorable and helpless circumstances, and needs a new dispensation for its relief.

According to these things, the world in general, not only formerly but even at this day, are dead in sin, and helpless as to their salvation; and therefore the generality of them that are born into it, are much more likely to perish, than otherwise, till the new dispensation comes: and yet he supposes, we all have reason to be thankful for our being. Yea, further still, I think, according to our author's doctrine, men may have great reason to be thankful to God for bringing them into a state, which yet, as the case is, is attended with misery, as its certain consequence. As, with respect to God's raising the wicked to life, at the last day: which, he supposes, is in itself a great benefit, procured by Christ, and the wonderful grace of God through him: and if it be the fruit of God's wonderful grace, surely men ought to be thankful for that grace, and praise God for it. Our doctrine of original sin, therefore, no more disparages God's goodness in man's formation in the womb, than his doctrine disparages God's goodness in their resurrection from the grave.

Another argument, which Dr. T. makes use of, against the doctrine of original sin, is what the Scripture reveals of the process of the day of judgment, which represents the judge as dealing with men singly and separately, rendering to every man according to his deeds, and according to the improvement he has made of the particular powers and talents God has given him personally.

But this objection will vanish, if we consider what is the end or design of the public judgment. Now this will not be, that God may find out what men are, or what punishment or reward is proper for them, or in order to the passing of a right judgment of these things within himself, which is the end of human trials; but it is to manifest what men are to their own consciences. and to the world. As the day of judgment is called the day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God; in order to this, God will make use of evidences, or proofs. But the proper evidences of the wickedness of men's hearts (the true seat of all wickedness) both as to corruption of nature, and additional pollution and guilt, are men's works.

The special end of God's public judgment will be, to make a proper, perfect, open distinction among men, rightly to state and manifest their difference one from another, in order to that separation and difference in the eternal retribution that is to follow: and this difference will be made to appear, by their personal works.

There are two things, with regard to which men will be tried, and openly distinguished, by the perfect judgment of God at the last day; according to the twofold real distinction subsisting among mankind: viz. (1.) The difference of STATE; that primary, and grand distinction, whereby all mankind are divided into two sorts the righteous and the wicked. (2.) That secondary distinction, whereby both sorts differ from others in the same general state, in DEGREES of additional fruits of righteousness and wickedness. Now the Judge, in order to manifest both these, will judge men according to their personal works. But to inquire at the day of judgment, whether Adam sinned or no, or whether men are to be looked upon as one with him, and so partaken in his sin, is what in no respect tends to manifest either of these distinctions.

**1.** The first thing to be manifest, will be the state, that each man is in, with respect to the grand distinction of the whole world of mankind into righteous and wicked or, in metaphorical language, wheat and tares, or, the children of the kingdom of Christ, and the children of the wicked one: the latter, the head of the apostacy, but the former the head of the restoration and recovery. The Judge, in manifesting this, will prove men's hearts by their works in such as have had opportunity to perform any works in the body. The evil works of the children of the wicked one will be the proper manifestation and evidence or proof of whatever belongs to the general state of such; and particularly they will prove, that they belong to the kingdom of the great deceiver, and head of the apostacy, as they will demonstrate the exceeding corruption of their nature, and full consent of their hearts to the common apostasy, and also that their hearts never relinquished the apostacy, by a cordial adherence to Christ, the great restorer. The Judge will also make use of the good work of the righteous to show their interest in the redemption of Christ; as thereby will be manifested the sincerity of their hearts in their acceptance of, and adherence to, the Redeemer and his righteousness. And in thus proving the state of men's hearts by their actions, the circumstances of those actions

must necessarily come into consideration, to manifest the true quality of their actions; as, each one's talents, opportunities, advantages, light, motives, etc.

**2.** The other thing to be manifested, will be that secondary distinction, wherein particular persons, both righteous and wicked, differ from one another, in the degree of secondary good or evil; the degree of evil fruit which is additional to the guilt and corruption of the whole body of apostates and enemies; and the denture of personal goodness and good fruit, which is a secondary goodness with respect to the righteousness and merits of Christ which belong to all by that sincere faith manifested in all. Of this also each one's works, with their circumstances, opportunities, talents, etc. will be the proper evidence.

As to the nature and aggravations of the general apostacy by Adam's sin, and also the nature and sufficiency of the redemption by Jesus Christ, the great restorer, though both these will have vast influence on the eternal state, which men shall be adjudged to, yet neither of them will properly belong to the trial men will be the subjects of at that day in order to the manifestation of their state, wherein they are distinguished and from another. They will belong to the business of that day no otherwise, than the manifestation of the great truths of religion in general, as the nature and perfections of God, the dependence of mankind on God, as their creator and preserver, etc. Such truths as these will also have great influence on the eternal state, to which men will then be adjudged, as they aggravate the guilt of man's wickedness, and must be considered in order to a due estimate of Christ's righteousness, and men's personal virtue; yet being of general and equal concernment, will not properly belong to the trial of particular persons.

Another thing urged by our author particularly against the imputation of Adam's sin, is this: "Though, in Scripture, action is frequently said to be imputed, reckoned, accounted to a person, it is no other than his own act and deed. In the same place he cites a number of places of Scripture, where these words are used, which he says are all that he can find in the Bible.

But we are no way concerned with this argument at present, any further than it relates to imputation of sin or sinful action. Therefore all that is in the argument, which relates to the present purpose, is this: that the word

is so often applied in Scripture to signify God's imputing of personal sin, but never once to his imputing of Adam's sin.-So often!-How often?-But twice. There are but two of all those places which he reckons up, that have any reference to God imputing sin to any person, where there is any evidence that only personal sin is meant; (<sup>CRIB</sup> Leviticus 17:3, 4. and <sup>CRIB</sup> 2 Timothy 4:16. All therefore that the argument comes to, is this: that the word impute, is applied twice in Scripture to the case of God imputing sin, and neither of those times to signify the imputing of Adam's sin, but both times it has reference to personal sin, therefore Adam's sin is not imputed to his posterity. And this is to be noted, that one of these two places, even that in <sup>CRIB</sup> Leviticus 17:3, 4. does not speak of imputing the act committed, but another not committed. The words are, "what man soever there be of the house of Israel, that killeth an ox or lamb or goat in the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp, and bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the Lord, before the tabernacle of the Lord, blood shall be imputed unto that man, he hath shed blood that man shall be cut off from among his people," i. e. plainly murder shall be imputed to him: he shall be put to death for it, and therein punished with the same severity as if he had slain a man. It is plain by <sup>CRIB</sup> Isaiah 66:3. that, in some cases, shedding the blood of beasts, in an unlawful manner, was imputed to them, as if they slew a man.

But whether it be so or not, although in both these places the word impute, be applied to personal sin, and to the very act, or although this could be said of all the places which our author reckons up, yet that the word impute, is never expressly applied to Adam's sin, does no more argue, that It is not imputed to his posterity, than it argues that pride, unbelief, lying, theft, oppression, persecution, fornication, adultery, sodomy, perjury, idolatry, and innumerable other particular moral evils, are never imputed to the persons that committed them, or in whom they are because the word impute, though so often used in Scripture, is never applied to any of these kinds of wickedness.

I know not what can be said here, except one of these two things: that though these sins are not expressly said to be imputed, yet other words are used that do as plainly and certainly imply that they are imputed, as if it were said so expressly. Very well, find so I say with respect to the imputation of Adam's sin. The thing meant by the word impute, may be

as plainly and certainly expressed by using other words, as if that word were expressly used; and more certainly, because the words used instead of it, may amount to an explanation of this word. And this, I think, is the very case here. Though the word, impute, is not used with respect to Adam's sin, yet it is said, all have sinned; which, respecting infants, can be true only of their sinning by his sin. And, it is said, by his disobedience many were made sinners; and, judgment and condemnation came upon all by that sin, and that he this means death the wages of sin, passed on all men, etc. Which phrases amount to full and precise explanations of the word, impute; and therefore do more certainly determine the point really insisted on.

Or, perhaps it will be said, with respect to those personal sins before-mentioned, pride, unbelief, etc it is no argument they are not imputed to those who are guilty of them, that the very word impute, is not applied to them; for the word itself is rarely used; not one time in a hundred, and perhaps five hundred, of those wherein the thing meant is plainly implied, or may be certainly inferred. Well, and the same also may be applied likewise, with respect to Adam's sin.

It is probable, Dr. T. intends an argument against original sin, by that which he says in opposition to what R. R. suggests of children discovering the principle of iniquity, and seeds of sin, before they are capable of moral action, viz. That little children are made PATTERN of humility meekness, and innocence, (~~1~~ Matthew 18:3. ~~1~~ 1 Corinthians 14:20. and ~~1~~ Psalm 131:2.)

But when the utmost is made of this, there can be no shadow of reason, to understand more by these texts, than that little children are recommended as patterns in regard of a negative virtue, innocence with respect to the exercise and fruits of sin, harmlessness as to the hurtful effects of it; find that image of meekness and humility arising from this, in conjunct with a natural tenderness of mind, fear, self-diffidence, yieldableness, and confidence in parents and others older than themselves. And so they are commended as patterns of virtue no more than doves, which are an harmless sort of creatures, and have on image of the virtues of meekness and love. Even according to Dr. T.'s own doctrine, no more can be made of it than this: for his scheme will not admit of any such thing as positive

virtue or virtuous disposition, in infants; he insisting (as was observed before) that virtue must be the fruit of thought and reflection. But there can be no thought and reflection, that produces positive virtue, in children not yet capable of moral action; and it is such children he speaks of. And that little children have a negative virtue or innocence, in relation to the positive acts and hurtful effects of vice, is no argument that they have not a corrupt nature within them: for let their nature be ever to corrupt, yet surely it is no wonder that they be not guilty of positive wicked action before they are capable of any moral action at all. A young viper has a malignant nature, though incapable of doing a malignant action, and at present appearing a harmless creature.

Another objection, which Dr. T. and some others offer against this doctrine, is, That it pours contempt upon the human nature. But their declaiming on this topic is like addressing the affections and conceits of children, rather than rational arguing with men. It seems this doctrine is not compliment enough. I am sensible, it is not suited to the taste of some, who are so very delicate (to say no worse) that they can hear nothing but compliment and flattery. No contempt is by this doctrine cast upon the noble faculties and capacities of man's nature, or the exalted business, and divine and immortal happiness, of which he is made capable. And as to speaking ill of man's present moral state, I presume, it will not be denied, that please belongs to them who are truly sinful; and to suppose, that this is not the native character of mankind, is still but meanly begging the question. If we, as we come into the world, are truly sinful, and consequently miserable, he acts but a friendly part to us, who endeavors fully to discover and manifest our disease. Whereas, on the contrary, he acts an unfriendly part, who to his utmost hides it from us: and so, I in effect, does what in him lies to prevent our seeking a remedy from that, which if not remedied in time, must bring us finally to shame and everlasting contempt, and end in perfect and remediless destruction hereafter.

Another objection, which some have made against this doctrine much like the former, is, that it tends to beget in us on ill opinion of our, fellow-ship and to promote ill-nature and mutual hatred.

To which I would say, if it be truly so, that we all come sinful into the world, then our heartily acknowledging it tends to promote humility: but our disowning that sin and guilt which truly belongs to us, and endeavoring to persuade ourselves that we are vastly better than we are, leads to a foolish self-exaltation and pride. And it is manifest, by reason, experience, and the word of God, that pride is the chief source of all the contention, mutual hatred, and ill-will which are so prevalent in the world; and that nothing so effectually promotes the contrary tempers and deportments, as humility. This doctrine teaches us to think no worse of others, than of ourselves: it teaches us, that we are all, as we are by nature, companions in a miserable helpless condition; which under a revelation of the divine mercy, tends to promote mutual compassion. And nothing has a greater tendency to promote those amiable dispositions of mercy, forbearance, long-suffering, gentleness, and forgiveness, than a sense of our own extreme unworthiness and misery, and the infinite need we have of the divine mercy, forbearance, and forgiveness, together with a hope of obtaining mercy. If the doctrine which teaches that mankind are corrupt by nature, tends to promote ill-will, why should not Dr. T.'s doctrine tend to it as much? For he teaches us, that the generality of mankind are very wicked having made themselves so by their own free choice, without any necessity: which is a way of becoming wicked, that renders men truly worthy of resentment; but the other, not at all, even according to his own doctrine.

Another exclamation against this doctrine is, that it tends to hinder comfort and joy, and to promote melancholy and gloominess of mind. To which I shall briefly say, doubtless, supposing men are really become sinful, and so exposed to the displeasure of God, by whatever means, if they once come to have their eyes opened, and are not very stupid, the reflection, on their case will tend to make them sorrowful; and it is fit it should. Men, with whom this is the case, may well be filled with sorrow, till they are sincerely willing to forsake their sins, and turn to God. But there is nothing in this doctrine, that in the least stands in the way of comfort and exceeding joy, to such as find in their hearts a sincere willingness wholly to forsake all sin, and give their hearts and whole selves to Christ, and comply with the gospel method of salvation by him.

Another thing objected, is, that to make men believe that wickedness belongs to their very nature, tends to encourage them in sin, and plainly to lead them to all manner of iniquity; because they are taught, that sin is natural, and therefore necessary and unavoidable. But if this doctrine, which teaches that sin is natural to us, does also at the same time teach us, that it is never the better, or less to be condemned, for its being natural, then it does not at all encourage sin, any more than Dr. T.'s doctrine encourages wickedness when it is become inveterate; who teaches that such as by custom have contracted strong habits of sins are unable to help themselves. And is it reasonable, to represent it as encouraging a man in boldly neglecting and wilfully continuing in his disease, without seeking a cure, to tell him of his diseases to show him that it is real and very fatal, and what he can never cure himself of; yet withal directing him to a great Physician, who is sufficient for his restoration? But for a more particular answer to what is objected against the doctrine of our natural impotence and inability, as being an encouragement to go on in sin, and a discouragement to the use of all means for our help, I must for brevity refer the reader to what has been largely written on this head in my discourse on the Freedom of the Will.

Our author is pleased to advance another notion, among others by way of objection against the doctrine of original sin: That if this doctrine be true, it would be unlawful to beget children. He says, "If natural generation be the means of unavoidably conveying, all sin and wickedness into the world, it must itself be a sinful and unlawful thing." Now, if there be any force of argument here, it lies in this proposition whatsoever is a means or occasion of the certain infallible existence of sin and wickedness, must itself be sinful. But I imagine Dr. T. had not thoroughly weighed this proposition, nor considered where it would carry him. For, God continuing in being the devil, and others that are finally given up to wickedness, will be attended, most certainly and infallibly, with an eternal series of the most hateful and horrid wickedness. But will any be guilty of such vile blasphemy, as to say, therefore God's upholding of them in being is itself a sinful thing? In the same place our author says, "so far as we are generated in sin, it must be a sin to generate." But there is no appearance of evidence in that position, any more than in this: "So far as any is upheld in existence in sin, it is a sin to uphold them in existence;" Yea, if there were any reason in the



case, it would be strongest in the larger position: for parents, as Dr. T. himself observes, are not the authors of the beginning of existence: whereas, God is truly the author of the continuance of existence. As it is the known will of God, to continue Satan and millions of others in being, though the most sure consequence is the continuance of a vast infernal world, full of everlasting hellish wickedness: so it is part of the revealed will of God, that this world of mankind should be continued and the species propagated, for his own wise and holy purposes, which will is complied with by the parents joined in lawful marriage. Their children, though they come into the world in sin, yet are capable subjects of eternal holiness and happiness; which infinite benefits for their children, parents have great reason to expect, in the way of giving up their children to God in faith, through a Redeemer, and bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. I think, this may be answer enough to such a cavil.

Another objection is, That the doctrine of original sin is no oftener, and no more plainly, spoken of in Scripture; it being, if true, a very important doctrine. Dr. T. in many parts of his book suggests to his readers, that there are very few texts, in the whole Bible, wherein there is the least appearance of their teaching any such doctrine.

Of this I took notice before, but would here say further: That the reader who has perused the preceding defense of this doctrine, must now be left to judge for himself, whether there be any ground for such an allegation; whether there be not texts in sufficient number, both in the Old Testament and New, that exhibit undeniable evidence of this great article of Christian divinity, and whether it be not a doctrine taught in the Scripture with great plainness. I think there are few, if any, doctrines of revelation, taught more plainly and expressly. Indeed it is taught in an explicit manner more in the New Testament than in the Old. Which is not to be wondered at; it being thus with respect to all the most important doctrines of revealed religion.

But if it had been so, that this doctrine were but rarely taught in Scripture; yet if we find that it is indeed declared to us by God, if held forth to us by any word of his; then what belongs to us, is, to believe his word, and receive the doctrine which he teaches us, and not to prescribe to him how often he shall speak of it, and to insist upon knowing what reasons he has for speaking of it no oftener, before we will receive what he teaches us; or

to pretend that he should give us an account, why he did not speak of it so plainly as we think he ought to have done, sooner than he did. In this way of proceeding, if it be reasonable, the Sadducees of old, who denied any resumption or future state, might have maintained their cause against Christ, when he blamed them for not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God; and for not understanding by the Scripture text there would be a resurrection to spiritual enjoyment, and not to animal life, and sensual gratifications, and they might have insisted, that these doctrines, if true, were very important, and therefore ought to have been spoken of in the Scriptures oftener and more explicitly, and not that the church of God should be left, till that time, with only a few obscure intimations of that which so infinitely concerned them. And they might with disdain have rejected Christ's argument, by way of inference from God calling himself in the books of Moses, the GOD of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For answer, they might have said, that Moses was sent on purpose to teach the people the mind and will of God: and therefore, if these doctrines were true, he might in reason and in truth to have taught them plainly and frequently, and not have left the people to spell out so important a doctrine, only from God's saying, that he was the God of Abraham, etc.

One great end of the Scripture is; to teach the world what manner of being GOD is, about which the world without revelation, has been so wofully in the dark: and that God is an infinite being, is a doctrine of great importance, and a doctrine sufficiently taught in the Scripture. But yet, it appears to me, this doctrine is not taught there, in any measure, with such explicitness and precision, as the doctrine of original sin: and the Socinians, who denied God's omnipresence and omniscience, had as much room left them for cavil, as the Pelagians who deny original sin.

Dr. T. particularly urges, that Christ says not one word of this doctrine throughout the four Gospels; which doctrine, if true, being so important, and what so nearly concerned the great work of redemption, which he came to work out, (as is supposed,) one would think, it should have been emphatically spoken of in every page of the Gospels.

In reply to this, it may be observed, that by the account given in the four Gospels, Christ was continually saying those things which plainly implied, that all men in their original state are sinful and miserable. As,

when he declared, that they which are whole, need not a physician, but they which, are sick; That he came to seek and to save that which was lost. That it was necessary for all to be born again, and to be converted, and that otherwise they could not enter into the kingdom of heaven; — and, that all were sinners, as well as those whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices, etc. and that every one who did not repent, should perish; — Withal directing every one to pray to God for forgiveness of sin; — Using our necessity of forgiveness from God, as an argument with all to forgive the injuries of their neighbors; — Teaching, that earthly parents, though kind to their children, are in themselves evil; — And signifying, that things carnal and corrupt are properly the things of men; — Warning his disciples rather to beware of men, than of wild beasts; — Often representing the WORLD as evil, as wicked in its works, at enmity with truth and holiness, and hating him; — Yea and teaching plainly, that all men are extremely and inexpressibly sinful, owing ten thousand talents to their divine creditor.

And whether Christ did not plainly teach Nicodemus the doctrine of original total depravity, when he came to him to know what his doctrine was, must be left to the reader to judge, from what has been already observed on ~~CHR~~ John 3:1-11. And besides, Christ in the course of his preaching took the most proper method to convince men of the corruption of their nature, and to give them an effectual and practical knowledge of it, in application to themselves in particular, by teaching and urging the holy and strict law of God, in its extent, and spirituality, and dreadful threatenings: which, above all things, tends to seach the hearts of men, and to teach them their inbred exceeding depravity; not merely as a matter of speculation, but by proper conviction of conscience, which is the only knowledge of original sin, that can avail to prepare the mind for receiving Christ's redemption; as a man's sense of his own sickness prepares him to apply in good earnest to the physician.

And as to Christ being no more frequent and particular in mentioning and inculcating this point in a doctrinal manner, it is probable, one reason to be given for it, is the same that is to be given for his speaking no oftener of God's creating of the world: which, though so important a doctrine, is scarce ever spoken of in any of Christ's discourses, and no wonder, seeing this was a matter which the Jews, to whom he confined his personal

ministry, had all been instructed in from their forefathers, and never was called in question among them. And there is a great deal of reason, from the ancient Jewish writers, to suppose, that the doctrine of original sin had ever been allowed in the open profession of that people; though they were generally, in that corrupt time, very far from a practical conviction of it, and many notions were then prevalent especially among the Pharisee, which were indeed inconsistent with it. And though on account of these prejudices they might need to have this doctrine explained and applied to them, yet it is well known, by all acquainted with their Bibles, that Christ, for wise reasons, spake more sparingly and obscurely of several of the most important doctrine's of revealed religion, relating to the necessity, grounds, nature, and way of his redemption, and the method of the justification of sinners, while he lived here in the flesh, and left these doctrines to be more plainly and fully opened and inculcated by the Holy Spirit after his ascension.

But if, after all, Christ did not speak of this doctrine often enough to suit Dr. T. he might be asked, Why he supposes Christ did no oftener and no more plainly teach some of his, Dr. T.'s, doctrines, which he so much insists on? As, that temporal death comes on all mankind by Adam, and that it comes on them by him, not as a punishment or calamity, but as a great favor, being made a rich benefit, and a fruit of God's abundant grace, by Christ's redemption, who came into the world as a second Adam for this end. Surely, if this were so, it was of vast importance, that it should be known to the church of God in all ages, who saw death reigning over infants, as well as others. If infants were indeed perfectly innocent, was it not needful, that the design of that which was such a meloncholy and awful dispensation towards so many millions of innocent creatures, should be known, in order to prevent the worst thoughts of God from arising in the minds of the constant spectators of so mysterious and gloomy a dispensation? But why then such a total silence about it, for four thousand years together, and not one word of it in all the Old Testament, nor one word of it in all the four Gospels: and indeed not one word of it in the whole Bible, but only as forced and wrung out by Dr. T.'s arts of criticism and deduction, against the plainest and strongest evidence?

As to the arguments, made use of by many late writers from the universal moral sense, and the reasons they offer from experience, and observation

of the nature of mankind, to show that we are born into the world with principles of virtue; with a natural prevailing relish, approbation, and love of righteousness, tenth, and goodness, and of whatever tends to the public welfare, with a prevailing natural disposition to dislike, to resent, and condemn what is selfish, unjust, and immoral, and a native bent in mankind to mutual benevolence, tender compassion, etc. those who have had such objections against the doctrine of original sin thrown in their way, and desire to see them particularly considered, I ask leave to refer them to a treatise on the nature of true VIRTUE, lying by me prepared for the press, which may ere long be exhibited to public view.

## CONCLUSION.

ON the whole, I observe, there are some other things, besides arguments, in Dr. T.'s book which are calculated to influence the minds, and bias the judgment, of some sorts of readers. Here, not to insist on the profession he makes, in many places, of sincerity, humility, meekness, modesty, charity, etc. in searching after truth, and freely proposing his thoughts, with the reasons of them, to others it nor on his magisterial assurance, appearing on many occasions, and the high contempt he sometimes expresses of the opinions and arguments of very excellent divines and fathers in the church of God, who have thought differently from him — both of which, it is not unlikely, may have a degree of influence on some of his readers — I would take some notice of another thing, observable in the writings of Dr. T. and many of the late opposers of the more peculiar doctrines of Christianity, tending (especially with juvenile and unwary readers) not a little to abate the force, and prevent the due effect, of the clearest scripture-evidences in favor of those important doctrines; and particularly to make void the arguments taken from the writings of the apostle Paul, in which those doctrines are more plainly and fully revealed, than in any other part of the Bible. What I mean, is this: These gentlemen express a high opinion of this apostle, and that very justly, for his eminent genius, his admirable sagacity, strong powers of reasoning, acquired learning, etc. They speak of him as a writer of masterly address, of extensive reach, and deep design, every where in his epistles, almost in every word he says. This looks exceedingly specious: it carries a plausible appearance of christian zeal and

attachment to the Holy Scriptures, to bear such a testimony of high veneration for that great apostle, who was not only the principal instrument of propagating Christianity, but with his own hand wrote so considerable a part of the New Testament. And I am far from determining, with respect at least to some of these writers, that they are not sincere in their declarations; or, that all is mere artifice, only to make way for the reception of their own peculiar sentiments. However, it tends greatly to subserve such purpose; as much as if it were designedly contrived, with the utmost subtlety, for that end. Hereby their incautious readers are prepared the more easily to be drawn into a belief, that they, and others in their way of thinking, have not rightly understood many of those things in this apostles writings, which before seemed very plain to them. Thus they are prepared, by a prepossession in favor of these new writers, to entertain a favorable thoughts of the interpretations put by them upon the words and phrases of this apostle; and to admit in many passages a meaning which before lay entirely out of sight; quite foreign to all that in the view of a common reader seems to be their obvious sense; and most remote from the expositions agree in by those who used to be esteemed the greatest divines and best commentators. As to this apostle, being a man of no vulgar understanding, it is nothing strange if his meaning lies very deep; and no wonder then, if the superficial observation of vulgar Christian, or indeed of the herd of common divines, such as the Westminster Assembly, etc. falls vastly short of the apostle's reach, and frequently does not enter into the true spirit and design of his episode. They must understand, that the first reformers, and indeed preachers and expositors in general, for fifteen or sixteen hundred years past, were too unlearned and short-sighted, to be capable of penetrating into the sense, or fit to make comments on the writings, of so great a man as this apostle; or else had dwelt in a cave of bigotry and superstition, to gloomy to allow them to use their own understandings with freedom, in reading the Scripture. But at the same time it must be understood, that there is risen up how at lengths in this happy age of light and liberty, a set of men of a more free and generous turn of mind, of a more inquisitive genius, and of better discernment. By such insinuations, they seek advantage to their caused; and thus the most unreasonable and extravagant interpretations of Scripture are palliated and recommended: so that, if the simple reader is not very much on his guard, if he does not clearly see with his own eyes,

or has too much indolence, or too little leisure, thoroughly to examine for himself, he is in danger of being imposed on with delusive appearances.

But I humbly conceive, that their interpretations — particularly of the apostle Paul's writings, though in some things ingenious — are in many things extremely absurd, and demonstrably disagreeable, in the highest degree, to his real design, to the language he commonly used, and to the doctrines currently taught in his epistles. Their criticisms, when examined, appear far more subtle, than solid: and it seems as if nothing can possibly be strong enough, nothing perspicuous enough, in any composure whatever, to stand before such liberties as these writers indulge. The plainest and most nervous discourse is analyzed and criticized, till it either dissolves into nothing, or becomes a thing of little significance. The Holy Scriptures is subtle-ized into a mere mist; or made into a thin cloud, that easily puts on any shape, and is moved in any direction, with a puff of wind, just as the manager pleases. It is not in the nature and power of language, to afford sufficient defense against such an art, so abused; as, I imagine, a due consideration of some things I have had occasion in the preceding discourse to observe, may abundantly convince us.

But this, with the rest of what I have offered on the subject, must be left with every candid reader's judgment; and the success of the whole must now be left with God, who knows what is agreeable to his own mind, and is able to make his own truths prevail; however mysterious they may seem to the poor, partial, narrow, and extremely imperfect views of morals, while looking through a cloudy and delusory medium; and however disagreeable they may be to the innumerable prejudices of men's hearts; — and who has promised, that the gospel of CHRIST, such as is really his, shall finally be victorious; and has assured us, that the word which goes out of his mouth, shall not return to him void, but shall accomplish that which he pleaseth, and shall prosper in the thing where too he sends it. — Let GOD arise, and plead his own cause, and glorify his own great name. AMEN.

A TREATISE  
CONCERNING  
RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS  
IN THREE PARTS  
BY  
JONATHAN EDWARDS

INTRODUCTION

THERE is no question whatsoever, that is of greater importance to mankind, and what is more concerns every individual person to be well resolved in, than this: *What are the distinguishing qualifications of those that are in favor with God, and entitled to his eternal rewards?* Or, which comes to the same thing, *What is the nature of true religion? And wherein do lie the distinguishing notes of that virtue and holiness that is acceptable in the sight of God?* But though it be of such importance, and though we have clear and abundant light in the word of God to direct us in this matter, yet there is no one point, wherein professing Christians do more differ one from another. It would be endless to reckon up the variety of opinions in this point, that divide the Christian world; making manifest the truth of that declaration of our Savior, “Strait is the gate and narrow is the way, that leads to life, and few there be that find it.”

The consideration of these things has long engaged me to attend to this matter, with the utmost diligence and care, and exactness of search and inquiry, that I have been capable of. It is a subject on which my mind has been peculiarly intent, ever since I first entered on the study of divinity.



But as to the success of my inquiries it must be left to the judgment of the reader of the following treatise.

I am sensible it is much more difficult to judge impartially of that which is the subject of this discourse, in the midst of the dust and smoke of such a state of controversy, as this land is now in, about things of this nature. As it is more difficult to write impartially, so it is more difficult to read impartially. Many will probably be hurt in their spirits, to find so much that appertains to religious affection, here condemned: and perhaps indignation and contempt will be excited in others by finding so much here justified and approved. And it may be, some will be ready to charge me with inconsistency with myself, in so much approving some things, and so much condemning others; as I have found this has always been objected to by some, ever since the beginning of our late controversies about religion. It is a hard thing to be a hearty zealous friend of what has been good and glorious, in the late extraordinary appearances, and to rejoice much in it; and at the same time to see the evil and pernicious tendency of what has been bad, and earnestly to oppose that. But yet, I am humbly but fully persuaded, we shall never be in the way of truth, nor go on in a way acceptable to God, and tending to the advancement of Christ's kingdom till we do so. There is indeed something very mysterious in it, that so much good, and so much bad, should be mixed together in the church of God; as it is a mysterious thing, and what has puzzled and amazed many a good Christian, that there should be that which is so divine and precious, as the saving grace of God, and the new and divine nature dwelling in the same heart, with so much corruption, hypocrisy, and iniquity, in a particular saint. Yet neither of these is more mysterious than real. And neither of them is a new or rare thing. It is no new thing, that much false religion should prevail, at a time of great reviving of true religion, and that at such a time multitudes of hypocrites should spring up among true saints. It was so in that great reformation, and revival of religion, that was in Josiah's time; as appears by <sup><480></sup>Jeremiah 3:10, and <sup><200></sup>4:3, 4, and also by the great apostasy that there was in the land, so soon after his reign. So it was in that great outpouring of the Spirit upon the Jews, that was in the days of John the Baptist; as appears by the great apostasy of that people so soon after so general an awakening, and the temporary religious comforts and joys of many: <sup><455></sup>John 5:35, "Ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his

light.” So it was in those great commotions that were among the multitude, occasioned by the preaching of Jesus Christ; of the many that were then called, but few were chosen; of the multitude that were roused and affected by his preaching, and at one time or other appeared mightily engaged, full of admiration of Christ, and elevated with joy, but few were true disciples, that stood the shock of the great trials that came afterwards, and endured to the end. Many were like the stony ground, or thorny ground; and but few, comparatively, like the good ground. Of the whole heap that was gathered, great part was chaff; that the wind afterwards drove away; and the heap of wheat that was left, was comparatively small; as appears abundantly, by the history of the New Testament. So it was in that great outpouring of the Spirit that was in the apostles’ days as appears by <sup><1240></sup>Matthew 24:10-13. <sup><880></sup>Galatians 3:1, and <sup><8041></sup>4:11, 15. <sup><1621></sup>Philippians 2:21, and <sup><1089></sup>3:18, 19, and the two epistles to the Corinthians, and many other parts of the New Testament. And so it was in the great reformation from Popery. It appears plainly to have been in the visible church of God, in times of great reviving of religion, from time to time, as it is with the fruit trees in the spring; there are a multitude of blossoms, all of which appear fair and beautiful, and there is a promising appearance of young fruits; but many of them are but of short continuance; they soon fall off, and never come to maturity.

Not that it is to be supposed that it will always be so; for though there never will, in this world, be an entire purity, either in particular saints, in a perfect freedom from mixtures of corruption; or in the church of God, without any mixture of hypocrites with saints, and counterfeit religion, and false appearances of grace with true religion, and real holiness: yet it is evident, that there will come a time of much greater purity in the church of God, than has been in ages past; it is plain by these texts of Scripture, <sup><2571></sup>Isaiah 52:1. <sup><2440></sup>Ezekiel 44:6, 7, <sup><2987></sup>Joel 3:17. <sup><3402></sup>Zechariah 14:21. <sup><1668></sup>Psalms 69:32, 35, 36. <sup><2388></sup>Isaiah 35:8, 10, chap. <sup><2903></sup>4:3, 4. <sup><2618></sup>Ezekiel 20:38. <sup><1509></sup>Psalms 37:9, 10, 21, 29. And one great reason of it will be that at that time God will give much greater light to his people, to distinguish between true religion and its counterfeits. <sup><3008></sup>Malachi 3:3, “And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness.” With ver. 18, which is a continuation of the prophecy of

the same happy times. “Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not.”

It is by the mixture of counterfeit religion with true, not discerned and distinguished, that the devil has had his greatest advantage against the cause and kingdom of Christ, all along hitherto. It is by this means, principally, that he has prevailed against all revivings of religion, that ever have been shewn the first founding of the Christian church. By this, he hurt the cause of Christianity, in and after the apostolic age, much more than by all the persecutions of both Jews and Heathens. The apostles, in all their epistles, show themselves much more concerned at the former mischief, than the latter. By this, Satan prevailed against the reformation, began by Luther. Zwinglius, etc., to put a stop to its progress, and bring it into disgrace; ten times more, than by all those bloody, cruel, and before unheard of persecutions of the church of Rome. By this, principally, has he prevailed against revivals of religion, that have been in our nation since the reformation. By this he prevailed against New England, to quench the love and spoil the joy of her espousals, about a hundred years ago. And I think, I have had opportunity enough to see plainly that by this the devil has prevailed against the late great revival of religion in New England, so happy and promising in its beginning. Here, most evidently has been the main advantage Satan has had against us; by this he has foiled us. It is by this means, that the daughter of Zion in this land now lies on the ground, in such piteous circumstances as we now behold her; with her garments rent, her face disfigured, her nakedness exposed, her limbs broken, and weltering in the blood of her own wounds, and in no wise able to arise, and this, so quickly after her late great joys and hopes: ~~25117~~ Lamentations 1:17, “Zion spreadeth forth her hands, and there is none to comfort her: the Lord hath commanded concerning Jacob, that his adversaries shall be roundabout him: Jerusalem is as a menstruous woman among them.” I have seen the devil prevail the same way, against two great revivings of religion in this country. Satan goes on with mankind, as he began with them. He prevailed against our first parents, and cast them out of paradise, and suddenly brought all their happiness and glory to an end, by appearing to be a friend to their happy paradisaic state, and pretending to advance it to higher degrees. So the same cunning serpent, that beguiled Eve through his

subtlety, by perverting us from the simplicity that is in Christ, hath suddenly prevailed to deprive us of that fair prospect, we had a little while ago, of a kind of paradisaic state of the church of God in New England.

After religion has revived in the church of God, and enemies appear, people that are engaged to defend its cause, are commonly most exposed, where they are sensible of danger. While they are wholly intent upon the opposition that appears openly before them, to make head against that, and do neglect carefully to look all around them, the devil comes behind them, and gives a fatal stab unseen; and has opportunity to give a more home stroke, and wound the deeper, because he strikes at his leisure, and according to his pleasure, being obstructed by no guard or resistance.

And so it is ever likely to be in the church, whenever religion revives remarkably, till we have learned well to distinguish between true and false religion, between saving affections and experiences, and those manifold fair shows, and glistening appearances, by which they are counterfeited; the consequences of which, when they are not distinguished, are often inexpressibly dreadful. By this means, the devil gratifies himself, by bringing it to pass, that that should be offered to God, by multitudes, under a notion of a pleasing acceptable service to him, that is indeed above all things abominable to him. By this means he deceives great multitudes about the state of their souls; making them think they are something, when they are nothing; and so eternally undoes them; and not only so, but establishes many in a strong confidence of their eminent holiness, who are in God's sight some of the vilest of hypocrites. By this means, he many ways damps and wounds religion in the hearts of the saints, obscures and deforms it by corrupt mixtures, causes their religious affections woefully to degenerate, and sometimes, for a considerable time, to be like the manna that bred worms and stank; and dreadfully ensnares and confounds the minds of others of the saints and brings them into great difficulties and temptation, and entangles them in a wilderness, out of which they can by no means extricate themselves. By this means, Satan mightily encourages the hearts of open enemies of religion, and strengthens their hands, and fills them with weapons, and makes strong their fortresses; when, at the same time, religion and the church of God lie exposed to them, as a city without walls. By this means, he brings it to pass, that men work wickedness under a notion of doing God service, and so sin without

restraint, yea with earnest forwardness and zeal, any with all their might. By this means he brings in even the friends of religion, insensibly to themselves, to do the work of enemies, by destroying religion in a far more effectual manner than open enemies can do, under a notion of advancing it. By this means the devil scatters the flock of Christ, and sets them one against another, and that with great heat of spirit, under a nation of zeal for God; and religion, by degrees degenerates into vain jangling; and during the strife, Satan leads both parties far out of the right way, driving each to great extremes, one on the right hand, and the other on the left, according as he finds they are most inclined, or most easily moved and swayed, till the right path in the middle is almost wholly neglected. And in the midst of this confusion, the devil has great opportunity to advance his own interest, and make it strong in ways innumerable, and get the government of all into his own hands and work his own will. And by what is seen of the terrible consequences of this counterfeit religion, when not distinguished from true religion, God's people in general have their minds unhinged and unsettled in things of religion, and know not where to set their foot, or what to think or do; and many are brought into doubts, whether there be anything in religion; and heresy, and infidelity, and atheism greatly prevail.


Therefore it greatly concerns us to use our utmost endeavors clearly to discern, and have it well settled and established, wherein true religion does consist. Till this be done, it may be expected, that great revivings of religion will be but of short continuance; till this be done, there is but little good to be expected of all our warm debates in conversation and from the press, not knowing clearly and distinctly what we ought to contend for.

My design is to contribute my mite, and use my best (however feeble) endeavors to this end, in the ensuing treatise; wherein it must be noted, that my design is somewhat diverse from the design of what I have formerly published, which was to *show the distinguishing marks of a work of the Spirit of God*, including both his common and saving operations; but what I aim at now, is to show the nature and signs of the *gracious operations* of God's Spirit, by which they are to be distinguished from all things whatsoever, that the minds of men are the subjects of, which are not of a saving nature. If I have succeeded, in this my aim, in any tolerable measure, I hope it will tend to promote the interest of

religion. And whether I have succeeded to bring any light to this subject or no, and however my attempts may be reproached in these captious and censorious times, I hope ins the mercy of a gracious God, for the acceptance of the sincerity of my endeavors; and hope also for the candor and prayers of the true followers of the meek and charitable Lamb of God.

## PART 1.

### CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THE AFFECTIONS AND THEIR IMPORTANCE IN RELIGION

 *1 Peter 1:8: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.*

In these words, the apostle represents the state of the minds of the Christians he wrote to, under the persecutions they were then the subjects of. These persecutions are what he has respect to, in the two preceding verses, when he speaks of the *trial of their faith*, and of their *being in heaviness through manifold temptations*.

Such trials are of threefold benefit to true religion. Hereby the truth of it is manifested, and it appears to be indeed true religion; they, above all other things, have a tendency to distinguish between true religion and false, and to cause the difference between them evidently to appear. Hence they are called by the name of *trials*, in the verse nextly preceding the text, and in innumerable other places; they try the faith and religion of professors, of what sort it is, as apparent gold is tried in the fire, and manifested, whether it be true gold or no. And the faith of true Christians being thus tried and proved to be true, is “found to praise, and honor, and glory,” as in that preceding verse.

And then, these trials are of further benefit to true religion; they not only manifest the truth of it, but they make its genuine beauty and amiableness remarkably to appear. True virtue never appears so lovely, as when it is most oppressed; and the divine excellency of real Christianity, is never exhibited with such advantage, as when under the greatest trials: then it is that true faith appears much more precious than gold! And upon this account is “found to praise, and honor, and glory.”

And again, another benefit that such trials are of to true religion, is, that they purify and increase it. They not only manifest it to be true, but also tend to refine it, and deliver it from those mixtures of that which is false, which encumber and impede it; that nothing may be left but that which is true. They tend to cause the amiableness of true religion to appear to the

best advantage, as was before observed; and not only so, but they tend to increase its beauty, by establishing and confirming it, and making it more lively and vigorous, and purifying it from those things that obscured its luster and glory. As gold that is tried in the fire, is purged from its alloy, and all remainders of dross, and comes forth more solid and beautiful; so true faith being tried as gold is tried in the fire, becomes more precious, and thus also is “found unto praise, and honor, and glory.” The apostle seems to have respect to each of these benefits, that persecutions are of to true religion, in the verse preceding the text.

And, in the text, the apostle observes how true religion operated in the Christians he wrote to, under their persecutions, whereby these benefits of persecution appeared in them; or what manner of operation of true religion, in them, it was, whereby their religion, under persecution, was manifested to be true religion, and eminently appeared in the genuine beauty and amiableness of true religion, and also appeared to be increased and purified, and so was like to be “found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” And there were two kinds of operation, or exercise of true religion, in them, under their sufferings, that the apostle takes notice of in the text, wherein these benefits appeared.

**1. *Love to Christ:*** “Whom having not yet seen, ye love.” The world was ready to wonder, what strange principle it was, that influenced them to expose themselves to so great sufferings, to forsake the things that were seen, and renounce all that was dear and pleasant, which was the object of sense. They seemed to the men of the world about them, as though they were beside themselves, and to act as though they hated themselves; there was nothing in their view, that could induce them thus to suffer, and support them under, and carry them through such trials. But although there was nothing that was seen, nothing that the world saw, or that the Christians themselves ever saw with their bodily eyes, that thus influenced and supported them, yet they had a supernatural principle of love to something unseen; they loved Jesus Christ, for they saw him spiritually whom the world saw not, and whom they themselves had never seen with bodily eyes.



**2. Joy in Christ.** Though their outward sufferings were very grievous, yet their inward spiritual joys were greater than their sufferings; and these supported them, and enabled them to suffer with cheerfulness.

There are two things which the apostle takes notice of in the text concerning this joy.

**1.** The manner in which it rises, the way in which Christ, though unseen, is the foundation of it, viz., by faith; which is the evidence of things not seen: “In whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice.”

**2.** The nature of this joy; “unspeakable and full of glory.” Unspeakable in the kind of it; very different from worldly joys, and carnal delights; of a vastly more pure, sublime, and heavenly nature, being something supernatural, and truly divine, and so ineffably excellent; the sublimity and exquisite sweetness of which, there were no words to set forth. Unspeakable also in degree; it pleasing God to give them this holy joy, with a liberal hand, and in large measure, in their state of persecution.

Their joy was full of glory. Although the joy was unspeakable, and no words were sufficient to describe it, yet something might be said of it, and no words more fit to represent its excellency than these, that it *was full of glory*; or, as it is in the original, *glorified joy*. In rejoicing with this joy, their minds were filled, as it were, with a glorious brightness, and their natures exalted and perfected. It was a most worthy, noble rejoicing, that did not corrupt and debase the mind, as many carnal joys do; but did greatly beautify and dignify it; it was a prelibation of the joy of heaven, that raised their minds to a degree of heavenly blessedness; it filled their minds with the light of God’s glory, and made themselves to shine with some communication of that glory.

Hence the proposition or doctrine, that I would raise from these words, is this: **DOCTRINE.** *True religion, in great part, consists in holy affections.*

We see that the apostle, in observing and remarking the operations and exercises of religion in the Christians he wrote to, wherein their religion appeared to be true and of the right kind, when it had its greatest trial of what sort it was, being tried by persecution as gold is tried in the fire, and when their religion not only proved true, but was most pure, and cleansed

from its dross and mixtures of that which was not true, and when religion appeared in them most in its genuine excellency and native beauty, and was found to praise, and honor, and glory; he singles out the religious affections of *love* and *joy*, that were then in exercise in them: these are the exercises of religion he takes notice of wherein their religion did thus appear true and pure, and in its proper glory. Here, I would,

1. Show what is intended by the affections.
2. Observe some things which make it evident, that a great part of true religion lies in the affections.

**I.** It may be inquired, what the affections of the mind are?

I answer: The affections are no other than the more vigorous and sensible exercises of the inclination and will of the soul.

God has endued the soul with two faculties: one is that by which it is capable of perception and speculation, or by which it discerns, and views, and judges of things; which is called the understanding. The other faculty is that by which the soul does not merely perceive and view things, but is some way inclined with respect to the things it views or considers; either is inclined *to* them, or is disinclined and averse *from* them; or is the faculty by which the soul does not behold things, as an indifferent unaffected spectator, but either as liking or disliking, pleased or displeased, approving or rejecting. This faculty is called by various names; it is sometimes called the *inclination*: and, as it has respect to the actions that are determined and governed by it, is called the *will*: and the mind, with regard to the exercises of this faculty, is often called the *heart*.

The exercise of this faculty are of two sorts; either those by which the soul is carried out towards the things that are in view, in approving of them, being pleased with them, and inclined to them; or those in which the soul opposes the things that are in view, in disapproving of them, and in being displeased with them, averse from them, and rejecting them.

And as the exercises of the inclination and will of the soul are various in their kinds, so they are much more various in their degrees. There are some exercises of pleasedness or displeasedness, inclination or disinclination, wherein the soul is carried but a little beyond the state of indifference. —

And there are other degrees above this, wherein the approbation or dislike, pleasedness or aversion, are stronger, wherein we may rise higher and higher, till the soul comes to act vigorously and sensibly, and the actings of the soul are with that strength, that (through the laws of the union which the Creator has fixed between the soul and the body) the motion of the blood and animal spirits begins to be sensibly altered; whence oftentimes arises some bodily sensation, especially about the heart and vitals, that are the fountain of the fluids of the body: from whence it comes to pass, that the mind, with regard to the exercises of this faculty, perhaps in all nations and ages, is called the *heart*. And it is to be noted, that they are these more vigorous and sensible exercises of this faculty that are called the *affections*.

The will, and the affections of the soul, are not two faculties; the affections are not essentially distinct from the will, nor do they differ from the mere actings of the will, and inclination of the soul, but only in the liveliness and sensibleness of exercise.

It must be confessed, that language is here somewhat imperfect, and the meaning of words in a considerable measure loose and unfixed, and not precisely limited by custom, which governs the use of language. In some sense, the affection of the soul differs nothing at all from the will and inclination, and the will never is in any exercise any further than it is affected; it is not moved out of a state of perfect indifference, any otherwise than as it is affected one way or other, and acts nothing any further. But yet there are many actings of the will and inclination, that are not so commonly called *affections*: in everything we do, wherein we act voluntarily, there is an exercise of the will and inclination; it is our inclination that governs us in our actions; but all the actings of the inclination and will, in all our common actions of life, are not ordinarily called affections. Yet, what are commonly called affections are not essentially different from them, but only in the degree and manner of exercise. In every act of the will whatsoever, the soul either likes or dislikes, is either inclined or disinclined to what is in view: these are not essentially different from those affections of love and hatred: that liking or inclination of the soul to a thing, if it be in a high degree, and be vigorous and lively, is the very same thing with the affection of love; and that disliking and disinclining, if in a greater degree, is the very same with hatred. In every act of the will for, or towards something not present, the

soul is in some degree inclined to that thing; and that inclination, if in a considerable degree, is the very same with the affection of desire. And in every degree of the act of the will, wherein the soul approves of something present, there is a degree of pleasedness; and that pleasedness, if it be in a considerable degree, is the very same with the affections of joy or delight. And if the will disapproves of what is present, the soul is in some degree displeased, and if that displeasedness be great, it is the very same with the affection of grief or sorrow.

Such seems to be our nature, and such the laws of the union of soul and body, that there never is in any case whatsoever, any lively and vigorous exercise of the will or inclination of the soul, without some effect upon the body, in some alteration of the motion of its fluids, and especially of the animal spirits. And, on the other hand, from the same laws of the union of the soul and body, the constitution of the body, and the motion of its fluids, may promote the exercise of the affections. But yet it is not the body, but the mind only, that is the proper seat of the affections. The body of man is no more capable of being really the subject of love or hatred, joy or sorrow, fear or hope, than the body of a tree, or than the same body of man is capable of thinking and understanding. As it is the soul only that has ideas, so it is the soul only that is pleased or displeased with its ideas. As it is the soul only that thinks, so it is the soul only that loves or hates, rejoices or is grieved at what it thinks of. Nor are these motions of the animal spirits, and fluids of the body, anything properly belonging to the nature of the affections, though they always accompany them, in the present state; but are only effects or concomitants of the affections that are entirely distinct from the affections themselves, and no way essential to them; so that an unbodied spirit may be as capable of love and hatred, joy or sorrow, hope or fear, or other affections, as one that is united to a body.

The affections and passions are frequently spoken of as the same; and yet in the more common use of speech, there is in some respect a difference; and affection is a word that in its ordinary signification, seems to be something more extensive than passion, being used for all vigorous lively actings of the will or inclination; but passion for those that are more sudden, and whose effects on the animal spirits are more violent, and the mind more overpowered, and less in its own command.

As all the exercises of the inclination and will, are either in approving and liking, or disapproving and rejecting; so the affections are of two sorts; they are those by which the soul is carried out to what is in view, cleaving to it, or seeking it; or those by which it is averse from it, and opposes it.

Of the former sort are love, desire, hope, joy, gratitude, complacence. Of the latter kind are hatred, fear, anger, grief, and such like; which it is needless now to stand particularly to define.

And there are some affections wherein there is a composition of each of the aforementioned kinds of actings of the will; as in the affection of *pity*, there is something of the former kind, towards the person suffering, and something of the latter towards what he suffers. And so in zeal, there is in it high approbation of some person or thing, together with vigorous opposition to what is conceived to be contrary to it.

There are other mixed affections that might be also mentioned, but I hasten to,

**II.** The second thing proposed, which was to observe some things that render it evident, that true religion, in great part consists in the affections. And here,

**1.** What has been said of the nature of the affections makes this evident, and may be sufficient, without adding anything further, to put this matter out of doubt; for who will deny that true religion consists in a great measure, in vigorous and lively actings of the inclination and will of the soul, or the fervent exercises of the heart?

That religion which God requires, and will accept, does not consist in weak, dull, and lifeless wishes, raising us but a little above a state of indifference: God, in his word, greatly insists upon it, that we be good in earnest, “fervent in spirit,” and our hearts vigorously engaged in religion:

<sup><521></sup>Romans 12:11, “Be ye fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.”

<sup><502></sup>Deuteronomy 10:12, “And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord the God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul?” and chap. <sup><504></sup>6:4, 6, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy might.” It is such a fervent vigorous engagedness of the heart in

religion, that is the fruit of a real circumcision of the heart, or true regeneration, and that has the promises of life; <sup>◀1806</sup>Deuteronomy 30:6, “And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.”

If we be not in good earnest in religion, and our wills and inclinations be not strongly exercised, we are nothing. The things of religion are so great, that there can be no suitableness in the exercises of our hearts, to their nature and importance, unless they be lively and powerful. In nothing is vigor in the actings of our inclinations so requisite, as in religion; and in nothing is lukewarmness so odious. True religion is evermore a powerful thing; and the power of it appears, in the first place in the inward exercises of it in the heart, where is the principal and original seat of it. Hence true religion is called the *power of godliness*, in distinction from the external appearances of it, that are the *form* of it, <sup>◀1807</sup>2 Timothy 3:5: “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power of it.” The Spirit of God, in those that have sound and solid religion, is a spirit of powerful holy affection; and therefore, God is said “to have given the Spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind,” <sup>◀1808</sup>2 Timothy 1:7. And such, when they receive the Spirit of God, in his sanctifying and saving influences, are said to be “baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with fire;” by reason of the power and fervor of those exercises the Spirit of God excites in their hearts, whereby their hearts, when grace is in exercise, may be said to “burn within them;” as is said of the disciples, <sup>◀1809</sup>Luke 24:32.

The business of religion is from time to time compared to those exercises, wherein men are wont to have their hearts and strength greatly exercised and engaged, such as running, wrestling or agonizing for a great prize or crown, and fighting with strong enemies that seek our lives, and warring as those, that by violence take a city or kingdom.

And though true grace has various degrees, and there are some that are but babes in Christ, in whom the exercise of the inclination and will, towards divine and heavenly things, is comparatively weak; yet everyone that has the power of godliness in his heart, has his inclinations and heart exercised towards God and divine things, with such strength and vigor that these holy exercises do prevail in him above all carnal or natural affections, and

are effectual to overcome them: for every true disciple of Christ “loves him above father or mother, wife and children, brethren and sisters, houses and lands: yea, than his own life.” From hence it follows, that wherever true religion is, there are vigorous exercises of the inclination and will towards divine objects: but by what was said before, the vigorous, lively, and sensible exercises of the will, are no other than the affections of the soul.

**2.** The Author of the human nature has not only given affections to men, but has made them very much the spring of men’s actions. As the affections do not only necessarily belong to the human nature, but are a very great part of it; so (inasmuch as by regeneration persons are renewed in the whole man, and sanctified throughout) holy affections do not only necessarily belong to true religion, but are a very great part of it. And as true religion is of a practical nature, and God hath so constituted the human nature, that the affections are very much the spring of men’s actions, this also shows, that true religion must consist very much in the affections.

Such is man’s nature, that he is very inactive, any otherwise than he is influenced by some affection, either love or hatred, desire, hope, fear, or some other. These affections we see to be the springs that set men agoing, in all the affairs of life, and engage them in all their pursuits: these are the things that put men forward, and carry them along, in all their worldly business; and especially are men excited and animated by these, in all affairs wherein they are earnestly engaged, and which they pursue with vigor. We see the world of mankind to be exceeding busy and active; and the affections of men are the springs of the motion: take away all love and hatred, all hope and fear, all anger, zeal, and affectionate desire, and the world would be, in a great measure motionless and dead; there would be no such thing as activity amongst mankind, or any earnest pursuit whatsoever. It is affection that engages the covetous man, and him that is greedy of worldly profits, in his pursuits; and it is by the affections, that the ambitious man is put forward in pursuit of worldly glory; and it is the affections also that actuate the voluptuous man, in his pursuit of pleasure and sensual delights: the world continues, from age to age, in a continual commotion and agitation, in a pursuit of these things, but take away all affection, and the spring of all this motion would be gone, and the motion

itself would cease. And as in worldly things, worldly affections are very much the spring of men's motion and action; so in religious matters, the spring of their actions is very much religious affection: he that has doctrinal knowledge and speculation only, without affection, never is engaged in the business of religion.

**3.** Nothing is more manifest in fact, than that the things of religion take hold of men's souls, no further than they affect them. There are multitudes that often hear the word of God, and therein hear of those things that are infinitely great and important, and that most nearly concern them, and all that is heard seems to be wholly ineffectual upon them, and to make no alteration in their disposition or behavior; and the reason is, they are not affected with what they hear. There are many that often hear of the glorious perfections of God, his almighty power and boundless wisdom, his infinite majesty, and that holiness of God, by which he is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity, and the heavens are not pure in his sight, and of God's infinite goodness and mercy, and hear of the great works of God's wisdom, power and goodness, wherein there appear the admirable manifestations of these perfections; they hear particularly of the unspeakable love of God and Christ, and of the great things that Christ has done and suffered, and of the great things of another world, of eternal misery in bearing the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, and of endless blessedness and glory in the presence of God, and the enjoyment of his dear love; they also hear the peremptory commands of God, and his gracious counsels and warnings, and the sweet invitations of the gospel; I say, they often hear these things and yet remain as they were before, with no sensible alteration in them, either in heart or practice, because they are not affected with what they hear; and ever will be so till they are affected. — I am bold to assert, that there never was any considerable change wrought in the mind or conversation of any person, by anything of a religious nature, that ever he read, heard or saw, that had not his affections moved. Never was a natural man engaged earnestly to seek his salvation; never were any such brought to cry after wisdom, and lift up their voice for understanding, and to wrestle with God in prayer for mercy; and never was one humbled, and brought to the foot of God, from anything that ever he heard or imagined of his own unworthiness and deserving of God's displeasure; nor was ever one induced to fly for refuge



unto Christ, while his heart remained unaffected. Nor was there ever a saint awakened out of a cold, lifeless flame, or recovered from a declining state in religion, and brought back from a lamentable departure from God, without having his heart affected. And in a word, there never was anything considerable brought to pass in the heart or life of any man living, by the things of religion, that had not his heart deeply affected by those things.

**4.** The holy Scriptures do everywhere place religion very much in the affection; such as fear, hope, love, hatred, desire, joy, sorrow, gratitude, compassion, and zeal.

The Scriptures place much of religion in godly fear; insomuch, that it is often spoken of as the character of those that are truly religious persons, that they tremble at God's word, that they fear before him, that their flesh trembles for fear of him, and that they are afraid of his judgments, that his excellency makes them afraid, and his dread falls upon them, and the like: and a compilation commonly given the saints in Scripture, is "fearers of God," or, "they that fear the Lord." And because the fear of God is a great part of true godliness, hence true godliness in general, is very commonly called by the name of the fear of God; as everyone knows, that knows anything of the Bible.

So hope in God and in the promises of his word, is often spoken of in the Scripture, as a very considerable part of true religion. It is mentioned as one of the three great things of which religion consists, <sup><B3></sup>1 Corinthians 13:13. Hope in the Lord is also frequently mentioned as the character of the saints: <sup><B5></sup>Psalm 146:5, "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God." <sup><B7></sup>Jeremiah 17:7, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." <sup><B9></sup>Psalm 31:24, "Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord." And the like in many other places. Religious fear and hope are, once and again, joined together, as jointly constituting the character of the true saints; <sup><B11></sup>Psalm 33:18, "Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy." <sup><B13></sup>Psalm 147:11, "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy." Hope is so great a part of true religion, that the apostle says, "we are saved by hope," <sup><B15></sup>Romans 8:24. And this is spoken of as the helmet of the Christian soldier. <sup><B17></sup>1 Thessalonians 5:8, "And for

a helmet, the hope of salvation;” and the sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, which preserves it from being cast away by the storms of this evil world.” <sup><306></sup>Hebrews 6:19, “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail.” It is spoken of as a great fruit and benefit which true saints receive by Christ’s resurrection: <sup><307></sup>1 Peter 1:3, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”

The Scriptures place religion very much in the affection of love, in love to God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and love to the people of God, and to mankind. The texts in which this is manifest, both in the Old Testament and New, are innumerable. But of this more afterwards.

The contrary affection of hatred also, as having sin for its object, is spoken of in Scripture as no inconsiderable part of true religion. It is spoken of as that by which true religion may be known and distinguished; <sup><308></sup>Proverbs 8:13, “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil.” And accordingly the saints are called upon to give evidence of their sincerity by this; <sup><309></sup>Psalms 97:10, “Ye that love the Lord hate evil.” And the Psalmist often mentions it as an evidence of his sincerity; <sup><310></sup>Psalms 2:3, “I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes; I hate the work of them that turn aside.” <sup><311></sup>Psalms 119:104, “I hate every false way.” So ver. 127. Again, <sup><312></sup>Psalms 139:21, “Do I not hate them, O Lord, that hate thee?”

So holy desire, exercised in longings, hungerings, and thirstings after God and holiness, is often mentioned in Scripture as an important part of true religion; <sup><313></sup>Isaiah 26:8, “The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.” <sup><314></sup>Psalms 27:4, “One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.” <sup><315></sup>Psalms 42:1, 2, “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God; my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?” <sup><316></sup>Psalms 63:1, 2, “My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen

thee in the sanctuary.” <sup><1800></sup>Psalm 84:1, 2, “How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.” <sup><1811></sup>Psalm 119:20, “My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times.” So <sup><1972></sup>Psalm 73:25, and <sup><1936></sup>143:6, 7, and <sup><1906></sup>130:6. <sup><2181></sup>Cant. 3:1, 2, and <sup><2168></sup>6:8. Such a holy desire and thirst of soul is mentioned, as one thing which renders or denotes a man truly blessed, in the beginning of Christ’s sermon on the mount, <sup><1016></sup>Matthew 5:6: “Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.” And this holy thirst is spoken of, as a great thing in the condition of a participation of the blessings of eternal life; <sup><1620></sup>Revelation 21:6, “I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely.”

The Scriptures speaks of holy joy, as a great part of true religion. So it is represented in the text. And as an important part of religion, it is often exhorted to, and pressed, with great earnestness; <sup><1800></sup>Psalm 37:4, “Delight thyself in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.” <sup><1972></sup>Psalm 97:12, “Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous.” So <sup><1811></sup>Psalm 33:1, “Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.” <sup><1016></sup>Matthew 5:12, “Rejoice, and be exceeding glad.” <sup><1016></sup>Philippians 3:1, “Finally, brethren, rejoice in the Lord.” And chap. <sup><1004></sup>4:4, “Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice.” <sup><1916></sup>1 Thessalonians 5:16, “Rejoice evermore.” <sup><1916></sup>Psalm 149:2, “Let Israel rejoice in him that made him; let the children of Zion be joyful in their king.” This is mentioned among the principal fruits of the Spirit of grace; <sup><1811></sup>Galatians 5:21, “The fruit of the Spirit is love,” etc. The Psalmist mentions his holy joy, as an evidence of his sincerity. <sup><1811></sup>Psalm 119:14, “I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.”

Religious sorrow, mourning, and brokenness of heart, are also frequently spoken of as a great part of true religion. These things are often mentioned as distinguishing qualities of the true saints, and a great part of their character; <sup><1016></sup>Matthew 5:4, “Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.” <sup><1811></sup>Psalm 34:18, “The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.” <sup><2100></sup>Isaiah 61:1, 2, “The Lord hath anointed me, to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort all that mourn.” This godly sorrow and brokenness of heart is often spoken of, not only as a great thing in the distinguishing character of the saints, but that in them, which is peculiarly acceptable and pleasing to God;

<sup><1517></sup>Psalm 51:17, “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” <sup><2575></sup>Isaiah 57:15, “Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” Chap. <sup><2660></sup>66:2, “To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit.”

Another affection often mentioned, as that in the exercise of which much of true religion appears, is gratitude; especially as exercised in thankfulness and praise to God. This being so much spoken of in the book of Psalms, and other parts of the holy Scriptures, I need not mention particular texts.

Again, the holy Scriptures do frequently speak of compassion or mercy, as a very great and essential thing in true religion, insomuch that good men are in Scripture denominated from hence; and a merciful man and a good man are equivalent terms in Scripture; <sup><2570></sup>Isaiah 57:1, “The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away.” And the Scripture chooses out this quality, as that by which, in a peculiar manner, a righteous man is deciphered; <sup><1570></sup>Psalm 37:21, “The righteous showeth mercy, and giveth;” and ver. 26, “He is ever merciful, and lendeth.” And <sup><1140></sup>Proverbs 14:21, “He that honoreth the Lord, hath mercy on the poor.” And <sup><3080></sup>Colossians 3:12, “Put ye on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies,” etc. This is one of those great things by which those who are truly blessed are described by our Savior; <sup><1080></sup>Matthew 5:7, “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” And this Christ also speaks of, as one of the weightier matters of the law; <sup><1230></sup>Matthew 23:23, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith.” To the like purpose is that, <sup><3080></sup>Micah 6:8, “He hath showed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justice, and love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?” And also that, <sup><3080></sup>Hosea 6:6 “For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice.” Which seems to have been a text much delighted in by our Savior, by his manner of citing it once and again, <sup><1080></sup>Matthew 9:13, and <sup><1210></sup>12:7.

Zeal is also spoken of, as a very essential part of the religion of true saints. It is spoken of as a great thing Christ had in view, in giving himself for our redemption; <sup><6124></sup>Titus 2:14, “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” And this is spoken of, as the great thing wanting in the lukewarm Laodiceans, <sup><6125></sup>Revelation 3:15, 16, 19.

I have mentioned but a few texts, out of an innumerable multitude, all over the Scripture, which place religion very much in the affections. But what has been observed, may be sufficient to show that they who would deny that much of true religion lies in the affections, and maintain the contrary, must throw away what we have been wont to own for our Bible, and get some other rule, by which to judge of the nature of religion.

**5.** The Scriptures do represent true religion, as being summarily comprehended in love, the chief of the affections, and fountain of all other affections.

So our blessed Savior represents the matter, in answer to the lawyer, who asked him, which was the great commandment of the law <sup><6126></sup>Matthew 22:37-40: “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” Which last words signify as much, as that these two commandments comprehend all the duty prescribed, and the religion taught in the law and the prophets. And the apostle Paul does from time to time make the same representation of the matter; as in <sup><6127></sup>Romans 13:8, “He that loveth another, hath fulfilled the law.” And ver. 10, “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” And <sup><6128></sup>Galatians 5:14, “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” So likewise in <sup><6129></sup>1 Timothy 1:5, “Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart,” etc. So the same apostle speaks of love, as the greatest thing in religion, and as the vitals, essence and soul of it; without which, the greatest knowledge and gifts, and the most glaring profession, and everything else which appertains to religion, are vain and worthless; and represents it as the fountain from whence proceeds all that

is good, in ~~431~~ 1 Corinthians 13 through out; for that which is there rendered charity, in the original is *αγαπη*, the proper English of which is love.

Now, although it be true, that the love thus spoken of includes the whole of a sincerely benevolent propensity of the soul towards God and man; yet it may be considered, that it is evident from what has been before observed, that this propensity or inclination of the soul, when in sensible and vigorous exercise, becomes affection, and is no other than affectionate love. And surely it is such vigorous and fervent love which Christ speaks of, as the sum of all religion, when he speaks of loving God with all our hearts, with all our souls, and with all our minds, and our neighbor as ourselves, as the sum of all that was taught and prescribed in the law and the prophets.

Indeed it cannot be supposed, when this affection of love is here, and in other Scriptures, spoken of as the sum of all religion, that hereby is meant the act, exclusive of the habit, or that the exercise of the understanding is excluded, which is implied in all reasonable affection. But it is doubtless true, and evident from these Scriptures, that the essence of all true religion lies in holy love; and that in this divine affection, and an habitual disposition to it, and that light which is the foundation of it, and those things which are the fruits of it, consists the whole of religion.

From hence it clearly and certainly appears, that great part of true religion consists in the affections. For love is not only one of the affections, but it is the first and chief of the affections, and the fountain of all the affections. From love arises hatred of those things which are contrary to what we love, or which oppose and thwart us in those things that we delight in: and from the various exercises of love and hatred, according to the circumstances of the objects of these affections, as present or absent, certain or uncertain, probable or improbable, arise all those other affections of desire, hope, fear, joy, grief, gratitude, anger, etc. From a vigorous, affectionate, and fervent love to God, will necessarily arise other religious affections; hence will arise an intense hatred and abhorrence of sin, fear of sin, and a dread of God's displeasure, gratitude to God for his goodness, complacency and joy in God, when God is graciously and sensibly present, and grief when he is absent, and a joyful hope when a future enjoyment of God is expected, and fervent zeal for the glory of God. And

in like manner, from a fervent love to men, will arise all other virtuous affections towards men.

**6.** The religion of the most eminent saints we have an account of in the Scripture, consisted much in holy affections.

I shall take particular notice of three eminent saints, who have expressed the frame and sentiments of their own hearts, and so described their own religion, and the manner of their intercourse with God, in the writings which they have left us, that are a part of the sacred canon.

The first instance I shall take notice of, is David, that “man after God’s own heart;” who has given us a lively portraiture of his religion in the book of Psalms. Those holy songs of his he has there left us, are nothing else but the expressions and breathings of devout and holy affections; such as an humble and fervent love to God, admiration of his glorious perfections and wonderful works, earnest desires, thirstings, and pantings of soul after God, delight and joy in God, a sweet and melting gratitude to God, for his great goodness, a holy exultation and triumph of soul in the favor, sufficiency, and faithfulness of God, his love to, and delight in the saints, the excellent of the earth, his great delight in the word and ordinances of God, his grief for his own and others’ sins, and his fervent zeal for God, and against the enemies of God and his church. And these expressions of holy affection, which the psalms of David are everywhere full of, are the more to our present purpose, because those psalms are not only the expressions of the religion of so eminent a saint, that God speaks of as so agreeable to his mind; but were also, by the direction of the Holy Ghost, penned for the use of the church of God in its public worship, not only in that age, but in after ages; as being fitted to express the religion of all saints, in all ages, as well as the religion of the Psalmist. And it is moreover to be observed, that David, in the book of Psalms, speaks not as a private person, but as the Psalmist of Israel, as the subordinate head of the church of God, and leader in their worship and praises; and in many of the psalms speaks in the name of Christ, as personating him in these breathings forth of holy affection; and in many other psalms he speaks in the name of the church.

Another instance I shall observe, is the apostle Paul; who was in many respects, the chief of all the ministers of the New Testament; being above

all others, a chosen vessel unto Christ, to bear his name before the Gentiles, and made a chief instrument of propagating and establishing the Christian church in the world, and of distinctly revealing the glorious mysteries of the gospel, for the instruction of the church in all ages; and (as has not been improperly thought by some) the most eminent servant of Christ that ever lived, received to the highest rewards in the heavenly kingdom of his Master. By what is said of him in the Scripture, he appears to have been a person that was full of affection. And it is very manifest, that the religion he expresses in his epistles, consisted very much in holy affections. It appears by all his expressions of himself, that he was, in the course of his life, inflamed, actuated, and entirely swallowed up, by a most ardent love to his glorious Lord, esteeming all things as loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of him, and esteeming them but dung that he might win him. He represents himself, as overpowered by this holy affection, and as it were compelled by it to go forward in his service, through all difficulties and sufferings, <sup><5054></sup>2 Corinthians 5:14, 15. And his epistles are full of expressions of an overpowering affection towards the people of Christ. He speaks of his dear love to them, <sup><4729></sup>2 Corinthians 12:19, <sup><5000></sup>Philippians 4:1, <sup><5000></sup>2 Timothy 1:2; of his “abundant love,” <sup><4000></sup>2 Corinthians 2:4; and of his “affectionate and tender love,” as of a nurse towards her children, <sup><5000></sup>1 Thessalonians 2:7, 8: “But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children; so, being affectionately desirous of you we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.” So also he speaks of his “bowels of love,” <sup><5008></sup>Philippians 1:8, <sup><5005></sup>Philemon 5, 12, and 20. So he speaks of his “earnest care” for others, <sup><4006></sup>2 Corinthians 8:16, and of his “bowels of pity, or mercy towards them,” <sup><5001></sup>Philippians 2:1; and of his concern for others, even to anguish of heart,” <sup><4004></sup>2 Corinthians 2:4: “For out of much affliction and anguish of heart, I wrote unto you with many tears; not that you should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.” He speaks of the great conflict of his soul for them, <sup><5001></sup>Colossians 2:1. He speaks of great and continual grief that he had in his heart from compassion to the Jews, <sup><5000></sup>Romans 9:2. He speaks of “his mouth’s being opened, and his heart enlarged” towards Christians, <sup><4001></sup>2 Corinthians 6:11: “O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged.” He often speaks of his “affectionate and longing desires,” <sup><5008></sup>1 Thessalonians 2:8,



Romans 1:11, <sup><500></sup>Philippians 1:8, and chap. <sup><500></sup>4:1, <sup><500></sup>2 Timothy 1:4. The same apostle is very often, in his epistles, expressing the affection of joy, <sup><400></sup>2 Corinthians 1:12 and chap. <sup><500></sup>7:7, and ver. 9. 16. <sup><500></sup>Philippians 1:4, and chap. <sup><500></sup>2:12, and chap. <sup><500></sup>3:3. <sup><500></sup>Colossians 1:34. <sup><500></sup>1 Thessalonians 3:9. He speaks of his “rejoicing with great joy,” <sup><500></sup>Philippians 4:10, <sup><500></sup>Philemon 1:7; of his “joying and rejoicing,” <sup><500></sup>Philippians 2:1, 7, and “of his rejoicing exceedingly,” <sup><400></sup>2 Corinthians 7:13, and of his being “filled with comfort, and being exceeding joyful,” <sup><500></sup>2 Corinthians 7:4. He speaks of himself as “always rejoicing,” <sup><400></sup>2 Corinthians 6:10. So he speaks of the triumphs of his soul, <sup><400></sup>2 Corinthians 2:14, and of his glorying in tribulation,” <sup><500></sup>2 Thessalonians 1:4, and <sup><400></sup>Romans 5:3. He also expresses the affection of hope; in <sup><500></sup>Philippians 1:20, he speaks of his “earnest expectation, and his hope.” He likewise expresses an affection of godly jealousy, <sup><400></sup>2 Corinthians 11:2, 3. And it appears by his whole history, after his conversion, in the Acts, and also by all his epistles, and the accounts he gives of himself there that the affection of zeal, as having the cause of his Master, and the interest and prosperity of his church, for its object, was mighty in him, continually inflaming his heart, strongly engaging to those great and constant labors he went through, in instructing, exhorting, warning, and reproving others, “travailing in birth with them;” conflicting with those powerful and innumerable enemies who continually opposed him, wrestling with principalities and powers, not fighting as one who beats the air, running the race set before him, continually pressing forwards through all manner of difficulties and sufferings; so that others thought him quite beside himself. And how full he was of affection, does further appear by his being so full of tears: in <sup><400></sup>2 Corinthians 2:4, he speaks of his a many tears;” and so <sup><400></sup>Acts 20:19; and of his “tears that he shed continually night and day,” ver. 31.

Now if anyone can consider these accounts given in the Scripture of this great apostle, and which he gives of himself, and yet not see that his religion consisted much in affection, must have a strange faculty of managing his eyes to shut out the light which shines most full in his face.

The other instance I shall mention, is of the apostle John, that beloved disciple, who was the nearest and dearest to his Master, of any of the twelve, and was by him admitted to the greatest privileges of any of them;

being not only one of the three who were admitted to be present with him in the mount at his transfiguration, and at the raising of Jairus's daughter, and whom he took with him when he was in his agony, and one of the three spoken of by the apostle Paul, as the three main pillars of the Christian church; but was favored above all, in being admitted to lean on his Master's bosom at his last supper, and in being chosen by Christ, as the disciple to whom he would reveal his wonderful dispensations towards his church, to the end of time; as we have an account in the Book of Revelation; and to shut up the canon of the New Testament, and of the whole Scripture; being preserved much longer than all the rest of the apostles, to set all things in order in the Christian church, after their death.

It is evident by all his writings (as is generally observed by divines) that he was a person remarkably full of affection: his addresses to those whom he wrote to being inexpressibly tender and pathetic, breathing nothing but the most fervent love; as though he were all made up of sweet and holy affection. The proofs of which cannot be given without disadvantage, unless we should transcribe his whole writings.

**7.** He whom God sent into the world to be the light of the world, and head of the whole church, and the perfect example of true religion and virtue, for the imitation of all, the Shepherd whom the whole flock should follow wherever he goes, even the Lord Jesus Christ, was a person who was remarkably of a tender and affectionate heart; and his virtue was expressed very much in the exercise of holy affections. He was the greatest instance of ardency, vigor and strength of love, to both God and man, that ever was. It was these affections which got the victory, in that mighty struggle and conflict of his affections, in his agonies, when "he prayed more earnestly, and offered strong crying and tears," and wrestled in tears and in blood. Such was the power of the exercises of his holy love, that they were stronger than death, and in that great struggle, overcame those strong exercises of the natural affections of fear and grief, when he was sore amazed, and his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. And he also appeared to be full of affection in the course of his life. We read of his great zeal, fulfilling that in the 69th Psalm, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up," <sup><107></sup> John 2:17. We read of his grief for the sins of men, <sup><105></sup> Mark 3:5: "He looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts;" and his breaking forth in tears and

exclamations, from the consideration of the sin and misery of ungodly men and on the sight of the city of Jerusalem, which was full of such inhabitants, <sup><0941></sup>Luke 19:41, 42: “And, when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes.” With chap. <sup><0134></sup>13:34, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!” We read of Christ’s earnest desire, <sup><0225></sup>Luke 22:15: “With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.” We often read of the affection of pity or compassion in Christ, <sup><0152></sup>Matthew 15:32, and <sup><0184></sup>18:34. <sup><0173></sup>Luke 7:13, and of his “being moved with compassion,” <sup><0095></sup>Matthew 9:36, and <sup><0144></sup>14:14, and <sup><0165></sup>Mark 6:34. And how tender did his heart appear to be, on occasion of Mary’s and Martha’s mourning for their brother, and coming to him with their complaints and tears! Their tears soon drew tears from his eyes he was affected with their grief, and wept with them; though he knew their sorrow should so soon be turned into joy, by their brother’s being raised from the dead; see John 11. And how ineffably affectionate was that last and dying discourse, which Jesus had with his eleven disciples the evening before he was crucified; when he told them he was going away, and foretold them the great difficulties and sufferings they should meet with in the world, when he was gone; and comforted and counseled them as his dear little children; and bequeathed to them his Holy Spirit, and therein his peace, and his comfort and joy, as it were in his last will and testament, in the 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of John; and concluded the whole with that affectionate intercessory prayer for them, and his whole church, in chap. 17. Of all the discourses ever penned, or uttered by the mouth of any man, this seems to be the most affectionate and affecting.

## **8. The religion of heaven consists very much in affection.**

There is doubtless true religion in heaven, and true religion in its utmost purity and perfection. But according to the Scripture representation of the heavenly state, the religion of heaven consists chiefly in holy and mighty love and joy, and the expression of these in most fervent and exalted praises. So that the religion of the saints in heaven, consists in the same things with that religion of the saints on earth, which is spoken of in our

text, viz., love, and “joy unspeakable and full of glory.” Now it would be very foolish to pretend, that because the saints in heaven be not united to flesh and blood, and have no animal fluids to be moved (through the laws of union of soul and body) with those great emotions of their souls, that therefore their exceeding love and joy are no affections. We are not speaking of the affections of the body, but of the affections of the soul, the chief of which are love and joy. When these are in the soul, whether that be in the body or out of it, the soul is affected and moved. And when they are in the soul, in that strength in which they are in the saints in heaven, the soul is mightily affected and moved, or, which is the same thing, has great affections. It is true, we do not experimentally know what love and joy are in a soul out of a body, or in a glorified body; i.e., we have not had experience of love and joy in a soul in these circumstances; but the saints on earth do know what divine love and joy in the soul are, and they know that love and joy are of the same kind with the love and joy which are in heaven, in separate souls there. The love and joy of the saints on earth, is the beginning and dawning of the light, life, and blessedness of heaven, and is like their love and joy there; or rather, the same in nature, though not the same with it, or like to it, in degree and circumstances. This is evident by many Scriptures, as <sup>4018</sup>Proverbs 4:18; <sup>4014</sup>John 4:14, and chap. <sup>4160</sup>6:40, 47, 50, 51, 54, 58; <sup>4166</sup>1 John 3:16; <sup>4138</sup>1 Corinthians 13:8-12. It is unreasonable therefore to suppose, that the love and joy of the saints in heaven, not only differ in degree and circumstances, from the holy love and joy of the saints on earth, but is so entirely different in nature, that they are no affections; and merely because they have no blood and animal spirits to be set in motion by them, which motion of the blood and animal spirits is not of the essence of these affections, in men on the earth, but the effect of them; although by their reaction they may make some circumstantial difference in the sensation of the mind. There is a sensation of the mind which loves and rejoices, that is antecedent to any effects on the fluids of the body; and this sensation of the mind, therefore, does not depend on these motions in the body, and so may be in the soul without the body. And wherever there are the exercises of love and joy, there is that sensation of the mind, whether it be in the body or out; and that inward sensation, or kind of spiritual sense, or feeling, and motion of the soul, is what is called affection: the soul when it thus feels (if I may say so), and is thus moved, is said to be affected, and especially when this

inward sensation and motion are to a very high degree, as they are in the saints in heaven. If we can learn anything of the state of heaven from the Scripture, the love and joy that the saints have there, is exceeding great and vigorous; impressing the heart with the strongest and most lively sensation of inexpressible sweetness, mightily moving, animating and engaging them, making them like a flame of fire. And if such love and joy be not affections, then the word affection is of no use in language. Will any say, that the saints in heaven, in beholding the face of their Father, and the glory of their Redeemer, and contemplating his wonderful works, and particularly his laying down his life for them, have their hearts nothing moved and affected by all which they behold or consider?

Hence, therefore, the religion of heaven, consisting chiefly in holy love and joy, consists very much in affection; and therefore, undoubtedly, true religion consists very much in affection. The way to learn the true nature of anything, is to go where that thing is to be found in its purity and perfection. If we would know the nature of true gold we must view it, not in the ore, but when it is refined. If we would learn what true religion is, we must go where there is true religion, and nothing but true religion, and in its highest perfection, without any defect or mixture. All who are truly religious are not of this world, they are strangers here, and belong to heaven; they are born from above, heaven is their native country, and the nature which they receive by this heavenly birth, is a heavenly nature, they receive an anointing from above; that principle of true religion which is in them, is a communication of the religion of heaven; their grace is the dawn of glory; and God fits them for that world by conforming them to it.

**9.** This appears from the nature and design of the ordinances and duties, which God hath appointed, as means and expressions of true religion.

To instance in the duty of prayer: it is manifest, we are not appointed in this duty, to declare God's perfections, his majesty, holiness, goodness, and all-sufficiency, and our own meanness, emptiness, dependence, and unworthiness, and our wants and desires, to inform God of these things, or to incline his heart, and prevail with him to be willing to show us mercy; but suitably to affect our own hearts with the things we express, and so to prepare us to receive the blessings we ask. And such gestures and manner of external behavior in the worship of God, which custom has made to be

significations of humility and reverence, can be of no further use than as they have some tendency to affect our own hearts, or the hearts of others.

And the duty of singing praises to God seems to be appointed wholly to excite and express religious affections. No other reason can be assigned why we should express ourselves to God in verse, rather than in prose, and do it with music but only, that such is our nature and frame, that these things have a tendency to move our affections.

The same thing appears in the nature and design of the sacraments, which God hath appointed. God, considering our frame, hath not only appointed that we should be told of the great things of the gospel, and of the redemption of Christ, and instructed in them by his word; but also that they should be, as it were, exhibited to our view, in sensible representations, in the sacraments, the more to affect us with them.

And the impressing divine things on the hearts and affections of men, is evidently one great and main end for which God has ordained that his word delivered in the holy Scriptures, should be opened, applied, and set home upon men, in preaching. And therefore it does not answer the aim which God had in this institution, merely for men to have good commentaries and expositions on the Scripture, and other good books of divinity; because, although these may tend as well as preaching to give men a good doctrinal or speculative understanding of the things of the word of God, yet they have not an equal tendency to impress them on men's hearts and affections. God hath appointed a particular and lively application of his word to men in the preaching of it, as a fit means to affect sinners with the importance of the things of religion, and their own misery, and necessity of a remedy, and the glory and sufficiency of a remedy provided; and to stir up the pure minds of the saints, and quicken their affections, by often bringing the great things of religion to their remembrance, and setting them before them in their proper colors, though they know them, and have been fully instructed in them already, <sup>and</sup> 2 Peter 1:12, 13. And particularly, to promote those two affections in them, which are spoken of in the text, love and joy: "Christ gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; that the body of Christ might be edified in love," <sup>and</sup> Ephesians 4:11, 12, 16. The apostle in instructing and counseling Timothy concerning

the work of the ministry, informs him that the great end of that word which a minister is to preach, is love or charity, <sup><5411></sup>1 Timothy 3, 4, 5. And another affection which God has appointed preaching as a means to promote in the saints, is joy; and therefore ministers are called “helpers of their joy,” <sup><4102></sup>2 Corinthians 1:24.

10. It is an evidence that true religion, or holiness of heart, lies very much in the affection of the heart, that the Scriptures place the sin of the heart very much in hardness of heart. Thus the Scriptures do everywhere. It was hardness of heart which excited grief and displeasure in Christ towards the Jews, <sup><4015></sup>Mark 3:5: “He looked round about on them, with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts.” It is from men’s having such a heart as this, that they treasure up wrath for themselves: <sup><4015></sup>Romans 2:5, “After thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.” The reason given why the house of Israel would not obey God, was, that they were hardhearted: <sup><2007></sup>Ezekiel 3:7, “But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hard-hearted.” The wickedness of that perverse rebellious generation in the wilderness, is ascribed to the hardness of their hearts: <sup><1907></sup>Psalms 95:7-10, “To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness; when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work: forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart,” etc. This is spoken of as what prevented Zedekiah’s turning to the Lord: <sup><1413></sup>2 Chronicles 36:13, “He stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning to the Lord God of Israel.” This principle is spoken of, as that from whence men are without the fear of God, and depart from God’s ways: <sup><2517></sup>Isaiah 63:17, “O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways and hardened our heart from thy fear?” And men’s rejecting Christ, and opposing Christianity, is laid to this principle: <sup><4119></sup>Acts 19:9, “But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude.” God’s leaving men to the power of the sin and corruption of the heart is often expressed by God’s hardening their hearts: <sup><4118></sup>Romans 9:18, “Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.” <sup><4124></sup>John 12:40, “He hath blinded their minds, and hardened their hearts.” And the apostle

seems to speak of “an evil heart that departs from the living God, and a hard heart,” as the same thing: <sup><332B></sup>Hebrews 3:8, “Harden not your heart, as in the provocation,” etc.; ver. 12, 13, “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God: but exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” And that great work of God in conversion, which consists in delivering a person from the power of sin, and mortifying corruption, is expressed, once and again, by God’s “taking away the heart of stone, and giving a heart of flesh,” <sup><331B></sup>Ezekiel 11:19, and chap. <sup><332B></sup>36:26.

Now by a hard heart, is plainly meant an unaffected heart, or a heart not easy to be moved with virtuous affections, like a stone, insensible, stupid, unmoved, and hard to be impressed. Hence the hard heart is called a *stony heart*, and is opposed to a heart of flesh, that has feeling, and is sensibly touched and moved. We read in Scripture of a hard heart, and a tender heart; and doubtless we are to understand these, as contrary the one to the other. But what is a tender heart, but a heart which is easily impressed with what ought to affect it? God commends Josiah, because his heart was tender; and it is evident by those things which are mentioned as expressions and evidences of this tenderness of heart, that by his heart being tender is meant, his heart being easily moved with religious and pious affection: <sup><332B></sup>2 Kings 22:19, “Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me, I also have heard thee, saith the Lord.” And this is one thing, wherein it is necessary we should “become as little children, in order to our entering into the kingdom of God,” even that we should have our hearts tender, and easily affected and moved in spiritual and divine things, as little children have in other things.

It is very plain in some places, in the texts themselves, that by hardness of heart is meant a heart void of affection. So, to signify the ostrich’s being without natural affection to her young, it is said, <sup><332B></sup>Job 39:16, “She hardeneth her heart against her young ones, as though they were not hers.” So a person having a heart unaffected in time of danger, is expressed by his



hardening his heart: ~~1884~~ Proverbs 28:14, “Happy is the man that feareth alway; but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.”

Now, therefore, since it is so plain, that by a hard heart, in Scripture, is meant a heart destitute of pious affections, and since also the Scriptures do so frequently place the sin and corruption of the heart in hardness of heart; it is evident, that the grace and holiness of the heart, on the contrary, must, in a great measure, consist in its having pious affections, and being easily susceptible of such affection. Divines are generally agreed, that sin radically and fundamentally consist in what is negative, or privative, having its root and foundation in a privation or want of holiness. And therefore undoubtedly, if it be so that sin does very much consist in hardness of hearts and so in the want of pious affections of heart, holiness does consist very much in those pious affections.

I am far from supposing that all affections do show a tender heart: hatred, anger, vainglory, and other selfish and self-exalting affections, may greatly prevail in the hardest heart. But yet it is evident, that hardness of heart and tenderness of heart, are expressions that relate to the affection of the heart, and denote the heart's being susceptible of, or shut up against certain affections; of which I shall have occasion to speak more afterwards.

Upon the whole, I think it clearly and abundantly evident, that true religion lies very much in the affections. Not that I think these arguments prove, that religion in the hearts of the truly godly, is ever in exact proportion to the degree of affection, and present emotion of the mind: for undoubtedly, there is much affection in the true saints which is not spiritual; their religious affections are often mixed; all is not from grace, but much from nature. And though the affections have not their seat in the body; yet the constitution of the body may very much contribute to the present emotion of the mind. And the degree of religion is rather to be judged of by the fixedness and strength of the habit that is exercised in affection, whereby holy affection is habitual, than by the degree of the present exercise; and the strength of that habit is not always in proportion to outward effects and manifestations, or inward effects, in the hurry and vehemence, and sudden changes of the course of the thoughts of the mind. But yet it is evident, that religion consists so much in affection, as that without holy affection there is no true religion; and no light in the

understanding is good, which does not produce holy affection in the heart: no habit or principle in the heart is good, which has no such exercise; and no external fruit is good, which does not proceed from such exercises.

Having thus considered the evidence of the proposition laid down, I proceed to some inferences.

**1.** We may hence learn how great their error is, who are for discarding all religious affections, as having nothing solid or substantial in them.

There seems to be too much of a disposition this way, prevailing in this land at this time. Because many who, in the late extraordinary season, appeared to have great religious affections, did not manifest a right temper of mind, and run into many errors, in the time of their affections, and the heat of their zeal; and because the high affections of many seem to be so soon come to nothing, and some who seemed to be mightily raised and swallowed up with joy and zeal, for a while, seem to have returned like the dog to his vomit; hence religious affections in general are grown out of credit with great numbers, as though true religion did not at all consist in them. Thus we easily and naturally run from one extreme to another. A little while ago we were in the other extreme; there was a prevalent disposition to look upon all high religious affections as eminent exercises of true grace, without much inquiring into the nature and source of those affections, and the manner in which they arose: if persons did but appear to be indeed very much moved and raised, so as to be full of religious talk, and express themselves with great warmth and earnestness, and to be filled, or to be very full, as the phrases were; it was too much the manner, without further examination, to conclude such persons were full of the Spirit of God, and had eminent experience of his gracious influences. This was the extreme which was prevailing three or four years ago. But of late, instead of esteeming and admiring all religious affections without distinction, it is a thing much more prevalent, to reject and discard all without distinction. Herein appears the subtlety of Satan. While he saw that affections were much in vogue, knowing the greater part of the land were not versed in such things, and had not had much experience of great religious affections to enable them to judge well of them, and distinguish between true and false: then he knew he could best play his game, by sowing tares amongst the wheat, and mingling false affections with the

works of God's Spirit: he knew this to be a likely way to delude and eternally ruin many souls, and greatly to wound religion in the saints, and entangle them in a dreadful wilderness, and by and by, to bring all religion into disrepute.

But now, when the ill consequences of these false affections appear, and it is become very apparent, that some of those emotions which made a glaring show, and were by many greatly admired, were in reality nothing; the devil sees it to be for his interest to go another way to work, and to endeavor to his utmost to propagate and establish a persuasion, that all affections and sensible emotions of the mind, in things of religion, are nothing at all to be regarded, but are rather to be avoided, and carefully guarded against, as things of a pernicious tendency. This he knows is the way to bring all religion to a mere lifeless formality, and effectually shut out the power of godliness, and everything which is spiritual, and to have all true Christianity turned out of doors. For although to true religion there must indeed be something else besides affection; yet true religion consists so much in the affections, that there can be no true religion without them. He who has no religious affection, is in a state of spiritual death, and is wholly destitute of the powerful, quickening, saving influences of the Spirit of God upon his heart. As there is no true religion where there is nothing else but affection, so there is no true religion where there is no religious affection. As on the one hand, there must be light in the understanding, as well as an affected fervent heart; where there is heat without light, there can be nothing divine or heavenly in that heart; so on the other hand, where there is a kind of light without heat, a head stored with notions and speculations, with a cold and unaffected heart, there can be nothing divine in that light, that knowledge is no true spiritual knowledge of divine things. If the great things of religion are rightly understood, they will affect the heart. The reason why men are not affected by such infinitely great, important, glorious, and wonderful things, as they often hear and read of, in the word of God, is undoubtedly because they are blind; if they were not so, it would be impossible, and utterly inconsistent with human nature, that their hearts should be otherwise than strongly impressed, and greatly moved by such things.

This manner of slighting all religious affections, is the way exceedingly to harden the hearts of men, and to encourage them in their stupidity and

senselessness, and to keep them in a state of spiritual death as long as they live, and bring them at last to death eternal. The prevailing prejudice against religious affections at this day, in the land, is apparently of awful effect to harden the hearts of sinners, and damp the graces of many of the saints, and stun the life and power of religion, and preclude the effect of ordinances, and hold us down in a state of dullness and apathy, and undoubtedly causes many persons greatly to offend God, in entertaining mean and low thoughts of the extraordinary work he has lately wrought in this land.

And for persons to despise and cry down all religious affections, is the way to shut all religion out of their own hearts, and to make thorough work in ruining their souls.

They who condemn high affections in others, are certainly not likely to have high affections themselves. And let it be considered, that they who have but little religious affection, have certainly but little religion. And they who condemn others for their religious affections, and have none themselves, have no religion.

There are false affections, and there are true. A man's having much affection, does not prove that he has any true religion: but if he has no affection it proves that he has no true religion. The right way, is not to reject all affections, nor to approve all; but to distinguish between affections, approving some, and rejecting others; separating between the wheat and the chaff, the gold and the dross, the precious and the vile.

**2.** If it be so, that true religion lies much in the affections, hence we may infer, that such means are to be desired, as have much of a tendency to move the affections. Such books, and such a way of preaching the word, and administration of ordinances, and such a way of worshipping God in prayer, and singing praises, is much to be desired, as has a tendency deeply to affect the hearts of those who attend these means.

Such a kind of means would formerly have been highly approved of, and applauded by the generality of the people of the land, as the most excellent and profitable, and having the greatest tendency to promote the ends of the means of grace. But the prevailing taste seems of late strangely to be altered: that pathetical manner of praying and preaching, which

would formerly have been admired and extolled, and that for this reason, because it had such a tendency to move the affections, now, in great multitudes, immediately excites disgust, and moves no other affections, that those of displeasure and contempt.

Perhaps, formerly the generality (at least of the common people) were in the extreme, of looking too much to an affectionate address, in public performances: but now, a very great part of the people seem to have gone far into a contrary extreme. Indeed there may be such means, as may have a great tendency to stir up the passions of weak and ignorant persons, and yet have no great tendency to benefit their souls: for though they may have a tendency to excite affections, they may have little or none to excite gracious affections, or any affections tending to grace. But undoubtedly, if the things of religion, in the means used, are treated according to their nature, and exhibited truly, so as tends to convey just apprehensions, and a right judgment of them; the more they have a tendency to move the affections the better.

**3.** If true religion lies much in the affections, hence we may learn, what great cause we have to be ashamed and confounded before God, that we are no more affected with the great things of religion. It appears from what has been said, that this arises from our having so little true religion.

God has given to mankind affections, for the same purpose which he has given all the faculties and principles of the human soul for, viz., that they might be subservient to man's chief end, and the great business for which God has created him, that is, the business of religion. And yet how common is it among mankind, that their affections are much more exercised and engaged in other matters, than in religion! In things which concern men's worldly interest, their outward delights, their honor and reputation, and their natural relations, they have their desires eager, their appetites vehement, their love warm and affectionate, their zeal ardent; in these things their hearts are tender and sensible, easily moved, deeply impressed, much concerned, very sensibly affected, and greatly engaged; much depressed with grief at worldly losses, and highly raised with joy at worldly successes and prosperity. But how insensible and unmoved are most men, about the great things of another world! How dull are their affections! How heavy and hard their hearts in these matters! Here their

love is cold, their desires languid, their zeal low, and their gratitude small. How they can sit and hear of the infinite height, and depth, and length, and breadth of the love of God in Christ Jesus, of his giving his infinitely dear Son, to be offered up a sacrifice for the sins of men, and of the unparalleled love of the innocent, and holy, and tender Lamb of God, manifested in his dying agonies, his bloody sweat, his loud and bitter cries, and bleeding heart, and all this for enemies, to redeem them from deserved, eternal burnings, and to bring to unspeakable and everlasting joy and glory; and yet be cold, and heavy, insensible, and regardless! Where are the exercises of our affections proper, if not here? What is it that does more require them? And what can be a fit occasion of their lively and vigorous exercise, if not such a one as this? Can anything be set in our view, greater and more important? Any thing more wonderful and surprising? Or more nearly concerning our interest? Can we suppose the wise Creator implanted such principles in the human nature as the affections, to be of use to us, and to be exercised on certain proper occasions, but to lie still on such an occasion as this? Can any Christian who believes the truth of these things, entertain such thoughts?

If we ought ever to exercise our affections at all, and if the Creator has not unwisely constituted the human nature in making these principles a part of it, when they are vain and useless; then they ought to be exercised about those objects which are most worthy of them. But is there anything which Christians can find in heaven or earth, so worthy to be the objects of their admiration and love, their earnest and longing desires, their hope, and their rejoicing, and their fervent zeal, as those things that are held forth to us in the gospel of Jesus Christ? In which not only are things declared most worthy to affect us, but they are exhibited in the most affecting manner. The glory and beauty of the blessed Jehovah, which is most worthy in itself, to be the object of our admiration and love, is there exhibited in the most affecting manner that can be conceived of, as it appears, shining in all its luster, in the face of an incarnate, infinitely loving, meek, compassionate, dying Redeemer. All the virtues of the Lamb of God, his humility, patience, meekness, submission, obedience, love and compassion, are exhibited to our view, in a manner the most tending to move our affections, of any that can be imagined; as they all had their greatest trial, and their highest exercise, and so their brightest

manifestation, when he was in the most affecting circumstances; even when he was under his last sufferings, those unutterable and unparalleled sufferings he endured, from his tender love and pity to us. There also the hateful nature of our sins is manifested in the most affecting manner possible: as we see the dreadful effects of them, in that our Redeemer, who undertook to answer for us, suffered for them. And there we have the most affecting manifestation of God's hatred of sin, and his wrath and justice in punishing it; as we see his justice in the strictness and inflexibleness of it; and his wrath in its terribleness, in so dreadfully punishing our sins, in one who was infinitely dear to him, and loving to us. So has God disposed things, in the affair of our redemption, and in his glorious dispensations, revealed to us in the gospel, as though everything were purposely contrived in such a manner, as to have the greatest possible tendency to reach our hearts in the most tender part, and move our affections most sensibly and strongly. How great cause have we therefore to be humbled to the dust, that we are no more affected!

## PART 2

### SHOWING WHAT ARE NO CERTAIN SIGNS THAT RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS ARE GRACIOUS, OR THAT THEY ARE NOT

If anyone, on the reading of what has been just now said, is ready to acquit himself, and say, “I am not one of those who have no religious affections; I am often greatly moved with the consideration of the great things of religion:” let him not content himself with this, that he has religious affections: for as we observed before, as we ought not to reject and condemn all affections, as though true religion did not at all consist in affection; so on the other hand, we ought not to approve of all, as though everyone that was religiously affected had true grace, and was therein the subject of the saving influences of the Spirit of God; and that therefore the right way is to distinguish among religious affections, between one sort and another. Therefore let us now endeavor to do this; and in order to do it, I would do two things.

**I.** I would mention some things, which are no signs one way or the other, either that affections are such as true religion consists in, or that they are otherwise; that we may be guarded against judging of affections by false signs.

**II.** I would observe some things, wherein those affections which are spiritual and gracious, differ from those which are not so, and may be distinguished and known.

**First,** I would take notice of some things, which are no signs that affect titans are gracious, or that they are not.

It is no sign one way or the other, that religious affections are very great, or raised very high.

Some are ready to condemn all high affections: if persons appear to have their religious affections raised to an extraordinary pitch, they are prejudiced against them, and determine that they are delusions, without further inquiry. But if it be, as has been proved, that true religion lies very much in religious affections, then it follows, that if there be a great deal of



true religion, there will be great religious affections; if true religion in the hearts of men be raised to a great height, divine and holy affections will be raised to a great height.

Love is an affection, but will any Christian say, men ought not to love God and Jesus Christ in a high degree? And will any say, we ought not to have a very great hatred of sin, and a very deep sorrow for it? Or that we ought not to exercise a high degree of gratitude to God for the mercies we receive of him, and the great things he has done for the salvation of fallen men? Or that we should not have very great and strong desires after God and holiness? Is there any who will profess, that his affections in religion are great enough; and will say, “I have no cause to be humbled, that I am no more affected with the things of religion than I am; I have no reason to be ashamed, that I have no greater exercises of love to God and sorrow for sin, and gratitude for the mercies which I have received?” Who is there that will bless God that he is affected enough with what he has read and heard of the wonderful love of God to worms and rebels, in giving his only begotten Son to die for them, and of the dying love of Christ; and will pray that he may not be affected with them in any higher degree, because high affections are improper and very unlovely in Christians, being enthusiastical, and ruinous to true religion?

Our text plainly speaks of great and high affections when it speaks of “rejoicing with joy unspeakable, and full of glory:” here the most superlative expressions are used, which language will afford. And the Scriptures often require us to exercise very high affections: thus in the first and great commandment of the law, there is an accumulation of expressions, as though words were wanting to express the degree in which we ought to love God: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.” So the saints are called upon to exercise high degrees of joy: “Rejoice,” says Christ to his disciples, “and be exceeding glad,” <sup><112></sup>Matthew 5:12. So it is said, <sup><111></sup>Psalms 68:3, “Let the righteous be glad: let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.” So in the book of Psalms, the saints are often called upon to shout for joy; and in <sup><112></sup>Luke 6:23, to leap for joy. So they are abundantly called upon to exercise high degrees of gratitude for mercies, to “praise God with all their hearts, with hearts lifted up in the

ways of the Lord, and their souls magnifying the Lord, singing his praises, talking of his wondrous works, declaring his doings, etc.”

And we find the most eminent saints in Scripture often professing high affections. Thus the Psalmist speaks of his love, as if it were unspeakable; <sup><489></sup>Psalm 119:97, “O how love I thy law!” So he expresses a great degree of hatred of sin, <sup><490></sup>Psalm 139:21, 29: “Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? And am not I grieved with them that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred.” He also expresses a high degree of sorrow for sin: he speaks of his sins “going over his head as a heavy burden that was too heavy for him: and of his roaring all the day, and his moisture being turned into the drought of summer,” and his bones being as it were broken with sorrow. So he often expresses great degrees of spiritual desires, in a multitude of the strongest expressions which can be conceived of; such as “his longing, his soul’s thirsting as a dry and thirsty land, where no water is, his panting, his flesh and heart crying out, his soul’s breaking for the longing it hath,” etc. He expresses the exercises of great and extreme grief for the sins of others, <sup><491></sup>Psalm 119:136, “Rivers of water run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.” And verse 53, “Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law.” He expresses high exercises of joy, <sup><492></sup>Psalm 21:1: “The king shall joy in thy strength, and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice.” <sup><493></sup>Psalm 71:23 “My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee.” <sup><494></sup>Psalm 63:3, 4, 5, 6, 7, “Because thy loving kindness is better than life; my lips shall praise thee, Thus will I bless thee, while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips; when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help; therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.”

The Apostle Paul expresses high exercises of affection. Thus he expresses the exercises of pity and concern for others’ good, even to anguish of heart; a great, fervent, and abundant love, and earnest and longing desires, and exceeding joy; and speaks of the exultation and triumphs of his soul, and his earnest expectation and hope, and his abundant tears, and the travails of his soul, in pity, grief, earnest desires, godly jealousy, and fervent zeal, in many places that have been cited already, and which therefore I need not repeat. John the Baptist expressed great joy, <sup><495></sup>John

3:39. Those blessed women that anointed the body of Jesus, are represented as in a very high exercise of religious affection, on occasion of Christ's resurrection, <sup><488></sup>Matthew 28:8: "And they departed from the sepulcher with fear and great joy."

It is often foretold of the church of God, in her future happy seasons here on earth, that they shall exceedingly rejoice: <sup><488></sup>Psalms 89:15, 16, "They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted."

<sup><309></sup>Zechariah 9:9, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh," etc. The same is represented in innumerable other places. And because high degrees of joy are the proper and genuine fruits of the gospel of Christ, therefore the angel calls this gospel, "good tidings of great joy, that should be to all people."

The saints and angels in heaven, that have religion in its highest perfection, are exceedingly affected with what they behold and contemplate of God's perfections and works. They are all as a pure heavenly flame of fire in their love and in the greatness and strength of their joy and gratitude: their praises are represented, "as the voice of many waters and as the voice of a great thunder." Now the only reason why their affections are so much higher than the holy affections of saints on earth, is, they see the things they are affected by, more according to their truth, and have their affections more conformed to the nature of things. And therefore, if religious affections in men here below, are but of the same nature and kind with theirs, the higher they are, and the nearer they are to theirs in degree, the better, because therein they will be so much the more conformed to truth, as theirs are.

From these things it certainly appears, that religious affections being in a very high degree, is no evidence that they are not such as have the nature of true religion. Therefore they do greatly err, who condemn persons as enthusiasts merely because their affections are very high.

And on the other hand, it is no evidence that religious affections are of a spiritual and gracious nature, because they are great. It is very manifest by the holy Scripture, our sure and infallible rule to judge of things of this nature, that there are religious affections which are very high, that are not spiritual and saving. The Apostle Paul speaks of affections in the

Galatians, which had been exceedingly elevated, and which yet he manifestly speaks of, as fearing that they were vain, and had come to nothing: <sup><RHS</sup>Galatians 4:15, “Where is the blessedness you spoke of? For I bear you record, that if it had been possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.” And in the 11th verse, he tells them, “he was afraid of them, lest he had bestowed upon them labor in vain.” So the children of Israel were greatly affected with God’s mercy to them, when they had seen how wonderfully he wrought for them at the Red Sea, where they sang God’s praise; though they soon forgot his works. So they were greatly affected again at mount Sinai, when they saw the marvelous manifestations God made of himself there; and seemed mightily engaged in their minds, and with great forwardness made answer, when God proposed his holy covenant to them, saying, “All that the Lord hath spoken will we do, and be obedient.” But how soon was there an end to all this mighty forwardness and engagedness of affection! How quickly were they turned aside after other gods, rejoicing and shouting around their golden calf! So great multitudes who were affected with the miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead, were elevated to a high degree, and made a mighty ado, when Jesus presently after entered into Jerusalem, exceedingly magnifying Christ, as though the ground were not good enough for the ass he rode to tread upon; and therefore cut branches of palm trees, and strewed them in the way; yea, pulled off their garments, and spread them in the way; and cried with loud voices, “Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, hosanna in the highest;” so as to make the whole city ring again, and put all into an uproar. We learn by the evangelist John, that the reason why the people made this ado, was because they were affected with the miracle of raising Lazarus, <sup><RHS</sup>John 12:18. Here was a vast multitude crying Hosanna on this occasion, so that it gave occasion to the Pharisees to say, “Behold, the world has gone after him,” <sup><RHS</sup>John 12:19, but Christ had at that time but few true disciples. And how quickly was this ado at an end! All of this nature is quelled and dead, when this Jesus stands bound, with a mock robe and a crown of thorns, to be derided, spit upon, scourged, condemned and executed. Indeed, there was a great and loud outcry concerning him among the multitude then, as well as before; but of a very different kind: it is not then, Hosanna, hosanna, but Crucify, crucify.

And it is the concurring voice of all orthodox divines, that there may be religious affections, which are raised to a very high degree, and yet there be nothing of true religion.<sup>1</sup>

**II.** It is no sign that affections have the nature of true religion, or that they have not, that they have great effects on the body.

All affections whatsoever, have in some respect or degree, an effect on the body. As was observed before, such is our nature, and such are the laws of union of soul and body, that the mind can have no lively or vigorous exercise, without some effect upon the body. So subject is the body to the mind, and so much do its fluids, especially the animal spirits, attend the motions and exercises of the mind, that there cannot be so much as an intense thought, without an effect upon them. Yea, it is questionable whether an imbodied soul ever so much as thinks one thought, or has any exercise at all, but that there is some corresponding motion or alteration of motion, in some degree, of the fluids, in some part of the body. But universal experience shows, that the exercise of the affections have in a special manner a tendency to some sensible effect upon the body. And if this be so, that all affections have some effect upon the body, we may then well suppose, the greater those affections be, and the more vigorous their exercise (other circumstances being equal) the greater will be the effect on the body. Hence it is not to be wondered at, that very great and strong exercises of the affections should have great effects on the body. And therefore, seeing there are very great affections, both common and spiritual; hence it is not to be wondered at, that great effects on the body should arise from both these kinds of affections. And consequently these effects are no signs, that the affections they arise from, are of one kind or the other.

Great effects on the body certainly are no sure evidences that affections are spiritual; for we see that such effects oftentimes arise from great affections about temporal things, and when religion is no way concerned in them. And if great affections about secular things, that are purely natural, may have these effects, I know not by what rule we should determine that high affections about religious things, which arise in like manner from nature, cannot have the like effect.

Nor, on the other hand, do I know of any rule any have to determine, that gracious and holy affections, when raised as high as any natural affections, and have equally strong and vigorous exercises, cannot have a great effect on the body. No such rule can be drawn from reason: I know of no reason, why a being affected with a view of God's glory should not cause the body to faint, as well as being affected with a view of Solomon's glory. And no such rule has as yet been produced from the Scripture; none has ever been found in all the late controversies which have been about things of this nature. There is a great power in spiritual affections: we read of the power which worketh in Christians, <sup>2</sup> and of the Spirit of God being in them as the Spirit of power, <sup>3</sup> and of the effectual working of his power in them. <sup>4</sup> But man's nature is weak: flesh and blood are represented in Scripture as exceeding weak; and particularly with respect to its unfitness for great spiritual and heavenly operations and exercises, <sup>1</sup> Matthew 26:41, <sup>2</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:43, and 50. The text we are upon speaks of "joy unspeakable, and full of glory." And who that considers what man's nature is, and what the nature of the affections is, can reasonably doubt but that such unutterable and glorious joys, may be too great and mighty for weak dust and ashes, so as to be considerably overbearing to it? It is evident by the Scripture that true divine discoveries, or ideas of God's glory, when given in a great degree have a tendency, by affecting the mind, to overbear the body; because the Scripture teaches us often, that if these ideas or views should be given to such a degree as they are given in heaven, the weak frame of the body could not subsist under it, and that no man can, in that manner, see God and live. The knowledge which the saints have of God's beauty and glory in this world, and those holy affections that arise from it, are of the same nature and kind with what the saints are the subjects of in heaven, differing only in degree and circumstances: what God gives them here, is a foretaste of heavenly happiness, and an earnest of their future inheritance. And who shall limit God in his giving this earnest, or say he shall give so much of the inheritance, such a part of the future reward as an earnest of the whole, and no more? And seeing God has taught us in his word, that the whole reward is such, that it would at once destroy the body, is it not too bold a thing for us, so to set bounds to the sovereign God, as to say that in giving the earnest of this reward in this world, he shall never give so much of it, as in the least to diminish the strength of the body, when God has nowhere thus limited himself?

The Psalmist, speaking of the vehement religious affections he had, speaks of an effect in his flesh or body, besides what was in his soul, expressly distinguishing one from the other, once and again: <sup><3812></sup>Psalm 84:2, “My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.” Here is a plain distinction between the heart and the flesh, as being each affected. So <sup><3811></sup>Psalm 63:1, “My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.” Here also is an evident designed distinction between the soul and the flesh.

The prophet Habakkuk speaks of his bodies being overborne by a sense of the majesty of God, <sup><3816></sup>Habakkuk 3:16: “When I heard, my belly trembled: my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness enter into my bones, and I trembled in myself.” So the Psalmist speaks expressly of his flesh trembling, <sup><3810></sup>Psalm 119:120: My flesh trembleth for fear of thee.”

That such ideas of God’s glory as are sometimes given in this world, have a tendency to overhear the body, is evident, because the Scripture gives us an account, that this has sometimes actually been the effect of those external manifestations God has made of himself to some of the saints which were made to that end, viz., to give them an idea of God’s majesty and glory. Such instances we have in the prophet Daniel, and the apostle John. Daniel, giving an account of an external representation of the glory of Christ, says, <sup><2708></sup>Daniel 10:8, “And there remained no strength in me; for my comeliness was turned into corruption, and I retained no strength.” And the apostle John, giving an account of the manifestation made to him, says, <sup><4017></sup>Revelation 1:17, “And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead.” It is in vain to say here, these were only external manifestations or symbols of the glory of Christ, which these saints beheld: for though it be true, that they were outward representations of Christ’s glory, which they beheld with their bodily eyes; yet the end and use of these external symbols are representations was to give to these prophets an idea of the thing represented, and that was the true divine glory and majesty of Christ, which is his spiritual glory; they were made use of only as significations of this spiritual glory, and thus undoubtedly they received them, and improved them, and were affected by them. According to the end for which God intended these outward signs, they received by them a great and lively apprehension of the real glory and majesty of God’s

nature, which they were signs of; and thus were greatly affected, their souls swallowed up, and their bodies overborne. And I think they are very bold and daring, who will say God cannot, or shall not give the like clear and affecting ideas and apprehensions of the same real glory and majesty of his nature, to any of his saints, without the intervention of any such external shadows of it.

Before I leave this head, I would farther observe, that it is plain the Scripture often makes use of bodily effects, to express the strength of holy and spiritual affections; such as trembling, <sup>5</sup> groaning, <sup>6</sup> being sick, <sup>7</sup> crying out, <sup>8</sup> panting, <sup>9</sup> and fainting. <sup>10</sup> Now if it be supposed, that these are only figurative expressions, to represent the degree of affection: yet I hope all will allow, that they are fit and suitable figures to represent the high degree of those spiritual affections, which the Spirit of God makes use of them to represent; which I do not see how they would be, if those spiritual affections, let them be in never to high a degree, have no tendency to any such things; but that on the contrary, they are the proper effects and sad tokens of false affections, and the delusion of the devil. I cannot think, God would commonly make use of things which are very alien from spiritual affections, and are shrewd marks of the hand of Satan, and smell strong of the bottomless pit, as beautiful figures, to represent the high degree of holy and heavenly affections.

**III.** It is no sign that affections are truly gracious affections, or that they are not, that they cause those who have them to be fluent, fervent, and abundant, in talking of the things of religion.

There are many persons, who, if they see this in others, are greatly prejudiced against them. Their being so full of talk, is with them a sufficient ground to condemn them, as Pharisees, and ostentatious hypocrites. On the other hand, there are many, who if they see this effect in any, are very ignorantly and imprudently forward, at once to determine that they are the true children of God, and are under the saving influences of his Spirit, and speak of it as a great evidence of a new creature; they say, “such a one’s mouth is now opened: he used to be slow to speak; but now he is full and free; he is free now to open his heart, and tell his experiences, and declare the praises of God; it comes from him, as free as water from a fountain;” and the like. And especially are they captivated



into a confident and undoubting persuasion, that they are savingly wrought upon, if they are not only free and abundant, but very affectionate and earnest in their talk.

But this is the fruit of but little judgment, a scanty and short experience; as events do abundantly show: and is a mistake persons often run into, through their trusting to their own wisdom and discerning, and making their own notions their rule, instead of the holy Scripture. Though the Scripture be full of rules, both how we should judge of our own state, and also how we should be conducted in our opinion of others; yet we have nowhere any rule, by which to judge ourselves or others to be in a good estate, from any such effect: for this is but the religion of the mouth and of the tongue, and what is in the Scripture represented by the leaves of a tree, which, though the tree ought not to be without them, yet are nowhere given as an evidence of the goodness of the tree.

That persons are disposed to be abundant in talking of things of religion, may be from a good cause, and it may be from a bad one. It may be because their hearts are very full of holy affections; “for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh:” and it may be because persons’ hearts are very full of religious affection which is not holy; for still out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. It is very much the nature of the affections, of whatever kind they be, and whatever objects they are exercised about, if they are strong, to dispose persons to be very much in speaking of that which they are affected with: and not only to speak much, but to speak very earnestly and fervently. And therefore persons talking abundantly and very fervently about the things of religion, can be an evidence of no more than this, that they are very much affected with the things of religion; but this may be (as has been already shown) and there be no grace. That which men are greatly affected with, while the high affection lasts, they will be earnestly engaged about, and will be likely to show that earnestness in their talk and behavior; as the greater part of the Jews, in all Judah and Galilee, did for a while, about John the Baptist’s preaching and baptism, when they were willing for a season to rejoice in his light; a mighty ado was made, all over the land, and among all sorts of persons, about this great prophet and his ministry. And so the multitude, in like manner, often manifested a great earnestness, a mighty engagedness of spirit in everything that was external, about Christ

and his preaching and miracles, “being astonished at his doctrine, anon with joy receiving the word,” following him sometimes night and day, leaving meat, drink, and sleep to hear him: once following him into the wilderness, fasting three days going to hear him; some times crying him up to the clouds, saying, “Never man spake like this man!” being fervent and earnest in what they said. But what did these things come to, in the greater part of them?

A person may be over full of talk of his own experiences; commonly falling upon it, everywhere, and in all companies; and when it is so, it is rather a dark sign than a good one. As a tree that is over full of leaves seldom bears much fruit; and as a cloud, though to appearance very pregnant and full of water, if it brings with it overmuch wind, seldom affords much rain to the dry and thirsty earth; which very thing the Holy Spirit is pleased several times to make use of, to represent a great show of religion with the mouth, without answerable fruit in the life: <sup>1059</sup>Proverbs 25:24, “Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift, is like clouds and wind without rain.” And the apostle Jude, speaking of some in the primitive times, that crept in unawares among the saints, and having a great show of religion, where for a while not suspected, “These are clouds (says he) without water, carried about of winds,” <sup>1060</sup>Jude ver. 4 and 12. And the apostle Peter, speaking of the same, says, <sup>1061</sup>2 Peter 2:17, “These are clouds without water, carried with a tempest.”

False affections, if they are equally strong, are much more forward to declare themselves, than true: because it is the nature of false religion, to affect show and observation; as it was with the Pharisees. <sup>11</sup>

**IV.** It is no sign that affections are gracious, or that they are otherwise, that persons did not make them themselves, or excite them of their own contrivance and by their own strength.

There are many in these days, that condemn all affections which are excited in a way that the subjects of them can give no account of, as not seeming to be the fruit of any of their own endeavors, or the natural consequence of the faculties and principles of human nature, in such circumstances, and under such means; but to be from the influence of some extrinsic and supernatural power upon their minds. How greatly has the doctrine of the inward experience, or sensible perceiving of the immediate

power and operation of the Spirit of God, been reproached and ridiculed by many of late! They say, the manner of the Spirit of God is to co-operate in a silent, secret, and undiscernable way with the use of means, and our own endeavors; so that there is no distinguishing by sense, between the influences of the Spirit of God, and the natural operations of the faculties of our own minds.

And it is true, that for any to expect to receive the saving influences of the Spirit of God, while they neglect a diligent improvement of the appointed means of grace, is unreasonable presumption. And to expect that the Spirit of God will savingly operate upon their minds, without the Spirit's making use of means, as subservient to the effect, is enthusiastical. It is also undoubtedly true, that the Spirit of God is very various in the manner and circumstances of his operations, and that sometimes he operates in a way more secret and gradual, and from smaller beginnings, than at others.

But if there be indeed a power, entirely different from, and beyond our power, or the power of all means and instruments, and above the power of nature, which is requisite in order to the production of saving grace in the heart, according to the general profession of the country; then, certainly it is in no wise unreasonable to suppose, that this effect should very frequently be produced after such a manner, as to make it very manifest, apparent, and sensible that it is so. If grace be indeed owing to the powerful and efficacious operation of an extrinsic agent, or divine efficient out of ourselves, why is it unreasonable to suppose it should seem to be so to them who are the subjects of it? Is it a strange thing, that it should seem to be as it is? When grace in the heart indeed is not produced by our strength, nor is the effect of the natural power of our own faculties, or any means or instruments, but is properly the workmanship and production of the Spirit of the Almighty, is it a strange and unaccountable thing, that it should seem to them who are subjects of it, agreeable to truth, and not right contrary to truth; so that if persons tell of effects that they are conscious to in their own minds, that seem to them not to be from the natural power or operation of their minds, but from the supernatural power of some other agent, it should at once be looked upon as a sure evidence of their being under a delusion, because things seem to them to be as they are? For this is the objection which is made: it is looked upon as a clear evidence, that the apprehensions and affections that many persons

have, are not really from such a cause, because they seem to them to be from that cause: they declare that what they are conscious of, seems to them evidently not to be from themselves, but from the mighty power of the Spirit of God; and others from hence condemn them, and determine what they experience is not from the Spirit of God, but from themselves, or from the devil. Thus unreasonably are multitudes treated at this day by their neighbors.

If it be indeed so, as the Scripture abundantly teaches, that grace in the soul is so the effect of God's power, that it is fitly compared to those effects which are farthest from being owing to any strength in the subject, such as a generation, or a being begotten, and resurrection, or a being raised from the dead, and creation, or a being brought out of nothing into being, and that it is an effect wherein the mighty power of God is greatly glorified, and the exceeding greatness of his power is manifested;<sup>12</sup> then what account can be given of it, that the Almighty, in so great a work of his power, should so carefully hide his power, that the subjects of it should be able to discern nothing of it? Or what reason or revelation have any to determine that he does so? If we may judge by the Scripture this is not agreeable to God's manner, in his operations and dispensations; but on the contrary, it is God's manner, in the great works of his power and mercy which he works for his people, to order things so as to make his hand visible, and his power conspicuous, and men's dependence on him most evident, that no flesh should glory in his presence,<sup>13</sup> that God alone might be exalted,<sup>14</sup> and that the excellency of the power might be of God and not of man,<sup>15</sup> and that Christ's power might be manifested in our weakness,<sup>16</sup> and none might say mine own hand hath saved me.<sup>17</sup> So it was in most of those temporal salvations which God wrought for Israel of old, which were types of the salvation of God's people from their spiritual enemies. So it was in the redemption of Israel from their Egyptian bondage; he redeemed them with a strong hand, and an outstretched arm; and that his power might be the more conspicuous, he suffered Israel first to be brought into the most helpless and forlorn circumstances. So it was in the great redemption by Gideon; God would have his army diminished to a handful, and they without any other arms than trumpets and lamps, and earthen pitchers. So it was in the deliverance of Israel from Goliath, by a stripling with a sling and a stone. So it was in that great work of God, his

calling the Gentiles, and converting the Heathen world, after Christ's ascension, after that the world by wisdom knew not God, and all the endeavors of philosophers had proved in vain, for many ages, to reform the world, and it was by everything become abundantly evident, that the world was utterly helpless, by anything else but the mighty power of God. And so it was in most of the conversions of particular persons, we have an account of in the history of the New Testament: they were not wrought on in that silent, secret, gradual, and insensible manner, which is now insisted on; but with those manifest evidences of a supernatural power, wonderfully and suddenly causing a great change, which in these days are looked upon as certain signs of delusion and enthusiasm.

The Apostle, in ~~the~~ Ephesians 1:18, 19, speaks of God's enlightening the minds of Christians, and so bringing them to believe in Christ, to the end that they might know the exceeding greatness of his power to them who believe. The words are, "The eyes of our understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power," etc. Now when the apostle speaks of their being thus the subjects of his power, in their enlightening and effectual calling, to the end that they might know what his mighty power was to them who believe, he can mean nothing else than, "that they might know by experience." But if the saints know this power by experience, then they feel it and discern it, and are conscious of it; as sensibly distinguishable from the natural operations of their own minds, which is not agreeable to a motion of God's operating so secretly, and undiscernably, that it cannot be known that they are the subjects of the influence of any extrinsic power at all, any otherwise than as they may argue it from Scripture assertions; which is a different; thing from knowing it by experience.

So that it is very unreasonable and unscriptural to determine that affections are not from the gracious operations of God's Spirit, because they are sensibly not from the persons themselves that are the subjects of them.

On the other hand, it is no evidence that affections are gracious, that they are not properly produced by those who are the subjects of them, or that they arise in their minds in a manner they cannot account for.

There are some who make this an argument in their own favor; when speaking of what they have experienced, they say, “I am sure I did not make it myself; it was a fruit of no contrivance or endeavor of mine; it came when I thought nothing of it; if I might have the world for it, I cannot make it again when I please.” And hence they determine that what they have experienced, must be from the mighty influence of the Spirit of God, and is of a saving nature; but very ignorantly, and without grounds. What they have been the subjects of, may indeed not be from themselves directly, but may be from the operation of an invisible agent, some spirit besides their own: but it does not thence follow, that it was from the Spirit of God. There are other spirits who have influence on the minds of men, besides the Holy Ghost. We are directed not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits, whether they be of God. There are many false spirits, exceeding busy with men, who often transform themselves into angels of light, and do in many wonderful ways, with great subtlety and power, mimic the operations of the Spirit of God. And there are many of Satan’s operations which are very distinguishable from the voluntary exercises of men’s own minds. They are so, in those dreadful and horrid suggestions, and blasphemous injections with which he follows many persons; and in vain and fruitless frights and terrors, which he is the author of. And the power of Satan may be as immediate, and as evident in false comforts and joys, as in terrors and horrid suggestions; and oftentimes is so in fact. It is not in men’s power to put themselves in such raptures, as the Anabaptists in Germany, and many other raving enthusiasts like them, have been the subjects of.

And besides, it is to be considered that persons may have those impressions on their minds, which may not be of their own producing, nor from an evil spirit, but from the Spirit of God, and yet not be from any saving, but a common influence of the Spirit of God; and the subjects of such impressions may be of the number of those we read of, ~~scrip~~ Hebrews 6:4, 5, “that are once enlightened, and taste of the heavenly gift, and are made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and taste the good word of God, and

the power of the world to come;" and yet may be wholly unacquainted with those "better things that accompany salvations" of spoken of ver. 9.

And where neither a good nor evil spirit have any immediate hand, persons, especially such as are of a weak and vapory habit of body, and the brain weak and easily susceptible of impressions, may have strange apprehensions and imaginations, and strong affections attending them, unaccountably arising, which are not voluntarily produced by themselves. We see that such persons are liable to such impressions about temporal things; and there is equal reason, why they should about spiritual things. As a person who is asleep has dreams that he is not the voluntary author of; so may such persons, in like manner, be the subjects of involuntary impressions, when they are awake.

**V.** It is no sign that religious affections are truly holy and spiritual, or that they are not, that they come with texts of Scripture, remarkably brought to the mind.

It is no sign that affections are not gracious, that they are occasioned by Scriptures so coming to mind; provided it be the Scripture itself, or the truth which the Scripture so brought contains and teaches, that is the foundation of the affection, and not merely, or mainly, the sudden and unusual manner of its coming to the mind.

But on the other hand, neither is it any sign that affections are gracious, that they arise on occasion of Scriptures brought suddenly and wonderfully to the mind; whether those affections be fear or hope, joy or sorrow, or any other. Some seem to look upon this as a good evidence that their affections are saving, especially if the affections excited are hope or joy, or any other which are pleasing and delightful. They will mention it as an evidence that all is right, that their experience came with the word, and will say, "There were such and such sweet promises brought to my mind: they came suddenly, as if they were spoken to me: I had no hand in bringing such a text to my own mind; I was not thinking of anything leading to it; it came all at once, so that I was surprised. I had not thought of it a long time before; I did not know at first that it was Scripture; I did not remember that ever I had read it." And it may be, they will add, "One Scripture came flowing in after another, and so texts all over the Bible, the most sweet and pleasant, and the most apt and suitable which could be


devised; and filled me full as I could hold: I could not but stand and admire: the tears flowed; I was full of joy, and could not doubt any longer.” And thus they think they have undoubted evidence that their affections must be from God, and of the right kind, and their state good: but without any manner of grounds. How came they by any such rule, as that if any affections or experiences arise with promises, and comfortable texts of Scripture, unaccountably brought to mind, without their recollection, or if a great number of sweet texts follow one another in a chain, that this is a certain evidence their experiences are saving? Where is any such rule to be found in the Bible, the great and only sure directory in things of this nature?

What deceives many of the less understanding and considerate sort of people, in this matter, seems to be this; that the Scripture is the word of God, and has nothing in it which is wrong, but is pure and perfect; and therefore, those experiences which come from the Scripture must be right. But then it should be considered, affections may arise on occasion of the Scripture, and not properly come from the Scripture, as the genuine fruit of the Scripture, and by a right use of it; but from an abuse of it. All that can be argued from the purity and perfection of the word of God, with respect to experiences, is this, that those experiences which are agreeable to the word of God, are right, and cannot be otherwise; and not that those affections must be right, which arise on occasion of the word of God coming to the mind.

What evidence is there that the devil cannot bring texts of Scripture to the mind, and misapply them to deceive persons? There seems to be nothing in this which exceeds the power of Satan. It is no work of such mighty power, to bring sounds or letters to persons’ minds, that we have any reason to suppose nothing short of Omnipotence can be sufficient for it. If Satan has power to bring any words or sounds at all to persons’ minds, he may have power to bring words contained in the Bible. There is no higher sort of power required in men, to make the sounds which express the words of a text of Scripture, than to make the sounds which express the words of an idle story or song. And so the same power in Satan, which is sufficient to renew one of those kinds of sounds in the mind, is sufficient to renew the other: the different signification, which depends wholly on custom, alters not the case, as to ability to make or revive the sounds or



letters. Or will any suppose, that texts or Scriptures are such sacred things, that the devil durst not abuse them, nor touch them? In this also they are mistaken. He who was bold enough to lay hold on Christ himself, and carry him hither and thither, into the wilderness, and into a high mountain, and to a pinnacle of the temple, is not afraid to touch the Scripture, and abuse that for his own purpose; as he showed at the same time that he was so bold with Christ, he then brought one Scripture and another, to deceive and tempt him. And if Satan did presume, and was permitted to put Christ himself in mind of texts of Scripture to tempt him, what reason have we determine that he dare not, or will not be permitted, to put wicked men in the mind of texts of Scripture, to tempt and deceive them? And if Satan may thus abuse one text of Scripture, so he may another. Its being a very excellent place of Scripture, a comfortable and precious promise, alters not the case, as to his courage or ability. And if he can bring one comfortable text to the mind, so he may a thousand; and may choose out such Scriptures as tend most to serve his purpose; and may heap up Scripture promises, tending, according to the perverse application he makes of them, wonderfully to remove the rising doubts, and to confirm the false joy and confidence of a poor deluded sinner.

We know the devil's instruments, corrupt and heretical teachers, can and do pervert the Scripture, to their own and others' damnation,  2 Peter 3:16. We see they have the free use of Scripture, in every part of it: there is no text so precious and sacred, but they are permitted to abuse it, to the eternal ruin of multitudes of souls; and there are no weapons they make use of with which they do more execution. And there is no manner of reason to determine, that the devil is not permitted thus to use the Scripture, as well as his instruments. For when the latter do it, they do it as his instruments and servants, and through his instigation and influence: and doubtless he does the same he instigates others to do; the devil's servants do but follow their master, and do the same work that he does himself.

And as the devil can abuse the Scripture, to deceive and destroy men, so may men's own folly and corruptions as well. The sin which is in men, acts like its father. Men's own hearts are deceitful like the devil, and use the same means to deceive.

So that it is evident, that any person may have high affections of hope and joy, arising on occasion of texts of Scripture, yea, precious promises of Scripture coming suddenly and remarkably to their minds, as though they were spoken to them, yea, a great multitude of such texts, following one another in a wonderful manner; and yet all this be no argument that these affections are divine, or that they are any other than the effects of Satan's delusions.

And I would further observe, that persons may have raised and joyful affections, which may come with the word of God, and not only so, but from the word, and those affections not be from Satan, nor yet properly from the corruptions of their own hearts, but from some influence of the Spirit of God with the word and yet have nothing of the nature of true and saving religion in them. Thus the stony ground hearers had great joy from the word; yea, which is represented as arising from the word, as growth from a seed; and their affections had, in their appearance, a very great and exact resemblance with those represented by the growth on the good ground, the difference not appearing until it was discovered by the consequences in a time of trial: and yet there was no saving religion in these affections.<sup>18</sup>

**VI.** It is no evidence that religious affections are saving, or that they are otherwise, that there is an appearance of love in them.

There are no professing Christians who pretend, that this is an argument against the truth and saving nature of religious affections. But, on the other hand, there are some who suppose, it is a good evidence that affections are from the sanctifying and saving influences of the Holy Ghost. — Their argument is that Satan cannot love; this affection being directly contrary to the devil, whose very nature is enmity and malice. And it is true, that nothing is more excellent, heavenly, and divine, than a spirit of true Christian love to God and men: it is more excellent than knowledge, or prophecy, or miracles, or speaking with the tongue of men and angels. It is the chief of the graces of God's Spirit, and the life, essence and sum of all true religion; and that by which we are most conformed to heaven, and most contrary to hell and the devil. But yet it is in arguing from hence, that there are no counterfeits of it. It may be observed that the more excellent anything is, the more will be the counterfeits of it. Thus there are many

more counterfeits of silver and gold, than of iron and copper: there are many false diamonds and rubies, but who goes about to counterfeit common stones? Though the more excellent things are, the more difficult it is to make anything that shall be like them, in their essential nature and internal virtues; yet the more manifold will the counterfeits be, and the more will art and subtlety be displayed, in an exact imitation of the outward appearance. Thus there is the greatest danger of being cheated in buying of medicines that are most excellent and sovereign, though it be most difficult to imitate them with anything of the like value and virtue, and their counterfeits are good for nothing when we have them. So it is with Christian virtues and graces; the subtlety of Satan, and men's deceitful hearts, are wont chiefly to be exercised in counterfeiting those that are in highest repute. So there are perhaps no graces that have more counterfeits than love and humility; these being virtues wherein the beauty of a true Christian does especially appear.

But with respect to love; it is plain by the Scripture, that persons may have a kind of religious love, and yet have no saving grace. Christ speaks of many professing Christians that have such love, whose love will not continue, and so shall fail of salvation, <sup>19</sup>Matthew 24:12, 13: "And because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Which latter words plainly show, that those spoken of before, whose love shall not endure to the end, but wax cold, should not be saved.

Persons may seem to have love to God and Christ, yea, to have very strong and violent affections of this nature, and yet have no grace. For this was evidently the case with many graceless Jews, such as cried Jesus up so high, following him day and night, without meat, drink, or sleep; such as said, "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest," and cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David." <sup>19</sup>

The apostle seems to intimate, that there were many in his days who had a counterfeit love to Christ, in <sup>20</sup>Ephesians 6:24: "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." The last word, in the original, *signifies incorruption*; which shows, that the apostle was sensible that there were many who had a kind of love to Christ, whose love was not pure and spiritual.

So also Christian love to the people of God may be counterfeited. It is evident by the Scripture, that there may be strong affections of this kind, without saving grace; as there were in the Galatians towards the Apostle Paul, when they were ready to pluck out their eyes and give them to him; although the apostle expresses his fear that their affections were come to nothing, and that he had bestowed upon them labor in vain, <sup><8041></sup>Galatians 4:11, 15.

**VII.** Persons having religious affections of many kinds, accompanying one another, is not sufficient to determine whether they have any gracious affections or no.

Though false religion is wont to be maimed and monstrous, and not to have that entireness and symmetry of parts, which is to be seen in true religion: yet there may be a great variety of false affections together, that may resemble gracious affections.

It is evident that there are counterfeits of all kinds of gracious affections; as of love to God, and love to the brethren, as has been just now observed; so of godly sorrow for sin, as in Pharaoh, Saul, and Ahab, and the children of Israel in the wilderness, <sup><1127></sup>Exodus 9:27, <sup><13246></sup>1 Samuel 24:16, 17, and <sup><1812></sup>31:21, <sup><127></sup>1 Kings 21:27, <sup><443></sup>Numbers 14:39, 40; and of the fear of God, as in the Samaritans, “who feared the Lord, and served their own gods at the same time,” <sup><1273></sup>2 Kings 17:32, 33; and those enemies of God we read of, <sup><368></sup>Psalms 66:3, who, “through the greatness of God’s power, submit themselves to him,” or, as it is in the Hebrew, “lie unto him,” i.e., yield a counterfeit reverence and submission. So of a gracious gratitude, as in the children of Israel, who sang God’s praise at the Red Sea, <sup><940></sup>Psalms 106:12; and Naaman the Syrian, after his miraculous cure of his leprosy, <sup><1155></sup>2 Kings 5:15, etc.

So of spiritual joy, as in the stony ground hearers, <sup><1030></sup>Matthew 13:20, and particularly many of John the Baptist’s hearers, <sup><165></sup>John 5:35. So of zeal, as in Jehu, <sup><1006></sup>2 Kings 10:16, and in Paul before his conversion, <sup><814></sup>Galatians 1:14, <sup><1006></sup>Philippians 3:6, and the unbelieving Jews, <sup><4018></sup>Acts 22:3, <sup><810></sup>Romans 10:2. So graceless persons may have earnest religious desires, which may be like Baalam’s desires, which he expresses under an extraordinary view that he had of the happy state of God’s people, as distinguished from all

the rest of the world, ~~deceit~~ Numbers 23:9, 10. They may also have a strong hope of eternal life, as the Pharisees had.

And as men, while in a state of nature, are capable of a resemblance of all kinds of religious affections, so nothing hinders but that they may have many of them together. And what appears in fact, does abundantly evince that it is very often so indeed. It seems commonly to be so, that when false affections are raised high, many false affections attend each other. The multitude that attended Christ into Jerusalem, after that great miracle of raising Lazarus, seem to have been moved with many religious affections at once, and all in a high degree. They seem to have been filled with admiration, and there was a show of a high affection of love, and also of a great degree of reverence, in their laying their garments on the ground for Christ to tread upon; and also of great gratitude to him, for the great and good works he had wrought, praising him with loud voices for his salvation; and earnest desires of the coming of God's kingdom, which they supposed Jesus was now about to set up, and showed great hopes and raised expectations of it, expecting it would immediately appear; and hence were filled with joy, by which they were so animated in their acclamations, as to make the whole city ring with the noise of them; and appeared great in their zeal and forwardness to attend Jesus, and assist him without further delay, now in the time of the great feast of the Passover, to set up his kingdom. And it is easy, from nature, and the nature of the affections, to give an account why, when one affection is raised very high, that it should excite others; especially if the affection which is raised high, be that of counterfeit love, as it was in the multitude who cried Hosanna. This will naturally draw many other affections after it. For, as was observed before, love is the chief of the affections, and as it were the fountain of them. Let us suppose a person who has been for some time in great exercise and terror through fear of hell, and his heart weakened with distress and dreadful apprehensions, and upon the brink of despair, and is all at once delivered, by being firmly made to believe, through some delusion of Satan, that God has pardoned him, and accepts him as the object of his dear love, and promises him eternal life; as suppose through some vision, or strong idea or imagination, suddenly excited in him, of a person with a beautiful countenance, smiling on him, and with arms open, and with blood dropping down, which the person

conceives to be Christ, without any other enlightening of the understanding, to give a view of the spiritual divine excellency of Christ and his fullness; and of the way of salvation revealed in the gospel: or perhaps by some voice or words coming as if they were spoken to him, such as these, “Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee;” or, “Fear not, it is the Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom,” which he takes to be immediately spoken by God to him, though there was no preceding acceptance of Christ, or closing of the heart with him: I say, if we should suppose such a case, what various passions would naturally crowd at once, or one after another, into such a person’s mind! It is easy to be accounted for, from mere principles of nature, that a person’s heart, on such an occasion, should be raised up to the skies with transports of joy; and be filled with fervent affection, to that imaginary God or Redeemer, who he supposes has thus rescued him from the jaws of such dreadful destruction, that his soul was so amazed with the fears of, and has received him with such endearment, as a peculiar favorite; and that now he should be filled with admiration and gratitude, and his mouth should be opened, and be full of talk about what he has experienced; and that, for a while he should think and speak of scarce anything else, and should seem to magnify that God who has done so much for him, and call upon others to rejoice with him, and appear with a cheerful countenance, and talk with a loud voice: and however, before his deliverance, he was full of quarrelings against the justice of God, that now it should be easy for him to submit to God, and own his unworthiness, and cry out against himself, and appear to be very humble before God, and lie at his feet as tame as a lamb; and that he should now confess his unworthiness, and cry out, “Why me? Why me?” (Like Saul, who when Samuel told him that God had appointed him to be king, makes answer, “Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Wherefore then speakest thou so to me?” Much in the language of David, the true saint, <sup>408</sup>2 Samuel 7:18, “Who am I, and what is my father’s house, that thou has brought me hitherto?”) Nor is it to be wondered at, that now he should delight to be with them who acknowledge and applaud his happy circumstances, and should love all such as esteem and admire him and what he has experienced, and have violent zeal against all such as would make nothing of such things, and be disposed openly to separate, and as it were to

proclaim war with all who be not of his party, and should now glory in his sufferings, and be very much for condemning and censuring all who seem to doubt, or make any difficulty of these things; and while the warmth of his affections lasts, should be mighty forward to take pains, and deny himself, to promote the interest of the party who he imagines favors such things, and seem earnestly desirous to increase the number of them, as the Pharisees compassed sea and land to make one proselyte.<sup>20</sup> And so I might go on, and mention many other things, which will naturally arise in such circumstances. He must have but slightly considered human nature, who thinks such things as these cannot arise in this manner, without any supernatural interposition of divine power.

As from true divine love flow all Christian affections, so from a counterfeit love in like manner naturally flow other false affections. In both cases, love is the fountain, and the other affections are the streams. The various faculties, principles, and affections of the human nature, are as it were many channels from one fountain: if there be sweet water in the fountain, sweet water will from thence flow out into those various channels; but if the water in the fountain be poisonous, then poisonous streams will also flow out into all those channels. So that the channels and streams will be alike, corresponding one with another; but the great difference will lie in the nature of the water. Or, man's nature may be compared to a tree, with many branches, coming from one root: if the sap in the root be good, there will also be good sap distributed throughout the branches, and the fruit that is brought forth will be good and wholesome; but if the sap in the root and stock be poisonous, so it will be in many branches (as in the other case), and the fruit will be deadly. The tree in both cases may be alike; there may be an exact resemblance in shape; but the difference is found only in eating the fruit. It is thus (in some measure at least) oftentimes between saints and hypocrites. There is sometimes a very great similitude between true and false experiences, in their appearance, and in what is expressed and related by the subjects of them: and the difference between them is much like the difference between the dreams of Pharaoh's chief butler and baker; they seemed to be much alike, insomuch that when Joseph interpreted the chief butler's dream, that he should be delivered from his imprisonment, and restored to the king's favor, and his honorable office in the palace, the chief baker had raised hopes and expectations, and

told his dream also; but he was woefully disappointed; and though his dream was so much like the happy and well boding dream of his companion, yet it was quite contrary in its issue.

**VIII.** Nothing can certainly be determined concerning the nature of the affections, by this, that comforts and joys seem to follow awakenings and convictions of conscience, in a certain order.

Many persons seem to be prejudiced against affections and experiences that come in such a method, as has been much insisted on by many divines; first, such awakenings, fears, and awful apprehensions, followed with such legal humblings, in a sense of total sinfulness and helplessness, and then, such and such light and comfort; they look upon all such schemes, laying down such methods and steps, to be of men's devising; and particularly if high affections of joy follow great distress and terror, it is made by many an argument against those affections. But such prejudices and objections are without reason or Scripture. Surely it cannot be unreasonable to suppose, that before God delivers persons from a state of sin and exposedness to eternal destruction, he should give them some considerable sense of the evil he delivers from; that they may be delivered sensibly, and understand their own salvation, and know something of what God does for them. As men that are saved are in two exceeding different states, first a state of condemnation, and then in a state of justification and blessedness: and as God, in the work of the salvation of mankind, deals with them suitably to their intelligent rational nature; so it seems reasonable, and agreeable to God's wisdom, that men who are saved should be in these two states sensibly; first, that they should, sensibly to themselves, be in a state of condemnation, and so in a state of woeful calamity and dreadful misery, and so afterwards in a state of deliverance and happiness; and that they should be first sensible of their absolute extreme necessity, and afterwards of Christ's sufficiency and God's mercy through him.

And that it is God's manner of dealing with men, to "lead them into a wilderness, before he speaks comfortably to them," and so to order it, that they shall be brought into distress, and made to see their own helplessness and absolute dependence on his power and grace, before he appears to work any great deliverance for them, is abundantly manifest by



the Scripture. Then is God wont to “repent himself for his professing people, when their strength is gone, and there is none shut up or left,” and when they are brought to see that their false gods cannot help them, and that the rock in whom they trusted is vain, <sup><152></sup>Deuteronomy 32:36, 37. Before God delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt, they were prepared for it, by being made to “see that they were in an evil case,” and “to cry unto God, because of their hard bondage,” <sup><152></sup>Exodus 2:23, and <sup><159></sup>5:19. And before God wrought that great deliverance for them at the Red Sea, they were brought into great distress, the wilderness had shut them in, they could not turn to the right hand nor the left, and the Red Sea was before them, and the great Egyptian host behind, and they were brought to see that they could do nothing to help themselves, and that if God did not help them, they should be immediately swallowed up; and then God appeared, and turned their cries into songs. So before they were brought to their rest, and to enjoy the milk and honey of Canaan, God “led them through a great and terrible wilderness, that he might humble them and teach them what was in their heart, and so do them good in their latter end,” <sup><155></sup>Deuteronomy 8:2, 16. The woman that had the issue of blood twelve years, was not delivered, until she had first “spent all her living on earthly physicians, and could not be healed of any,” and so was left helpless, having no more money to spend; and then she came to the great Physician, without any money or price, and was healed by him, <sup><156></sup>Luke 8:43, 44. Before Christ would answer the request of the woman of Canaan, he first seemed utterly to deny her, and humbled her, and brought her to own herself worthy to be called a dog; and then he showed her mercy, and received her as a dear child, <sup><157></sup>Matthew 15:22, etc. The Apostle Paul, before a remarkable deliverance, was “pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that he despaired even of life; but had the sentence of death in himself, that he might not trust in himself, but in God that raiseth the dead,” <sup><158></sup>2 Corinthians 1:8, 9, 10. There was first a great tempest, and the ship was covered with the waves, and just ready to sink, find the disciples were brought to cry to Jesus, “Lord save us, we perish;” and then the winds and seas were rebuked, and there was a great calm, <sup><159></sup>Matthew 8:24, 25, 26. The leper, before he is cleansed, must have his mouth stopped, by a covering on his upper lip, and was to acknowledge his great misery and utter uncleanness by rending his clothes, and crying, “Unclean, unclean,” <sup><160></sup>Leviticus 13:45. And backsliding Israel, before God

heals them, are brought to “acknowledge that they have sinned, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord,” and to see that “they lie down in their shame, and that confusion covers them,” and “that in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains,” and that God only can save them, <sup><4023></sup>Jeremiah 3:23, 24, 25. Joseph, who was sold be his brethren, and therein was a type of Christ, brings his brethren into great perplexity and distress, and brings them to reflect on their sin, and to say, We are verily guilty; and at last to resign up themselves entirely into his hands for bondmen; and then reveals himself to them, as their brother and their savior.

And if we consider those extraordinary manifestations which God made of himself to saints of old, we shall find that he commonly first manifested himself in a way which was terrible, and then by those things that were comfortable. So it was with Abraham; first, a horror of great darkness fell upon him, and then God revealed himself to him in sweet promises, <sup><4152></sup>Genesis 15:12, 13. So it was with Moses at Mount Sinai; first, God appeared to him in all the terrors of his dreadful Majesty, so that Moses said, “I exceedingly fear and quake,” and then he made all his goodness to pass before him, and proclaimed his name, “The Lord God gracious and merciful,” etc. So it was with Elijah; first, there is a stormy wind, and earthquakes and devouring fire, and then a still, small, sweet voice, <sup><1190></sup>1 Kings 19. So it was with Daniel; he first saw Christ’s countenance as lightning, that terrified him, and caused him to faint away; and then he is strengthened and refreshed with such comfortable words as these, “O Daniel, a man greatly beloved,” <sup><7001></sup>Daniel 10. So it was with the apostle John, <sup><6601></sup>Revelation 1. And there is an analogy observable in God’s dispensations and deliverances which he works for his people, and the manifestations which he makes of himself to them, both ordinary and extraordinary.

But there are many things in Scripture which do more directly show, that this is God’s ordinary manner in working salvation for the souls of men, and in the manifestations God makes of himself and of his mercy in Christ, in the ordinary works of his grace on the hearts of sinners. The servant that owed his prince ten thousand talents, is first held to his debt, and the king pronounces sentence of condemnation upon him, and commands him to be sold, and his wife and children, and payment to be made; and thus he

humbles him, and brings him to own the as whole of the debt to be just, and then forgives him all. The prodigal son spends all he has, and is brought to see himself in extreme circumstances, and to humble himself, and own his unworthiness, before he is relieved and feasted by his father, <sup><291></sup>Luke 15. Old inveterate wounds must be searched to the bottom, in order to healing: and the Scripture compares sin, the wound of the soul, to this, and speaks of healing this wound without thus searching of it, as vain and deceitful, <sup><291></sup>Jeremiah 7:11. Christ, in the work of his grace on the hearts of men, is compared to rain on the new mown grass, grass that is cut down with a scythe, <sup><292></sup>Psalms 72:6, representing his refreshing, comforting influences on the wounded spirit. Our first parents, after they had sinned, were first terrified with God's majesty and justice, and had their sin, with its aggravations, set before them by their Judge, before they were relieved by the promise of the seed of the woman. Christians are spoken of as those "that have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them," <sup><293></sup>Hebrews 6:18, which representation implies great fear and sense of danger, preceding. To the like purpose, Christ is called "a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, and as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," Isaiah 32 at the beginning. And it seems to be the natural import of the word gospel, glad tidings, that it is news of deliverance and salvation, after great fear and distress. There is also reason to suppose, that God deals with particular believers, as he dealt with his church, which he first made to hear his voice in the law, with terrible thunders and lightning and kept her under that schoolmaster to prepare her for Christ; and then comforted her with the joyful sound of the gospel from Mount Zion. So likewise John the Baptist came to prepare the way for Christ, and prepare men's hearts for his reception, by showing them their sins, and by bringing the self-righteous Jews off from their own righteousness, telling them that they were "a generation of vipers," and showing them their danger of "the wrath to come," telling them that "the axe was laid at the root of the trees," etc.

And if it be indeed God's manner (as I think the foregoing considerations show that it undoubtedly is), before he gives men the comfort of a deliverance from their sin and misery, to give them a considerable sense of the greatness and dreadfulness of those evils, and their extreme

wretchedness by reason of them; surely it is not unreasonable to suppose, that persons, at least oftentimes, while under these views, should have great distresses and terrible apprehensions of mind; especially if it be considered what these evils are that they have a view of; which are no other than great and manifold sins, against the infinite majesty of the great Jehovah, and the suffering of the fierceness of his wrath to all eternity. And the more so still, when we have many plain instances in Scripture of persons that have actually been brought into great distress, by such convictions, before they have received saving consolations: as the multitude at Jerusalem, who were “pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?” And the apostle Paul, who trembled and was astonished, before he was comforted; and the gaoler, when “he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

From these things it appears to be very unreasonable in professing Christians to make this an objection against the truth and spiritual nature of the comfortable and joyful affections which any have, that they follow such awful apprehensions and distresses as have been mentioned.

And, on the other hand, it is no evidence that comforts and joys are right, because they succeed great terrors, and amazing fears of hell.<sup>21</sup> This seems to be what some persons lay a great weight upon; esteeming great terrors an evidence of the great work of the law as wrought on the heart, well preparing the way for solid comfort; not considering that terror and a conviction of conscience are different things. For though convictions of conscience do often cause terror; yet they do not consist in it; and terrors do often arise from other causes. Convictions of conscience, through the influences of God’s Spirit, consist in conviction of sinfulness of heart and practices and of the dreadfulfulness of sins as committed against a God of terrible majesty, infinite holiness and hatred of sin, and strict justice in punishing of it. But there are some persons that have frightful apprehensions of hell, a dreadful pit ready to swallow them up, and flames just ready to lay hold of them, and devils around them, ready to seize them; who at the same time seem to have very little proper enlightenings of conscience really convincing them of their sinfulness of heart and life. The devil, if permitted, can terrify men as well as the Spirit of God, it is a

work natural to him, and he has many ways of doing it, in a manner tending to no good.

He may exceedingly affright persons, by impressing on them images and ideas of many external things, of a countenance frowning, a sword drawn, black clouds of vengeance, words of an awful doom pronounced,<sup>22</sup> hell gaping, devils coming, and the like, not to convince persons of things that are true, and revealed in the word of God, but to lead them to vain and groundless determinations; as that their day is past, that they are reprobated, that God is implacable, that he has come to a resolution immediately to cut them off, etc.

And the terrors which some persons have, are very much owing to the particular constitution and temper they are of. Nothing is more manifest than that some persons are of such a temper and frame, that their imaginations are more strongly impressed with everything they are affected with, than others; and the impression on the imagination reacts on the affection, and raises that still higher; and so affection and imagination act reciprocally, one on another, till their affection is raised to a vast height, and the person is swallowed up, and loses as possession of himself.<sup>23</sup>

And some speak of a great sight they have of their wickedness, who really, when the matter comes to be well examined into and thoroughly weighted, are found to have little or no convictions of conscience. They tell of a dreadful hard heart, and how their heart lies like a stone; when truly they have none of those things in their minds or thoughts, wherein the hardness of men's heart does really consist. They tell of a dreadful load and sink of sin, a heap of black and loathsome filthiness within them; when, if the matter be carefully inquired into, they have not in view anything wherein the corruption of nature does truly consist, nor have they any thought of any particular thing wherein their hearts are sinfully defective, or fall short of what ought to be in them, or any exercises at all of corruption in them. And many think also they have great convictions of their actual sins, who truly have none. They tell how their sins are set in order before them, they see them stand encompassing them round in a row, with a dreadful, frightful appearance; when really they have not so much as one of the sins

they gave been guilty of in the course of their lives, coming into view, that they are affected with the aggravations of.

And if persons have had great terrors which really have been from the awakening and convincing influences of the Spirit of God, it doth not thence follow that their terrors must needs issue in true comfort. The unmortified corruption of the heart may quench the Spirit of God (after he has been striving) by leading men to presumptuous, and self-exalting hopes and joys, as well as otherwise. It is not every woman who is really in travail, that brings forth a real child; but it may be a monstrous production, without anything of the form or properties of human nature belonging to it. Pharaoh's chief baker after he had lain in the dungeon with Joseph, had a vision that raised his hopes and he was lifted out of the dungeon, as well as the chief butler; but it was to be hanged.

But if comforts and joys do not only come after great terrors and awakenings, but there be an appearance of such preparatory convictions and humiliations, and brought about very distinctly, by such steps, and in such a method as has frequently been observable in true converts; this is no certain sign that the light and comforts which follow are true and saving. And for these following reasons:

**First**, As the devil can counterfeit all the saving operations and graces of the Spirit of God, so he can counterfeit those operations that are preparatory to grace. If Satan can counterfeit those effects of God's Spirit, which are special, divine and sanctifying, so that there shall be a very great resemblance, in all that can be observed by others; much more easily may he imitate those works of God's Spirit which are common, and which men, while they are yet his own children, are the subjects of. These works are in no wise so much above him as the other. There are no works of God that are so high and divine, and above the powers of nature, and out of reach of the power of all creatures, as those works of his Spirit, whereby he forms the creature in his own image, and makes it to be a partaker of the divine nature. But if the devil can be the author of such resemblances of these as have been spoken of, without doubt he may of those that are of an infinitely inferior kind. And it is abundantly evident in fact, that there are false humiliations and false submissions, as well as false comforts.<sup>24</sup> How far was Saul brought, though a very wicked man, and of a haughty spirit,

when he (though a great king) was brought, in conviction of his sin, as it were to fall down, all in tears, weeping aloud, before David his own subject (and one that he had for a long time mortally hated, and openly treated as an enemy), and condemn himself before him, crying out, “Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil!” And at another time, “I have sinned, I have played the fool, I have erred exceedingly, ” <sup>(1821)</sup>1 Samuel 24:16, 17, and chap. <sup>(1822)</sup>26:21. And yet Saul seems then to have had very little of the influences of the Spirit of God, it being after God’s Spirit had departed from him, and given him up, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. And if this proud monarch, in a pang of affection, was brought to humble himself so low before a subject that he hated, and still continued an enemy to, there doubtless may be appearances of great conviction and humiliation in men, before God, while they yet remain enemies to him, and though they finally continue so. There is oftentimes in men who are terrified through fears of hell, a great appearance of their being brought off from their own righteousness, when they are not brought off from it in all ways, although they are in many ways that are more plain and visible. They have only exchanged some ways of trusting in their own righteousness, for others that are more secret and subtle. Oftentimes a great degree of discouragement, as to many things they used to depend upon, is taken for humiliation: that is called a submission to God, which is no absolute submission, but has some secret bargain in it, that it is hard to discover.

**Secondly**, If the operations and effects of the Spirit of God, in the convictions, and comforts of true converts, may be sophisticated, then the order of them may be imitated. If Satan can imitate the things themselves, he may easily put them one after another, in such a certain order. If the devil can make A, B, and C, it is as easy for him to put A first, and B next, and C next, as to range item in a contrary order. The nature of divine things is harder for the devil to imitate, than their order. He cannot exactly imitate divine operations in their nature, though his counterfeits may be very much like them in external appearance, but he can exactly imitate their order. When counterfeits are made, there is no divine power needful in order to the placing one of them first, and another last. And therefore no order or method of operations and experiences is any certain sign of their divinity. That only is to be trusted to, as a certain evidence of grace, which

Satan cannot do, and which it is impossible should be brought to pass by any power short of divine.

**Thirdly**, We have no certain rule to determine how far God's own Spirit may go in those operations and convictions which in themselves are not spiritual and saving, and yet the person that is the subject of them never be converted, but fall short of salvation at last. There is no necessary connection in the nature of things, between anything that a natural man may experience while in a state of nature, and the saving grace of God's Spirit. And if there be no connection in the nature of things, then there can be no known and certain connection at all, unless it be by divine revelation. But there is no revealed certain connection between a state of salvation, and anything that a natural man can be the subject of, before he believes in Christ. God has revealed no certain connection between salvation, and any qualifications in men, but only grace and its fruits. And therefore we do not find any legal convictions, or comforts, following these legal convictions, in any certain method or order, ever once mentioned in the Scripture, as certain signs of grace, or things peculiar to the saints; although we do find gracious operations and effects themselves, so mentioned, thousands of times. Which should be enough with Christians who are willing to have the word of God, rather than their own philosophy, and experiences and conjectures, as their sufficient and sure guide in things of this nature.

**Fourthly**, Experience does greatly confirm, that persons seeming to have convictions and comforts following one another in such a method and order, as is frequently observable in true converts, is no certain sign of grace.<sup>25</sup> I appeal to all those ministers in this land, who have had much occasion of dealing with souls in the late extraordinary season, whether there have not been many who do not prove well, that have given a fair account of their experiences, and have seemed to be converted according to rule, i.e., with convictions and affections, succeeding distinctly and exactly, in that order and method, which has been ordinarily insisted on, as the order of the operations of the Spirit of God in conversion.

And as a seeming to have this distinctness as to steps and method, is no certain sign that a person is converted; so a being without it, is no evidence that a person is not converted. For though it might be made evident to a



demonstration, on Scripture principles, that a sinner cannot be brought heartily to receive Christ as his Savior, who is not convinced of his sin and misery, and of his own emptiness and helplessness, and his just desert of eternal condemnation; and that therefore such convictions must be some way implied in what is wrought in his soul; yet nothing proves it to be necessary, that all those things which are implied or presupposed in an act of faith in Christ, must be plainly and distinctly wrought in the soul, in so many successive and separate works of the Spirit, that shall be each one plain and manifest, in all who are truly converted. On the contrary (as Mr. Shepard observes), sometimes the change made in a saint, at first work, is like a confused chaos; so that the saints know not what to make of it. The manner of the Spirit's proceeding in them that are born of the Spirit, is very often exceeding mysterious and unsearchable; we, as it were, hear the sound of it, the effect of it is discernible; but no man can tell whence it came, or whither it went. And it is oftentimes as difficult to know the way of the Spirit in the new birth, as in the first birth; <sup>(2115)</sup> Ecclesiastes 11:5, "Thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, or how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; even so thou knowest not the works of God, that worketh all." The ingenerating of a principle of grace in the soul, seems in Scripture to be compared to the conceiving of Christ in the womb, <sup>(2109)</sup> Galatians 4:19. And therefore the Church is called Christ's mother, <sup>(2111)</sup> Cant. 3:11. And so is every particular believer, <sup>(1026)</sup> Matthew 12:49, 50. And the conception of Christ in the womb of the blessed virgin, by the power of the Holy Ghost, seems to be a designed resemblance of the conception of Christ in the soul of a believer, by the power of the same Holy Ghost. And we know not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow, either in the womb, or heart that conceives this holy child. The new creature may use that language in <sup>(1134)</sup> Psalm 139:14, 15, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret." Concerning the generation of Christ, both in his person, and also in the hearts of his people, it may be said, as in <sup>(2518)</sup> Isaiah 53:8, "Who can declare his generation?" We know not the works of God, that worketh all. "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing" (<sup>(1110)</sup> Proverbs 25:2), and to have "his path as it were in the mighty waters, that his footsteps may not be known;" and especially in the works of his Spirit on the hearts of men, which are the highest and chief of his works. And

therefore it is said, <sup>24113</sup>Isaiah 40:13, “Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him?” It is to be feared that some have gone too far towards directing the Spirit of the Lord, and marking out his footsteps for him, and limiting him to certain steps and methods. Experience plainly shows, that God’s Spirit is unsearchable and untraceable, in some of the best of Christians, in the method of his operations, in their conversion. Nor does the Spirit of God proceed discernibly in the steps of a particular established scheme, one half so often as is imagined. A scheme of what is necessary, and according to a rule already received and established by common opinion, has a vast (though to many a very insensible) influence in forming persons’ notions of the steps and method of their own experiences. I know very well what their way is; for I have had much opportunity to observe it. Very often, at first, their experiences appear like a confused chaos, as Mr. Shepard expresses it: but then those passages of their experience are picked out, that have most of the appearance of such particular steps that are insisted on; and these are dwelt upon in the thoughts, and these are told of from time to time, in the relation they give: these parts grow brighter and brighter in their view; and others, being neglected, grow more and more obscure: and what they have experienced is insensibly strained to bring all to an exact conformity to the scheme that is established. And it becomes natural for ministers, who have to deal with them, and direct them that insist upon distinctness and clearness of method, to do so too. But yet there has been so much to be seen of the operations of the Spirit of God, of late, that they who have had much to do with souls, and are not blinded with a seven-fold vail of prejudice, must know that the Spirit is so exceeding various in the manner of his operating, that in many cases it is impossible to trace him, or find out his way.

What we have principally to do with, in our inquiries into our own state, or directions we give to others, is the nature of the effect that God has brought to pass in the soul. As to the steps which the Spirit of God took to bring that effect to pass, we may leave them to him. We are often in Scripture expressly directed to try ourselves by the nature of the fruits of the Spirit; but nowhere by the Spirit’s method of producing them.<sup>26</sup> Many do greatly err in their notions of a clear work of conversion; calling that a clear work, where the successive steps of influence, and method of

experience are clear: whereas that indeed is the clearest work (not where the order of doing is clearest, but) where the spiritual and divine nature of the work done, and effect wrought, is most clear.

**IX.** It is no certain sign that the religious affections which persons have are such as have in them the nature of true religion, or that they have not, that they dispose persons to spend much time in religion, and to be zealously engaged in the external duties of worship.

This has, very unreasonably of late, been looked upon as an argument against the religious affections which some have had, that they spend so much time in reading, praying, singing, hearing sermons, and the like. It is plain from the Scripture, that it is the tendency of true grace to cause persons to delight in such religious exercises. True grace had this effect on Anna the prophetess: <sup><4077></sup>Luke 2:27, “She departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.” And grace had this effect upon the primitive Christians in Jerusalem: <sup><4026></sup>Acts 2:46, 47, “And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God.” Grace made Daniel delight in the duty of prayer, and solemnly to attend it three times a day, as it also did David: <sup><4050></sup>Psalms 55:17, “Evening, morning, and at noon will I pray.” Grace makes the saints delight in singing praises to God: Psalm 135: 3, “Sing praises unto his name, for it is pleasant.” And <sup><4070></sup>Psalm 147:1, “Praise ye the Lord; for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant, and praise is comely.” It also causes them to delight to hear the word of God preached: it makes the gospel a joyful sound to them, <sup><4045></sup>Psalms 89:15, and makes the feet of those who publish these good tidings to be beautiful: <sup><4050></sup>Isaiah 52:7, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!” etc. It makes them love God’s public worship: <sup><4040></sup>Psalms 26:8, “Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth.” And 27:4, “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.” <sup><4040></sup>Psalms 84:1, 2, etc. “How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord. — Yea, the sparrow hath found a house and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my

God. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Blessed is the man in whose heart are the ways of them, who passing through the valley of Baca-go from strength to strength, everyone of them in Zion appeareth before God.” Ver 10, “A day in thy courts is better than a thousand.”

This is the nature of true grace. But yet, on the other hand, persons’ being disposed to abound and to be zealously engaged in the external exercises of religion, and to spend much time in them, is no sure evidence of grace; because such a disposition is found in many that have no grace. So it was with the Israelites of old, whose services were abominable to God; they attended the “new moons, and Sabbaths, and calling of assemblies, and spread forth their hands, and made many prayers,” <sup><AM></sup> Isaiah 1:12-15. So it was with the Pharisees; they “made long prayers, and fasted twice a week.” False religion may cause persons to be loud and earnest in prayer: Isaiah 58: 4, “Ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to cause your voice to be heard on high.” That religion which is not spiritual and saving, may cause men to delight in religious duties and ordinances: <sup><AM></sup> Isaiah 58:2, “Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice: they take delight in approaching to God.” It may cause them to take delight in hearing the word of God preached, as it was with Ezekiel’s hearers: <sup><AM></sup> Ezekiel 33:31, 32, “And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not.” So it was with Herod; he heard John the Baptist gladly, <sup><AM></sup> Mark 6:20. So it was with others of his hearers, “for a season they rejoiced in his light,” <sup><AM></sup> John 5:35. So the stony ground hearers heard the word with joy.

Experience shows, that persons, from false religion, may be inclined to be exceeding abundant in the external exercises of religion; yea, to give themselves up to them, and devote almost their whole time to them. Formerly a sort of people were very numerous in the Romish church, called recluses, who forsook the world, and utterly abandoned the society of mankind, and shut themselves up close in a narrow cell, with a vow

never to stir out of it, nor to see the face of any of mankind any more (unless that they might be visited in case of sickness), to spend all their days in the exercise of devotion and converse with God. There were also in old time, great multitudes called Hermits and Anchorites, that left the world to spend all their days in lonesome deserts, to give themselves up to religious contemplations and exercises of devotion; some sorts of them having no dwellings, but the caves and vaults of the mountains, and no food, but the spontaneous productions of the earth. I once lived, for many months, next door to a Jew (the houses adjoining one to another), and had much opportunity daily to observe him; who appeared to me the devoutest person that I ever saw in my life; great part of his time being spent in acts of devotion, at his eastern window, which opened next to mine, seeming to be most earnestly engaged, not only in the daytime, but sometimes whole nights.

**X.** Nothing can be certainly known of the nature of religious affections by this, that they much dispose persons with their mouths to praise and glorify God. This indeed is implied in what has been just now observed, of abounding and spending much time in the external exercises of religion, and was also hinted before; but because many seem to look upon it as a bright evidence of gracious affection, when persons appear greatly disposed to praise and magnify God, to have their mouths full of his praises, and affectionately to be calling on others to praise and extol him, I thought it deserved a more particular consideration.

No Christian will make it an argument against a person, that he seems to have such a disposition. Nor can it reasonably be looked upon as an evidence for a person, if those things that have been already observed and proved, be duly considered, viz., that persons, without grace, may have high affections towards God and Christ, and that their affections, being strong, may fill their mouths and incline them to speak much, and very earnestly, about the things they are affected with, and that there may be counterfeits of all kinds of gracious affection. But it will appear more evidently and directly, that this is no certain sign of grace, if we consider what instances the Scripture gives us of it in those that were graceless. We often have an account of this, in the multitude that were present when Christ preached and wrought miracles; ~~and~~ Mark 2:12, “And immediately he arose, took up his bed, and went forth before them all, insomuch that they

were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.” So ~~1098~~ Matthew 9:8, and ~~1098~~ Luke 5:26. Also ~~1098~~ Matthew 15:31, “Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.” So we are told, that on occasion of Christ’s raising the son of the widow of Nain, ~~1098~~ Luke 7:16, “There came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.” So we read of their glorifying Christ, or speaking exceeding highly of him: ~~1098~~ Luke 4:15, “And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.” And how did they praise him, with loud voices, crying, “Hosanna to the Son of David; hosanna in the highest; blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,” a little before he was crucified! And after Christ’s ascension, when the apostles had healed the impotent man, we are told, that all men glorified God for that which was done, ~~1098~~ Acts 4:21. When the Gentiles in Antioch of Pisidia, heard from Paul and Barnabas, that God would reject the Jews, and take the Gentiles to be his people in their room, they were affected with the goodness of God to the Gentiles, “and glorified the word of the Lord:” but all that did so were not true believers; but only a certain elect number of them; as is intimated in the account we have of it, ~~1098~~ Acts 13:48: “And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.” So of old the children of Israel at the Red Sea, “sang God’s praise; but soon forgat his works.” And the Jews in Ezekiel’s time, “with their mouth showed much love, while their heart went after their covetousness.” And it is foretold of false professors and real enemies of religion, that they should show a forwardness to glorify God: ~~1098~~ Isaiah 66:5, “Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word. Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name’s sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified.”

It is no certain sign that a person is graciously affected, if, in the midst of his hopes and comforts, he is greatly affected with God’s unmerited mercy to him that is so unworthy, and seems greatly to extol and magnify free grace. Those that yet remain with unmortified pride and enmity against God, may, when they imagine that they have received extraordinary kindness from God, cry out of their unworthiness, and magnify God’s undeserved goodness to them, from no other conviction of their ill

deservings, and from no higher principle than Saul had, who, while he yet remained with unsubdued pride and enmity against David, was brought, though a king, to acknowledge his unworthiness, and cry out, “I have played the fool, I have erred exceedingly,” and with great affection and admiration, to magnify and extol David’s unmerited and unexampled kindness to him, <sup><1056></sup>1 Samuel 25:16-19, and <sup><1057></sup>26:21, and from no higher principle than that from whence Nebuchadnezzar was affected with God’s dispensations, that he saw and was the subject of, and praises, extols and honors the King of heaven; and both he, and Darius, in their high affections, call upon all nations to praise God, <sup><1058></sup>Daniel 3:28, 29, 30, and <sup><1059></sup>4:1, 2, 3, 34, 35, 37, and <sup><1060></sup>6:25, 26, 27.

**XI.** It is no sign that affections are right, or that they are wrong, that they make persons that have them exceeding confident that what they experience is divine, and that they are in a good estate.

It is an argument with some, against persons, that they are deluded if they pretend to be assured of their good estate, and to be carried beyond all doubting of the favor of God; supposing that there is no such thing to be expected in the church of God, as a full and absolute assurance of hope; unless it be in some very extraordinary circumstances; as in the case of martyrdom; contrary to the doctrine of Protestants, which has been maintained by their most celebrated writers against the Papists; and contrary to the plainest Scripture evidence. It is manifest, that it was a common thing for the saints that we have a history or particular account of in Scripture, to be assured. God, in the plainest and most positive manner, revealed and testified his special favor to Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Daniel, and others. Job often speaks of his sincerity and uprightness with the greatest imaginable confidence and assurance, often calling God to witness to it; and says plainly, “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall see him for myself, and not another,” <sup><1061></sup>Job 19:25, etc. David, throughout the book of Psalms, almost everywhere speaks without any hesitancy, and in the most positive manner, of God as his God glorying in him as his portion and heritage, his rock and confidence, his shield; salvation, and high tower, and the like. Hezekiah appeals to God, as one that knew that he had walked before him in truth, and with a perfect heart, <sup><1062></sup>2 Kings 20:3. Jesus Christ, in his dying discourse with his eleven disciples, in the 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of John (which was



as it were Christ's last will and testament to his disciples, and to his whole church), often declares his special and everlasting love to them in the plainest and most positive terms and promises them a future participation with him in his glory, in the most absolute manner; and tells them at the same time that he does so, to the end that their joy might be full: <sup><B51></sup>John 15:11, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." See also at the conclusion of his whole discourse, chap. <sup><B16></sup>16:33: "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the would ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Christ was not afraid of speaking too plainly and positively to them; he did not desire to hold them in the least suspense. And he concluded that last discourse of his with a prayer in their presence, wherein he speaks positively to his Father of those eleven disciples, as having all of them savingly know him, and believed in him, and received and kept his word; and that they were not of the world; and that for their sakes he sanctified himself; and that his will was, that they should be with him in his glory; and tells his Father, that he spake those things in his prayer, to the end, that his joy might be fulfilled in them, verse 13. By these things it is evident, that it is agreeable to Christ's designs, and the contrived ordering and disposition Christ makes of things in his church, that there should be sufficient and abundant provision made, that his saints might have full assurance of their future glory.

The Apostle Paul, through all his epistles speaks in an assured strain; ever speaking positively of his special relation to Christ, his Lord, and Master, and Redeemer, and his interest in, and expectation of the future reward. It would be endless to take notice of all places that might be enumerated; I shall mention but three or four: <sup><B20></sup>Galatians 2:20, "Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me;" <sup><B21></sup>Philippians 1:21, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain;" <sup><B12></sup>2 Timothy 1:12, "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day;" <sup><B22></sup>2 Timothy 4:7, 8, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me at that day."



And the nature of the covenant of grace, and God's declared ends in the appointment and constitution of things in that covenant, do plainly show it to be God's design to make ample provision for the saints having an assured hope of eternal life, while living here upon earth. For so are all things ordered and contrived in that covenant, that everything might be made sure on God's part. "The covenant is ordered in all things and sure:" the promises are most full, and very often repeated, and various ways exhibited; and there are many witnesses, and many seals; and God has confirmed his promises with an oath. And God's declared design in all this, is, that the heirs of the promises might have an undoubting hope and full joy, in an assurance of their future glory. <sup><807</sup>Hebrews 6:17, 18, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us." But all this would be in vain, to any such purpose, as the saints' strong consolation, and hope of their obtaining future glory, if their interest in those sure promises in ordinary cases was not ascertainable. For God's promises and oaths, let them be as sure as they will, cannot give strong hope and comfort to any particular person, any further than he can know that those promises are made to him. And in vain is provision made in Jesus Christ, that believers might be perfect as pertaining to the conscience, as is signified, <sup><808</sup>Hebrews 9:9, if assurance of freedom from the guilt of sin is not attainable.

It further appears that assurance is not only attainable in some very extraordinary cases, but that all Christians are directed to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure, and are told how they may do it, <sup><809</sup>2 Peter 1:5-8. And it is spoken of as a thing very unbecoming Christians, and an argument of something very blamable in them, not to know whether Christ be in them or no: <sup><4735</sup>2 Corinthians 13:5, "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" And it is implied that it is an argument of a very blamable negligence in Christians, if they practice Christianity after such a manner as to remain uncertain of the reward, in <sup><4925</sup>1 Corinthians 9:26: "I therefore so run, as not uncertainly." And to add no more, it is manifest, that Christians' knowing their interest in the saving benefits of Christianity is a

thing ordinarily attainable, because the apostle tells us by what means Christians (and not only the apostles and martyrs) were wont to know this: <sup>1</sup>1 Corinthians 2:12, “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.” And <sup>1</sup>1 John 2:3, “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.” And verse 5, “Hereby know we that we are in him.” Chap. <sup>1</sup>3:14, “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren;” ver. 19, “Hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him;” ver. 24, “Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.” So chap. <sup>1</sup>4:13, and chap. <sup>1</sup>5:2, and verse 19.

Therefore it must needs be very unreasonable to determine, that persons are hypocrites, and their affections wrong, because they seem to be out of doubt of their own salvation, and the affections they are the subjects of seem to banish all fears of hell.

On the other hand, it is no sufficient reason to determine that men are saints, and their affections gracious, because the affections they have are attended with an exceeding confidence that their state is good, and their affections divine.<sup>27</sup> Nothing can be certainly argued from their confidence, how great and strong soever it seems to be. If we see a man that boldly calls God his Father, and commonly speaks in the most bold, familiar, and appropriating language in prayer, “My Father, my dear Redeemer, my sweet Savior, my Beloved,” and the like; and it is a common thing for him to use the most confident expressions before men, about the goodness of his state; such as, I know certainly that God is my Father; I know so surely as there is a God in heaven, that he is my God; I know I shall go to heaven, as well as if I were there; I know that God is now manifesting himself to my soul, and is now smiling upon me;” and seems to have done forever with any inquiry or examination into his state, as a thing sufficiently known, and out of doubt, and to condemn all that so much as intimate or suggest that there is some reason to doubt or fear whether all is right; such things are no signs at all that it is indeed so as he is confident it is.<sup>28</sup> Such an overbearing, high-handed, and violent sort of confidence as this, so affecting to declare itself with a most glaring show in the sight of men, which is to be seen in many, has not the countenance of a true Christian assurance: it savors more of the spirit of the Pharisees, who

never doubted but that they were saints, and the most eminent of saints, and were bold to go to God, and come up near to him, and lift up their eyes, and thank him for the great distinction he had made between them and other men; and when Christ intimated that they were blind and graceless, despised the suggestion: ~~and~~ John 9:40, “And some of the Pharisees which were with him, heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?” If they had more of the spirit of the publican, with their confidence, who, in a sense of his exceeding unworthiness, stood afar off, and durst not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote on his breast, and cried out of himself as a sinner, their confidence would have more of the aspect of the confidence of one that humbly trusts and hopes in Christ, and has no confidence in himself.

If we do but consider what the hearts of natural men are, what principles they are under the dominion of, what blindness and deceit, what self-flattery, self-exaltation, and self-confidence reign there, we need not at all wonder that their high opinion of themselves, and confidence of their happy circumstances, be as high and strong as mountains, and as violent as a tempest, when once conscience is blinded, and convictions killed, with false high affections, and those forementioned principles let loose, fed up and prompted by false joys and comforts, excited by some pleasing imaginations, impressed by Satan, transforming himself into an angel of light.

When once a hypocrite is thus established in a false hope, he has not those things to cause him to call his hope in question, that oftentimes are the occasion of the doubting of true saints; as, first, he has not that cautious spirit, that great sense of the vast importance of a sure foundation, and that dread of being deceived. The comforts of the true saints increase awakening and caution, and a lively sense how great a thing it is to appear before an infinitely holy, just and omniscient Judge. But false comforts put an end to these things and dreadfully stupefy the mind. Secondly, The hypocrite has not the knowledge of his own blindness, and the deceitfulness of his own heart, and that mean opinion of his own understanding that the true saint has. Those that are deluded with false discoveries and affections, are evermore highly conceited of their light and understanding. Thirdly, The devil does not assault the hope of the hypocrite, as he does the hope of a true saint. The devil is a great enemy

to a true Christian hope, not only because it tends greatly to the comfort of him that hath it, but also because it is a thing of a holy, heavenly nature, greatly tending to promote and cherish grace in the heart, and a great incentive to strictness and diligence in the Christian life. But he is no enemy to the hope of a hypocrite, which above all things establishes his interest in him that has it. A hypocrite may retain his hope without opposition, as long as he lives, the devil never disturbing it, nor attempting to disturb it. But there is perhaps no true Christian but what has his hope assaulted by him. Satan assaulted Christ himself upon this, whether he were the Son of God or no: and the servant is not above his Master, nor the disciple above his Lord; it is enough for the disciple, that is most privileged in this world, to be as his Master. Fourthly, He who has a false hope, has not that sight of his own corruptions, which the saint has. A true Christian has ten times so much to do with his heart and its corruptions, as a hypocrite: and the sins of his heart and practice, appear to him in their blackness; they look dreadful; and it often appears a very mysterious thing, that any grace can be consistent with such corruption, or should be in such a heart. But a false hope hides corruption, covers it all over, and the hypocrite looks clean and bright in his own eyes.

There are two sorts of hypocrites: one that are deceived with their outward morality and external religion; many of whom are professed Arminians, in the doctrine of justification: and the other, are those that are deceived with false discoveries and elevations; who often cry down works, and men's own righteousness, and talk much of free grace; but at the same time make a righteousness of their discoveries and of their humiliation, and exalt themselves to heaven with them. These two kinds of hypocrites, Mr. Shepard, in his exposition of the Parable of the Ten Virgins, distinguishes by the name of legal and evangelical hypocrites; and often speaks of the latter as the worst. And it is evident that the latter are commonly by far the most confident in their hope, and with the most difficulty brought of from it: I have scarcely known the instance of such a one, in my life, that has been undeceived. The chief grounds of the confidence of many of them, are the very same kind of impulses and supposed revelations (sometimes with texts of Scripture, and sometimes without) that so many of late have had concerning future events; calling these impulses about their good estate, the witness of the Spirit; entirely misunderstanding the

nature of the witness of the Spirit, as I shall show hereafter. Those that have had visions and impulses about other things, it has generally been to reveal such things as they are desirous and fond of: and no wonder that persons who give heed to such things, have the same sort of visions or impressions about their own eternal salvation, to reveal to them that their sins are forgiven them, that their names are written in the book of life, that they are in high favor with God, etc., and especially when they earnestly seek, expect, and wait for evidence of their election and salvation this way, as the surest and most glorious evidence of it. Neither is it any wonder, that when they have such a supposed revelation of their good estate, it raises in them the highest degree of confidence of it. It is found by abundant experience, that those who are led away by impulses and imagined revelations, are extremely confident: they suppose that the great Jehovah has declared these and those things to them; and having his immediate testimony, a strong confidence is the highest virtue. Hence they are bold to say, I know this or that-I know certainly-I am as sure as that I have a being, and the like; and they despise all argument and inquiry in the case. And above all things else, it is easy to be accounted for, that impressions and impulses about that which is so pleasing, so suiting their self-love and pride, as their being the dear children of God, distinguished from most in the world in his favor, should make them strongly confident; especially when with their impulses and revelations they have high affections, which they take to be the most eminent exercises of grace. I have known of several persons, that have had a fond desire of something of a temporal nature, through a violent passion that has possessed them; and they have been earnestly pursuing the thing they have desired should come to pass, and have met with great difficulty and many discouragements in it, but at last have had an impression, or supposed revelation, that they should obtain what they sought; and they have looked upon it as a sure promise from the Most High, which has made them most ridiculously confident, against all manner of reason to convince them to the contrary, and all events working against them. And there is nothing hinders, but that persons who are seeking their salvation, may be deceived by the like delusive impressions, and be made confident of that, the same way.

The confidence of many of this sort of hypocrites, that Mr. Shepard calls evangelical hypocrites, is like the confidence of some mad men, who think they are kings; they will maintain it against all manner of reason and evidence. And in one sense, it is much more immovable than a truly gracious assurance; a true assurance is not upheld, but by the soul's being kept in a holy frame, and Grace maintained in lively exercise. If the actings of grace do much decay in the Christian, and he falls into a lifeless frame, he loses his assurance: but this kind of confidence of hypocrites will not be shaken by sin; they (at least some of them) will maintain their boldness in their hope, in the most corrupt frames and wicked ways; which is a sure evidence of their delusion.<sup>29</sup>

And here I cannot but observe, that there are certain doctrines often preached to the people, which need to be delivered with more caution and explanation than they frequently are; for, as they are by many understood, they tend greatly to establish this delusion and false confidence of hypocrites. The doctrines I speak of are those of "Christians living by faith, not by sight; their giving glory to God, by trusting him in the dark; living upon Christ, and not upon experiences; not making their good frames the foundation of their faith:" which are excellent and important doctrines indeed, rightly understood, but corrupt and destructive, as many understand them. The Scripture speaks of living or walking by faith, and not by sight, in no other way than these, viz., a being governed by a respect to eternal things, that are the objects of faith, and are not seen, and not by a respect to temporal things, which are seen; and believing things revealed, that we never saw with bodily eyes; and also living by faith in the promise of future things, without yet seeing or enjoying the things promised, or knowing the way how they can be fulfilled. This will be easily evident to anyone who looks over the Scriptures, which speak of faith in opposition to sight; as ~~2~~2 Corinthians 4:18, and ~~4~~4:17 5:7, ~~8~~Hebrews 11:1, 8, 13, 17, 27, 29, ~~8~~Romans 8:24, ~~10~~John 20:29. But this doctrine, as it is understood by many, is, that Christians ought firmly to believe and trust in Christ, without spiritual sight or light, and although they are in a dark dead frame, and, for the present, have no spiritual experiences or discoveries. And it is truly the duty of those who are thus in darkness, to come out of darkness into light and believe. But that they should confidently believe and trust, while they yet remain without

spiritual light or sight, is an anti-scriptural and absurd doctrine. The Scripture is ignorant of any such faith in Christ of the operation of God, that is not founded in a spiritual sight of Christ. That believing on Christ, which accompanies a title to everlasting life, is a “seeing the Son, and believing on him,” <sup>AND</sup> John 6:40. True faith in Christ is never exercised, any further than persons “behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and have the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,” <sup>AND</sup> 2 Corinthians 3:18, and <sup>AND</sup> 4:6. They into whose minds “the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, does not shine, believe not,” <sup>AND</sup> 2 Corinthians 4:5. That faith, which is without spiritual light, is not the faith of the children of the light, and of the day; but the presumption of the children of darkness. And therefore to press and urge them to believe, without any spiritual light or sight, tends greatly to help forward the delusions of the prince of darkness. Men not only cannot exercise faith without some spiritual light, but they can exercise faith only just in such proportion as they have spiritual light. Men will trust in God no further than they know him; and they cannot be in the exercise of faith in him one ace further than they have a sight of his fullness and faithfulness in exercise. Nor can they have the exercise of trust in God, any further than they are in a gracious frame. They that are in a dead carnal frame, doubtless ought to trust in God; because that would be the same thing as coming out of their bad frame, and turning to God; but to exhort men confidently to trust in God, and so hold up their hope and peace, though they are not in a gracious frame, and continue still to be so, is the same thing in effect, as to exhort them confidentially to trust in God, but not with a gracious trust: and what is that but a wicked presumption? It is just as impossible for men to have a strong or lively trust in God, when they have no lively exercises of grace, or sensible Christian experiences, as it is for them to be in the lively exercises of grace, without the exercises of grace.

It is true, that it is the duty of God’s people to trust in him when in darkness, and though they remain still in darkness, in that sense, that they ought to trust in God when the aspects of his providence are dark, and look as though God had forsaken them, and did not hear their prayers, and many clouds gather, and many enemies surround them, with a formidable aspect, threatening to swallow them up, and all events of providence seem

to be against them, all circumstances seem to render the promises of God difficult to be fulfilled, and God must be trusted out of sight, i.e., when we cannot see which way it is possible for him to fulfill his word; everything but God's mere word makes it look unlikely, so that if persons believe, they must hope against hope. Thus the ancient Patriarchs, and Job, and the Psalmist, and Jeremiah, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, and the Apostle Paul, gave glory to God by trusting in God in darkness. And we have many instances of such a glorious victorious faith in the eleventh of Hebrews. But how different a thing is this, from trusting in God, without spiritual sight, and being at the same time in a dead and carnal frame!

There is also such a thing as spiritual light's being let into the soul in one way, when it is not in another; and so there is such a thing as the saints trusting in God, and also knowing their good estate, when they are destitute of some kinds of experience. As for instance, they may have clear views of God's sufficiency and faithfulness, and so confidently trust in him, and know that they are his children; and at the same time, not have those clear and sweet ideas of his love as at other times: for it was thus with Christ himself in his last passion. And they may have views of much of God's sovereignty, holiness, and all sufficiency, enabling them quietly to submit to him, and exercise a sweet and most encouraging hope in God's fullness, when they are not satisfied of their own good estate. But how different things are these, from confidently trusting in God, without spiritual light or experience!

Those that thus insist on persons living by faith, when they have no experience, and are in very bad frames, are also very absurd in their notions of faith. What they mean by faith is, believing that they are in a good estate. Hence they count it a dreadful sin for them to doubt of their state, whatever frames they are in, and whatever wicked things they do, because it is the great and heinous sin of unbelief; and he is the best man, and puts most honor upon God, that maintains his hope of his good estate the most confidently and immovably, when he has the least light or experience; that is to say, when he is in the worst and most wicked frame and way; because, forsooth, that is a sign that he is strong in faith, giving glory to God, and against hope believes in hope. But what Bible do they learn this notion of faith out of, that it is a man's confidently believing that



he is in a good estate? <sup>30</sup> If this be faith, the Pharisees had faith in an eminent degree; some of which, Christ teaches, committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost. The Scripture represents faith as that by which men are brought into a good estate; and therefore it cannot be the same thing as believing that they are already in a good estate. To suppose that faith consists in persons believing that they are in a good estate, is in effect the same thing, as to suppose that faith consists in a person's believing that he has faith, or believing that he believes.

Indeed persons doubting of their good estate, may in several respects arise from unbelief. It may be from unbelief, or because they have so little faith that they have so little evidence of their good estate: if they had more experience of the actings of faith, and so more experience of the exercise of grace, they would have clearer evidence that their state was good; and so their doubts would be removed. And then their doubting of their state may be from unbelief thus, when, though there be many things that are good evidences of a work of grace in them, yet they doubt very much whether they are really in a state of favor with God, because it is they, those that are so unworthy, and have done so much to provoke God to anger against them. Their doubts in such a case arise from unbelief, as they arise from want of a sufficient sense of, and reliance on, the infinite riches of God's grace, and the sufficiency of Christ for the chief of sinners. They may also be from unbelief, when they doubt of their state, because of the mystery of God's dealings with them; they are not able to reconcile such dispensations with God's favor to them; or when they doubt whether they have any interest in the promises, because the promises from the aspect of providence appear so unlikely to be fulfilled; the difficulties that are in the way are so many and great. Such doubting arises from want of dependence upon God's almighty power, and his knowledge and wisdom, as infinitely above theirs. But yet, in such persons, their unbelief, and their doubting of their state, are not the same thing; though one arises from the other.

Persons may be greatly to blame for doubting of their state, on such grounds as these last mentioned; and they may be to blame, that they have no more grace, and no more of the present exercises and experiences of it, to be an evidence to them of the goodness of their state: men are doubtless to blame for being in a dead, carnal frame; but when they are in such a

frame, and have no sensible experience of the exercises of grace, but on the contrary, are much under the prevalence of lusts and an unchristian spirit, they are not to blame for doubting their state. It is as impossible, in the nature of things, that a holy and Christian hope be kept alive, in its clearness and strength, in such circumstances, as it is to keep the light in the room, when the candle is put out; or to maintain the bright sunshine in the air, when the sun is gone down. Distant experiences, when darkened by present prevailing lust and corruption, never keep alive a gracious confidence and assurance; but that sickens and decays upon it, as necessarily as a little child by repeated blows on the head with a hammer. Nor is it at all to be lamented, that persons doubt of their state in such circumstances: but, on the contrary, it is desirable and every way best that they should. It is agreeable to that wise and merciful constitution of things, which God hath established, that it should be so. For so hath God contrived and constituted things, in his dispensations towards his own people, that when their love decays, and the exercises of it fail, or become weak, fear should arise; for then they need it to restrain them from sin, and to excite them to care for the good of their souls, and so to stir them up to watchfulness and diligence in religion: but God hath so ordered, that when love rises, and is in vigorous exercise, then fear should vanish, and be driven away; for then they need it not, having a higher and more excellent principle in exercise, to restrain them from sin, and stir them up to their duty. There are no other principles, which human nature is under the influence of, that will ever make men conscientious, but one of these two, fear or love; and therefore, if one of these should not prevail as the other decays, God's people, when fallen into dead and carnal frames, when love is asleep, would be lamentably exposed indeed: and therefore God has wisely ordained, that these two opposite principles of love and fear should rise and fall, like the two opposite scales of a balance; when one rises the other sinks. As light and darkness necessarily and unavoidably succeed each other; if light prevails, so much does darkness cease, and no more; and if light decays, so much does darkness prevail; so it is in the heart of a child of God: if divine love decays and falls asleep, and lust prevails, the light and joy of hope go out, and dark fear and doubting arises; and if, on the contrary, divine love prevails and comes into lively exercise, this brings in the brightness of hope, and drives away black lust, and fear with it. Love is the spirit of adoption, or the childlike principle; if

that slumbers, men fall under fear, which is the spirit of bondage, or the servile principle; and so on the contrary. And if it be so, that love, or the spirit of adoption, be carried to a great height, it quite drives away all fear, and gives full assurance; agreeable to that of the apostle, ~~CLAR~~ 1 John 4:18, "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear." These two opposite principles of lust and holy love, bring hope and fear into the hearts of God's children, in proportion as they prevail; that is, when left to their own natural influence, without something adventitious, or accidental intervening; as the distemper of melancholy, doctrinal ignorance, prejudices of education, wrong instruction, false principles, peculiar temptations, etc.

Fear is cast out by the Spirit of God, no other way than by the prevailing of love; nor is it ever maintained by his Spirit but when love is asleep. At such a time, in vain is all the saint's self-examinations, and poring on past experience, in order to establish his peace, and get assurance. For it is contrary to the nature of things, as God hath constituted them, that he should have assurance at such a time.

They therefore do directly thwart God's wise and gracious constitution of things, who exhort others to be confident in their hope, when in dead frames; under a notion of "living by faith, and not by sight, and trusting God in the dark, and living upon Christ, and not upon experiences;" and warn them not to doubt of their good estate, lest they should be guilty of the dreadful sin of unbelief. And it has a direct tendency to establish the most presumptuous hypocrites, and to prevent their ever calling their state in question, how much soever wickedness rages, and reigns in their hearts, and prevails in their lives; under a notion of honoring God, by hoping against hope, and confidently trusting in God, when things look very dark. And doubtless vast has been the mischief that has been done this way.

Persons cannot be said to forsake Christ, and live on their experiences of the exercises of grace, merely because they take them and use them as evidences of grace; for there are no other evidences that they can or ought to take. But then may persons be said to live upon their experiences, when they make a righteousness of them, and instead of keeping their eye on God's glory and Christ's excellency, they turn their eyes off these objects

without them, on to themselves, to entertain their minds, by viewing their own attainments, and high experiences, and the great things they have met with, and are bright and beautiful in their own eyes, and are rich and increased with goods in their own apprehensions, and think that God has as admiring an esteem of them, on the same account, as they have of themselves: this is living on experiences, and not on Christ; and is more abominable in the sight of God, than the gross immoralities of those who make no pretenses to religion. But this is a far different thing from a mere improving experiences as evidences of an interest in a glorious Redeemer.

But to return from this digression, I would mention one thing more under the general head that I am upon.

**XII.** Nothing can be certainly concluded concerning the nature of religious affections, that any are the subjects of, from this, that the outward manifestations of them, and the relation persons give of them, are very affecting and pleasing to the truly godly, and such as greatly gain their charity, and win their hearts.

The true saints have not such a spirit of discerning that they can certainly determine who are godly, and who are not. For though they know experimentally what true religion is, in the internal exercises of it; yet these are what they can neither feel, nor see, in the heart of another.<sup>31</sup> There is nothing in others, that comes within their view, but outward manifestations and appearances; but the Scripture plainly intimates, that this way of judging what is in men by outward appearances, is at best uncertain, and liable to deceit: ~~1~~ 1 Samuel 16:7, “The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.” ~~2~~ Isaiah 11:3, “He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears.”<sup>32</sup> They commonly are but poor judges, and dangerous counselors in soul cases, who are quick and peremptory in determining persons’ states, vaunting themselves in their extraordinary faculty of discerning and distinguishing, in these great affairs; as though all was open and clear to them. They betray one of these three things: either that they have had but little experience; or are persons of a weak judgment; or that they have a great degree of pride and self-confidence, and so ignorance of themselves. Wise and experienced men will proceed with great caution in such an affair.

When there are many probable appearances of piety in others, it is the duty of the saints to receive them cordially into their charity, and to love them and rejoice in them, as their brethren in Christ Jesus. But yet the best of men may be, when the appearances seem to them exceeding fair and bright, as entirely to gain their charity, and conquer their hearts. It has been common thing in the church of God, for such bright professors, that are received as eminent saints, among the saints, to fall away and come to nothing.<sup>33</sup> And this we need not wonder at, if we consider the things that have been already observed; what things it has been shown may appear in men who are altogether graceless. Nothing hinders but that all these things may meet together in men, and yet they be without a spark of grace in their hearts. They may have religious affections of many kinds together; they may have a sort of affection towards God, that bears a great resemblance of dear love to him; and so a kind of love to the brethren, and great appearances of admiration of God's perfections and works, and sorrow for sin, and reverence, submission, self-abasement, gratitude, joy, religious longings, and zeal for religion and the good of souls. And these affections may come after great awakenings and convictions of conscience; and there may be great appearances of a work of humiliation: and counterfeit love and joy, and other affections may seem to follow these, and one another, just in the same order that is commonly observable in the holy affections of true converts. And these religious affections may be carried to a great height, and may cause abundance of tears, yea, may overcome the nature of those who are the subjects of them, and may make them affectionate, and fervent, and fluent, in speaking of the things of God, and dispose them to be abundant in it; and may be attended with many sweet texts of Scripture, and precious promises, brought with great impression on their minds; and may dispose them with their mouths to praise and glorify God, in a very ardent manner, and fervently to call upon others to praise him, crying out of their unworthiness, and extolling free grace. And may, moreover, dispose them to abound in the external duties of religion, such as prayer, hearing the word preached, singing, and religious conference; and these things attended with a great resemblance of a Christian assurance, in its greatest height, when the saints mount on eagles' wings, above all darkness and doubting. I think it has been made plain, that there may be all these things, and yet there be nothing more than the common influences of the Spirit of God, joined with the delusions

of Satan, and the wicked and deceitful heart. — To which I may add, that all these things may be attended with a sweet natural temper, and a good doctrinal knowledge of religion, and a long acquaintance with the saints' way of talking, and of expressing their affections and experiences, and a natural ability and subtlety in accommodating their expressions and manner of speaking to the dispositions and notions of the hearers, and a taking decency of expression and behavior, formed by a good education. How great therefore may the resemblance be, as to all outward expressions and appearances, between a hypocrite and a true saint! Doubtless it is the glorious prerogative of the omniscient God, as the great searcher of hearts, to be able well to separate between sheep and goats. And what an indecent self-exaltation and arrogance it is, in poor, fallible, dark mortals, to pretend that they can determine and know, who are really sincere and upright before God, and who are not!

Many seem to lay great weight on that, and to suppose it to be what may determine them with respect to others' real piety, when they not only tell a plausible story, but when, in giving an account of their experiences, they make such a representation, and speak after such a manner, that they feel their talk; that is to say, when their talk seems to harmonize with their own experience, and their hearts are touched and affected and delighted, by what they hear them say, and drawn out by it, in dear love to them. But there is not that certainty in such things, and that full dependence to be had upon them, which many imagine. A true saint greatly delights in holiness; it is a most beautiful thing in his eyes; and God's work, in savingly renewing and making holy and happy, a poor, and before perishing soul, appears to him a most glorious work: no wonder, therefore, that his heart is touched, and greatly affected, when he hears another give a probable account of this work, wrought on his own heart, and when he sees in him probable appearances of holiness; whether those pleasing appearances have anything real to answer them, or no. And if he uses the same words, which are commonly made use of, to express the affections of true saints, and tells of many things following one another in an order, agreeable to the method of the experience of him that hears him, and also speaks freely and boldly, and with an air of assurance; no wonder the other thinks his experiences harmonize with his own. And if, besides all this, in giving his relation, he speaks with much affection; and, above all, if

in speaking he seems to show much affection to him to whom he speaks, such an affection as the Galatians did to the Apostle Paul; these things will naturally have a powerful influence, to affect and draw his hearer's heart, and open wide the doors of his charity towards him. David speaks as one who had felt Ahithophel's talk, and had once a sweet savor and relish of it. And therefore exceeding great was his surprise and disappointment, when he fell; it was almost too much for him: ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 55:12, 13, 14, "It was not an enemy — then I could have borne it; but it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance: we took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company."

It is with professors of religion, especially such as become so in a time of outpouring of the Spirit of God, as it is with blossoms in the spring; <sup>34</sup> there are vast numbers of them upon the trees, which all look fair and promising; but yet many of them never come to anything. And many of those, that in a little time wither up, and drop off, and rot under the trees; yet for a while look as beautiful and gay as others; and not only so, but smell sweet, and send forth a pleasant odor; so that we cannot, by any of our senses, certainly distinguish those blossoms which have in them that secret virtue, which will afterwards appear in the fruit, and that inward solidity and strength which shall enable them to bear, and cause them to be perfected by the hot summer sun, that will dry up the others. It is the mature fruit which comes afterwards, and not the beautiful colors and smell of the blossoms, that we must judge by. So new converts (professedly so), in their talk about things of religion, may appear fair, and be very savory, and the saints may think they talk feelingly. They may relish their talk, and imagine they perceive a divine savor in it, and yet all may come to nothing.

It is strange how hardly men are brought to be contented with the rules and directions Christ has given them, but they must needs go by other rules of their counsels which Christ ever delivered more plainly, than the rule. I know of no directions or councils which Christ ever delivered more plainly, than the rule he has given us, to guide our judging of others' sincerity, viz., that we should judge of the tree chiefly by the fruit: but yet this will not do; but other ways are found out, which are imagined to be more distinguishing and certain. And woeful have been the mischievous consequences of this arrogant setting up men's wisdom above the wisdom

of Christ. I believe many saints have gone much out of the way of Christ's word, in this respect: and some of them have been chastised with whips, and (I had almost said) scorpions, to bring them back again. But many things which have lately appeared, and do now appear, may convince that ordinarily those who have gone farthest this way, that have been most highly conceited of their faculty of discerning, and have appeared most forward, peremptorily and suddenly to determine the state of men's souls, have been hypocrites, who have known nothing of true religion.

In the parable of the wheat and tares, it is said, ~~413~~ Matthew 13:26, "When the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also." As though the tares were not discerned, nor distinguishable from the wheat, until then, as Mr. Flavel observes, <sup>35</sup> who mentions it as an observation of Jerome's, that "wheat and tares are so much alike, until the blade of the wheat comes to bring forth the ear, that it is next to impossible to distinguish them." And then Mr. Flavel adds, "How difficult soever it be to discern the difference between wheat and tares; yet doubtless the eye of sense can much easier discriminate them, than the most quick and piercing eye of man can discern the difference between special and common grace. For all saving graces in the saints, have their counterfeits in hypocrites; there are similar works in those, which a spiritual and very judicious eye may easily mistake for the saving and genuine effects of a sanctifying spirit."

As it is the ear of the fruit which distinguishes the wheat from the tares, so this is the true Shibboleth, that he who stands as judge at the passages of Jordan, makes use of to distinguish those that shall pass over Jordan into the true Canaan, from those that should be slain at the passages. For the Hebrew word Shibboleth signifies an ear of corn. And perhaps the more full pronunciation of Jephthah's friends, Shibboleth, may represent a full ear with fruit in it, typifying the fruits of the friends of Christ, the antitype of Jephthah; and the more lean pronunciation of the Ephraimites, his enemies, may represent their empty ears, typifying the show of religion in hypocrites, without substance and fruit. This is agreeable to the doctrine we are abundantly taught in Scripture, viz., that he who is set to judge those that pass through death, whether they have a right to enter into the heavenly Canaan or no, or whether they should not be slain, will judge every man according to his works.



We seem to be taught the same things, by the rules given for the priest's discerning the leprosy. In many cases it was impossible for the priest to determine whether a man had the leprosy, or whether he were clean, by the most narrow inspection of the appearances that were upon him, until he had waited to see what the appearances would come to, and had shut up the person who showed himself to him, one seven days after another; and when he judged, he was to determine by the hair, which grew out of the spot that was showed him, which was as it were the fruit that it brought forth.

And here, before I finish what I have to say under this head, I would say something to a strange notion some have of late been led away with, of certainly knowing the good estate that others are in, as though it were immediately revealed to them from heaven, by their love flowing out to them in an extraordinary manner. They argue thus, that their love being very sensible and great, it may be certainly known by them who feel it, to be a true Christian love: and if it be a true Christian love, the Spirit of God must be the author of it: and inasmuch as the Spirit of God who knows certainly, whether others are the children of God or no, and is a spirit of truth, is pleased by an uncommon influence upon them, to cause their love to flow out, in an extraordinary manner, towards such a person as a child of God; it must needs be, that this infallible Spirit, who deceives none, knows that that person is a child of God. But such persons might be convinced of the falseness of their reasoning, if they would consider whether or no it be not their duty, and what God requires of them, to love those as the children of God who they think are the children of God, and whom they have no reason to think otherwise of, from all that they can see in them, though God, who searches the hearts, knows them not to be his children.

If it be their duty, then it is good, and the want of it sin; and therefore surely the Spirit of God may be the author of it: the Spirit of God, without being a spirit of falsehood, may in such a case assist a person to do his duty, and keep him from sin. But then they argue from the uncommon degree and special manner, in which their love flows out to the person, which they think the Spirit of God never would cause, if he did not know the object to be a child of God. But then I would ask them, whether or no it is not their duty to love all such as they are bound to

think are the children of God, from all that they can see in them, to a very great degree, though God, from other things which he sees, that are out of sight to them, knows them not to be so. It is men's duty to love all whom they are bound in charity to look upon as the children of God, with a vastly dearer affection than they commonly do. As we ought to love Christ to the utmost capacity of our nature, so it is our duty to love those who we think are so near and dear to him as his members, with an exceeding dear affection, as Christ has loved us; and therefore it is sin in us not to love them so. We ought to pray to God that he would by his Spirit keep us from sin, and enable us to do our duty: and may not his Spirit answer our prayers, and enable us to do our duty, in a particular instance, without lying? If he cannot, then the Spirit of God is bound not to help his people to do their duty in some instances, because he cannot do it without being a spirit of falsehood. But surely God is so sovereign as that comes to, that he may enable us to do our duty when he pleases, and on what occasion he pleases. When persons think others are his children, God may have other ends in causing their exceedingly endeared love to flow out to them, besides revealing to them whether their opinion of them be right or no: he may have that merciful end in it to enable them to know their duty, and to keep them from that dreadful infinite evil, sin. And will they say God shall not show them that mercy in such a case? If I am at a distance from home, and hear, that in my absence my house is burnt, but my family have, in some extraordinary manner, all escaped the flames; and everything in the circumstances of the story, as I hear it, makes it appear very credible, it would be sin in me, in such a case, not to feel a very great degree of gratitude to God, though the story indeed be not true. And is not God so sovereign, that he may, if he pleases, show me that mercy on that occasion, and enable me to do my duty in a much further degree than I used to do it, and yet not incur the charge of deceitfulness in confirming a falsehood?

It is exceeding manifest, that error or mistake may be the occasion of a gracious exercise, and consequently a gracious influence of the Spirit of God by ~~540~~ Romans 14:6: "He that eateth to the Lord he eateth, and giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks!" The apostle is speaking of those, who through erroneous and needless scruples, avoided eating legally unclean meats. — By this it is

very evident, that there may be true exercises of grace, a true respect to the Lord, and particularly, a true thankfulness, which may be occasioned, both by an erroneous judgment and practice. And consequently, an error may be the occasion of those true holy exercises that are from the infallible Spirit of God. And if so, it is certainly too much for us to determine, to how great a degree the Spirit of God may give this holy exercise, on such an occasion.

This notion, of certainly discerning another's state, by love flowing out, is not only not founded on reason or Scripture, but it is anti-scriptural, it is against the rules of Scripture; which say not a word of any such way of judging the state of others as this, but direct us to judge chiefly by the fruits that are seen in them. And it is against the doctrines of Scripture, which do plainly teach us, that the state of others' souls towards God cannot be known by us, as in [Revelation 2:17](#): "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it." And [Romans 2:29](#), "He is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God." That by this last expression, "whose praise is not of men, but of God," the apostle has respect to the insufficiency of men to judge concerning him, whether he be inwardly a Jew or no (as they could easily see by outward marks, whether men were outwardly Jews), and would signify, that it belongs to God alone to give a determining voice in this matter, is confirmed by the same apostle's use of the phrase, in [1 Corinthians 4:5](#): "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart:" and then shall every man have praise of God. The apostle, in the two foregoing verses, says, "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord." And again, it is further confirmed, because the apostle, in this second chapter to the Romans, directs his speech especially to those who had a high conceit of their own holiness, made their boast of God, and were confident of their own discerning, and that they knew God's will, and approved the things which were excellent, or

tried the things that differ (as it is in the margin), ver. 19: “And were confident that they were guides of the blind, and a light to them which are in darkness, instructors of the foolish, teachers of babes; and so took upon them to judge others.” See ver. 1, and 17, 18, 19, 20.

And how arrogant must the notion be, that they have, who imagine they can certainly know others’ godliness, when that great Apostle Peter pretends not to say any more concerning Sylvanus, than that he was a faithful brother, as he supposed! ~~<4062~~ 1 Peter 5:12. Though this Sylvanus appears to have been a very eminent minister of Christ, and an evangelist, and a famous light in God’s church at that day, and an intimate companion of the apostles. See ~~<4009~~ 2 Corinthians 1:19, ~~<5000~~ 1 Thessalonians 1:1, and ~~<5002~~ 2 Thessalonians 1:1.

## PART 3

### SHOWING WHAT ARE DISTINGUISHING SIGNS OF TRULY GRACIOUS AND HOLY AFFECTIONS.

I COME now to the second thing appertaining to the trial of religious affections, which was proposed, viz., To take notice of some things, wherein those affections that are spiritual and gracious, do differ from those that are not so.

But before I proceed directly to the distinguishing characters, I would previously mention some things which I desire may be observed, concerning the marks I shall lay down.

**1.** That I am far from undertaking to give such signs of gracious affections, as shall be sufficient to enable any certainly to distinguish true affection from false in others; or to determine positively which of their neighbors are true professors, and which are hypocrites. In so doing, I should be guilty of that arrogance which I have been condemning. Though it be plain that Christ has given rules to all Christians, to enable them to judge of professors of religion, whom they are concerned with, so far as is necessary for their own safety, and to prevent their being led into a snare by false teachers, and false pretenders to religion; and though it be also beyond doubt, that the Scriptures do abound with rules, which may be very serviceable to ministers, in counseling and conducting souls committed to their care, in things appertaining to their spiritual and eternal state; yet it is also evident, that it was never God's design to give us any rules, by which we may certainly know, who of our fellow professors are his, and to make a full and clear separation between sheep and goats; but that, on the contrary, it was God's design to reserve this to himself, as his prerogative. And therefore no such distinguishing signs as shall enable Christians or ministers to do this, are ever to be expected to the world's end: for no more is ever to be expected from any signs, that are to be found in the word of God, or gathered from it, than Christ designed them for.

**2.** No such signs are to be expected, that shall be sufficient to enable those saints certainly to discern their own good estate, who are very low in

grace, or are such as have much departed from God, and are fallen into a dead, carnal, and unchristian frame. It is not agreeable to God's design (as has been already observed), that such should know their good estate: nor is it desirable that they should; but, on the contrary, every way best that they should not; and we have reason to bless God, that he has made no provision that such should certainly know the state that they are in, any other way than by first coming out of the ill frame and way they are in. Indeed it is not properly through the defect of the signs given in the word of God, that every saint living, whether strong or weak, and those who are in a bad frame, as well as others, cannot certainly know their good estate by them. For the rules in themselves are certain and infallible, and every saint has, or has had those things in himself, which are sure evidences of grace; for every, even the least act of grace is so. But it is through his defect to whom the signs are given. There is a twofold defect in that saint who is very low in grace, or in an ill frame, which makes it impossible for him to know certainly that he has true grace, by the best signs and rules which can be given him. First, a defect in the object, or the qualification to be viewed and examined. I do not mean an essential defect; because I suppose the person to be a real saint; but a defect in degree: grace being very small, cannot be clearly and certainly discerned and distinguished.

Things that are very small, we cannot clearly discern their form, or distinguish them one from another; though, as they are in themselves, their form may be very different. There is doubtless a great difference between the body of man, and the bodies of other animals, in the first conception in the womb: but yet if we should view the different embryos, it might not be possible for us to discern the difference, by reason of the imperfect state of the object; but as it comes to greater perfection, the difference becomes very plain. The difference between creatures of very contrary qualities, is not so plainly to be seen while they are very young; even after they are actually brought forth, as in their more perfect state. The difference between doves and ravens, or doves and vultures, when they first come out of the egg, is not so evident; but as they grow to their perfection, it is exceeding great and manifest. Another defect attending the grace of those I am speaking of is its being mingled with so much corruption, which clouds and hides it, and makes it impossible for it certainly to be known. Though different things that are before us, may

have in themselves many marks thoroughly distinguishing them one from another; yet if we see them only in a thick smoke, it may nevertheless be impossible to distinguish them. A fixed star is easily distinguishable from a comet, in a clear sky; but if we view them through a cloud, it may be impossible to see the difference. When true Christians are in an ill frame, guilt lies on the conscience; which will bring fear, and so prevent the peace and joy of an assured hope.

*Secondly.* There is in such a case a defect in the eye. As the feebleness of grace and prevalence of corruption, obscures the object; so it enfeebles the sight; it darkens the sight as to all spiritual objects, of which grace is one. Sin is like some distempers of the eyes, that make things to appear of different colors from those which properly belong to them, and like many other distempers, that put the mouth out of taste so as to disenable it from distinguishing good and wholesome food from bad, but everything tastes bitter.

Men in a corrupt and carnal frame, have their spiritual senses in but poor plight for judging and distinguishing spiritual things.

For these reasons no signs that can be given, will actually satisfy persons in such a case: let the signs that are given be never so good and infallible, and clearly laid down, they will not serve them. It is like giving a man rules, how to distinguish visible objects in the dark; the things themselves may be very different, and their difference may be very well and distinctly described to him; yet all is insufficient to enable him to distinguish them, because he is in the dark. And therefore many persons in such a case spend time in a fruitless labor, in poring on past experiences, and examining themselves by signs they hear laid down from the pulpit, or that they read in books; when there is other work for them to do, that is much more expected of them; which, while they neglect, all their self-examinations are like to be in vain if they should spend never so much time in them. The accursed thing is to be destroyed from their camp, and Achan to be slain; and until this be done they will be in trouble. It is not God's design that men should obtain assurance in any other way, than by mortifying corruption, and increasing in grace, and obtaining the lively exercises of it. — And although self-examination be a duty of great use and importance, and by no means to be neglected; yet it is not the principal

means, by which the saints do get satisfaction of their good estate. Assurance is not to be obtained so much by self-examination, as by action. The Apostle Paul sought assurance chiefly this way, even by “forgetting the things that were behind, and reaching forth unto those things that were before, pressing towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; if by any means he might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” And it was by this means chiefly that he obtained assurance:

✠1 Corinthians 9:26, “I therefore so run, not as uncertainly.” He obtained assurance of winning the prize, more by running, than by considering. The swiftness of his pace did more towards his assurance of a conquest, than the strictness of his examination. Giving all diligence to grow in grace, by adding to faith, virtue, etc., is the direction that the Apostle Peter gives us, for “making our calling and election sure, and having an entrance ministered to us abundantly, into Christ’s everlasting kingdom;” signifying to us, that without this, our eyes will be dim, and we shall be as men in the dark, that cannot plainly see things past or to come, either the forgiveness of our sins past, or our heavenly inheritance that is future, and far off, ✠2 Peter 1:5-11.<sup>36</sup>

Therefore, though good rules to distinguish true grace from counterfeit, may tend to convince hypocrites, and be of great use to the saints, in many respects; and among other benefits may be very useful to them to remove many needless scruples, and establish their hope; yet I am far from pretending to lay down any such rules, as shall be sufficient of themselves, without other means, to enable all true saints to see their good estate, or as supposing they should be the principal means of their satisfaction.

**3.** Nor is there much encouragement, in the experience of present or past times, to lay down rules or marks to distinguish between true and false affections, in hopes of convincing any considerable number of that sort of hypocrites, who have been deceived with great false discoveries and affections, and are once settled in a false confidence, and high conceit of their own supposed great experiences and privileges. Such hypocrites are so conceited of their own wisdom, and so blinded and hardened with a very great self-righteousness (but very subtle and secret, under the disguise of great humility), and so invincible a fondness of their pleasing conceit of their great exaltation, that it usually signifies nothing at all to lay before them the most convincing evidences of their hypocrisy. Their state



is indeed deplorable, and next to those who have committed the unpardonable sin. Some of this sort of persons seem to be most out of the reach of means of conviction and repentance. But yet the laying down good rules may be a means of preventing such hypocrites, and of convincing many of other kinds of hypocrites; and God is able to convince even this kind, and his grace is not to be limited, nor means to be neglected. And besides, such rules may be of use to the true saints, to detect false affections, which they may have mingled with true; and be a means of their religion's becoming more pure, and like gold tried in the fire.

Having premised these things, I now proceed directly to take notice of those things in which true religious affections are distinguished from false.

**I.** Affections that are truly spiritual and gracious, do arise from those influences and operations on the heart, which are spiritual, supernatural and divine.

I will explain what I mean by these terms, whence will appear their use to distinguish between those affections which are spiritual, and those which are not so.

We find that true saints, or those persons who are sanctified by the Spirit of God, are in the New Testament called spiritual persons. And their being spiritual is spoken of as their peculiar character, and that wherein they are distinguished from those who are not sanctified. This is evident, because those who are spiritual are set in opposition to natural men, and carnal men. Thus the spiritual man and the natural man are set in opposition one to another, ~~and~~ 1 Corinthians 2:14, 15: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things." The Scripture explains itself to mean an ungodly man, or one that has no grace, by a natural man: thus the Apostle Jude, speaking of certain ungodly men, that had crept in unawares among the saints, ver. 4, of his epistle, says, 5:19, "These are sensual, having not the Spirit." This the apostle gives as a reason why they behaved themselves in such a wicked manner as he had described. Here the word translated sensual, in the original is [psychikoi], which is the very same, which in those verses in ~~and~~ 1 Corinthians chap. 2 is translated natural. In the like manner, in the continuation of the same discourse, in the next verse

but one, spiritual men are opposed to carnal men; which the connection plainly shows mean the same, as spiritual men and natural men, in the foregoing verses; “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you, as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal;” i.e., as in a great measure unsanctified. That by carnal the apostle means corrupt and unsanctified, is abundantly evident, by <sup><417></sup>Romans 7:25, and <sup><418></sup>8:1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 19, 13, <sup><419></sup>Galatians 5:16, to the end, <sup><420></sup>Colossians 2:18. Now therefore, if by natural and carnal in these texts, be intended unsanctified, then doubtless by spiritual, which is opposed thereto, is meant sanctified and gracious.

And as the saints are called spiritual in Scripture, so we also find that there are certain properties, qualities, and principles, that have the same epithet given them. So we read of a “spiritual mind,” <sup><421></sup>Romans 8:6, 7, and of “spiritual wisdom,” <sup><422></sup>Colossians 1:9, and of “spiritual blessings,” <sup><423></sup>Ephesians 1:3.

Now it may be observed, that the epithet *spiritual*, in these and other parallel texts of the New Testament, is not used to signify any relation of persons or things to the spirit or soul of man, as the spiritual part of man, in opposition to the body, which is the material part. Qualities are not said to be spiritual, because they have their seat in the soul, and not in the body: for there are some properties that the Scripture calls *carnal* or *fleshly*, which have their seat as much in the soul, as those properties that are called *spiritual*. Thus it is with pride and self-righteousness, and a man’s trusting to his own wisdom, which the apostle calls *fleshly*, <sup><424></sup>Colossians 2:18. Nor are things called *spiritual*, because they are conversant about those things that are immaterial, and not corporeal. For so was the wisdom of the wise men, and princes of this world, conversant about spirits, and immaterial beings; which yet the apostle speaks of as natural men, totally ignorant of those things that are spiritual, 1 Corinthians chap. 2. But it is with relation to the Holy Ghost, or Spirit of God, that persons or things are termed spiritual in the New Testament. Spirit, as the word is used to signify the third person in the Trinity, is the substantive, of which is formed the adjective spiritual, in the holy Scriptures. Thus Christians are called spiritual persons, because they are born of the Spirit, and because of the indwelling and holy influences of the Spirit of God in them. And things are called spiritual as related to the Spirit of God; <sup><425></sup>1 Corinthians 2:13, 14, “Which things also we speak, not

in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Here the apostle himself expressly signifies, that by spiritual things, he means the things of the Spirit of God, and things which the Holy Ghost teacheth. The same is yet more abundantly apparent by viewing the whole context. Again, ◀R10 Romans 8:6, "To be carnally minded, is death; to be spiritually minded, is life and peace" The apostle explains what he means by being carnally and spiritually minded in what follows in the 9th verse, and shows that by being spiritually minded, he means a having the indwelling and holy influences of the Spirit of God in the heart: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, it so be the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The same is evident by all the context. But time would fail to produce all the evidence there is of this, in the New Testament.

And it must be here observed, that although it is with relation to the Spirit of God and his influences, that persons and things are called spiritual; yet not all those persons who are subject to any kind of influence of the Spirit of God, are ordinarily called spiritual in the New Testament. They who have only the common influences of God's Spirit, are not so called, in the places cited above, but only those who have the special, gracious, and saving influences of God's Spirit; as is evident, because it has been already proved, that by spiritual men is meant godly men, in opposition to natural, carnal, and unsanctified men. And it is most plain, that the apostle by spiritually minded, ◀R10 Romans 8:6, means graciously minded. And though the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which natural men might have, are sometimes called spiritual, because they are from the Spirit; yet natural men, whatever gifts of the Spirit they had, were not, in the usual language of the New Testament, called spiritual persons. For it was not by men's having the gifts of the Spirit, but by their having the virtues of the Spirit, that they were called spiritual; as is apparent by ◀R10 Galatians 6:1: "Brethren, if any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness." Meekness is one of those virtues which the apostle had just spoken of, in the verses next preceding, showing what are the fruits of the Spirit. Those qualifications are said to

be spiritual in the language of the New Testament, which are truly gracious and holy, and peculiar to the saints.

Thus, when we read of spiritual wisdom and understanding (as in <sup><500></sup>Colossians 1:9, “We desire that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding”), hereby is intended that wisdom which is gracious, and from the sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God. For, doubtless, by spiritual wisdom is meant that which is opposite to what the Scripture calls natural wisdom; as the spiritual man is opposed to the natural man. And therefore spiritual wisdom is doubtless the same with that wisdom which is from above, that the Apostle James speaks of, <sup><5087></sup>James 3:17: “The wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, ” etc., for this the apostle opposes to natural wisdom, ver. 15: “This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual” — the last word in the original is the same that is translated *natural*, in <sup><4124></sup>1 Corinthians 2:14.

So that although natural men may be the subjects of many influences of the Spirit of God, as is evident by many Scriptures, as <sup><921></sup>Numbers 24:2, <sup><900></sup>1 Samuel 10:10, and <sup><910></sup>11:6, and <sup><914></sup>16:14, <sup><431></sup>1 Corinthians 13:1, 2, 3, <sup><308></sup>Hebrews 6:4, 5, 6, and many others; yet they are not, in the sense of the Scripture, spiritual persons; neither are any of those effects, common gifts, qualities, or affections, that are from the influence of the Spirit of God upon them, called spiritual things. The great difference lies in these two things.

**1.** The Spirit of God is given to the true saints to dwell in them, as his proper lasting abode; and to influence their hearts, as a principle of new nature or as a divine supernatural spring of life and action. The Scriptures represent the Holy Spirit not only as moving, and occasionally influencing the saints, but as dwelling in them as his temple, his proper abode, and everlasting dwelling place, <sup><486></sup>1 Corinthians 3:16, <sup><406></sup>2 Corinthians 6:16, <sup><346></sup>John 14:16, 17. And he is represented as being there so united to the faculties of the soul, that he becomes there a principle or spring of new nature and life.

So the saints are said to live by Christ living in them, <sup><421></sup>Galatians 2:20. Christ by his Spirit not only *is* in them, but *lives* in them; and so that they live by his life; so is his Spirit united to them, as a principle of life in them;

they do not only drink living water, but this “living water becomes a well or fountain of water,” in the soul, “springing up into spiritual and everlasting life,” ~~John~~ John 4:14, and thus becomes a principle of life in them. This living water, this evangelist himself explains to intend the Spirit of God, chap. ~~7:38~~ 7:38, 39. The light of the Sun of righteousness does not only shine upon them, but is so communicated to them that they shine also, and become little images of that Sun which shines upon them; the sap of the true vine is not only conveyed into them, as the sap of a tree may be conveyed into a vessel, but is conveyed as sap is from a tree into one of its living branches, where it becomes a principle of life. The Spirit of God being thus communicated and united to the saints, they are from thence properly denominated from it, and are called *spiritual*.

On the other hand, though the Spirit of God may many ways influence natural men; yet because it is not thus communicated to them, as an indwelling principle, they do not derive any denomination or character from it: for, there being no union, it is not their own. The light may shine upon a body that is very dark or black; and though that body be the subject of the light, yet, because the light becomes no principle of light in it, so as to cause the body to shine, hence that body does not properly receive its denomination from it, so as to be called a lightsome body. So the Spirit of God acting upon the soul only, without communicating itself to be an active principle in it, cannot denominate it spiritual. A body that continues black, may be said not to have light, though the light shines upon it: so natural men are said “not to have the Spirit,” ~~Jude~~ Jude 19, sensual or natural (as the word is elsewhere rendered), having not the Spirit.

**2.** Another reason why the saints and their virtues are called spiritual (which is the principal thing) is, that the Spirit of God, dwelling as a vital principle in their souls, there produces those effects wherein he exerts and communicates himself in his own proper nature. Holiness is the nature of the Spirit of God, therefore he is called in Scripture the Holy Ghost. Holiness, which is as it were the beauty and sweetness of the divine nature, is as much the proper nature of the Holy Spirit, as heat is the nature of fire, or sweetness was the nature of that holy anointing oil, which was the principal type of the Holy Ghost in the Mosaic dispensation; yea, I may rather say, that holiness is as much the proper

nature of the Holy Ghost, as sweetness was the nature of the sweet odor of that ointment. The Spirit of God so dwells in the hearts of the saints, that he there, as a seed or spring of life, exerts and communicates himself, in this his sweet and divine nature, making the soul a partaker of God's beauty and Christ's joy, so that the saint has truly fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, in thus having the communion or participation of the Holy Ghost. The grace which is in the hearts of the saints, is of the same nature with the divine holiness, as much as it is possible for that holiness to be, which is infinitely less in degree; as the brightness that is in a diamond which the sun shines upon, is of the same nature with the brightness of the sun, but only that it is as nothing to it in degree. Therefore Christ says, <sup><RB></sup>John 3:6, "That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit;" i.e., the grace that is begotten in the hearts of the saints, is something of the same nature with that Spirit, and so is properly called a spiritual nature; after the same manner as that which is born of the flesh is flesh, or that which is born of corrupt nature is corrupt nature.

But the Spirit of God never influences the minds of natural men after this manner. Though he may influence them many ways, yet he never, in any of his influences, communicates himself to them in his own proper nature. Indeed he never acts disagreeably to his nature, either on the minds of saints or sinners: but the Spirit of God may act upon men agreeably to his own nature, and not exert his proper nature in the acts and exercises of their minds: the Spirit of God may act so, that his actions may be agreeable to his nature, and yet may not at all communicate himself in his proper nature, in the effect of that action. Thus, for instance, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and there was nothing disagreeable to his nature in that action; but yet he did not at all communicate himself in that action, there was nothing of the proper nature of the Holy Spirit in that motion of the waters. And so he may act upon the minds of men many ways, and not communicate himself any more than when he acts on inanimate things.

Thus not only the manner of the relation of the Spirit, who is the operator, to the subject of his operations, is different; as the Spirit operates in the saints, as dwelling in them, as an abiding principle of action, whereas he doth not so operate upon sinners; but the influence and operation itself is different, and the effect wrought exceeding different. So that not only the

persons are called spiritual, as having the Spirit of God dwelling in them; but those qualifications, affections, and experiences, that are wrought in them by the Spirit, are also spiritual, and therein differ vastly in their nature and kind from all that a natural man is or can be the subject of, while he remains in a natural state; and also from all that men or devils can be the authors of. It is a spiritual work in this high sense; and therefore above all other works is peculiar to the Spirit of God. There is no work so high and excellent; for there is no work wherein God doth so much communicate himself, and wherein the mere creature hath, in so high a sense a participation of God; so that it is expressed in Scripture by the saints “being made partakers of the divine nature,” <sup><B004></sup>2 Peter 1:4, and “having God dwelling in them, and they in God,” <sup><B012></sup>1 John 4:12, 15, 16, and chap. <sup><B021></sup>3:21; “and having Christ in them,” <sup><B021></sup>John 17:21, <sup><B030></sup>Romans 8:10; “being the temples of the living God,” <sup><B036></sup>2 Corinthians 6:16; “living by Christ’s life,” <sup><B021></sup>Galatians 2:20; “being made partakers of God’s holiness,” <sup><B021></sup>Hebrews 12:10; “having Christ’s love dwelling in them,” <sup><B026></sup>John 17:26; “having his joy fulfilled in them,” <sup><B013></sup>John 17:13; “seeing light in God’s light, and being made to drink of the river of God’s pleasures,” <sup><B036></sup>Psalms 36:8, 9; “having fellowship with God, or communicating and partaking with him (as the word signifies),” <sup><B013></sup>1 John 1:3. Not that the saints are made partakers of the essence of God, and so are godded with God, and christed with Christ, according to the abominable and blasphemous language and notions of some heretics: but, to use the Scripture phrase, they are made partakers of God’s fullness, <sup><B037></sup>Ephesians 3:17, 18, 19, <sup><B016></sup>John 1:16, that is, of God’s spiritual beauty and happiness, according to the measure and capacity of a creature; for so it is evident the word fullness signifies in Scripture language. Grace in the hearts of the saints, being therefore the most glorious work of God, wherein he communicates of the goodness of his nature, it is doubtless his peculiar work, and in an eminent manner above the power of all creatures. And the influences of the Spirit of God in this, being thus peculiar to God, and being those wherein God does, in so high a manner, communicate himself, and make the creature partaker of the divine nature (the Spirit of God communicating itself in its own proper nature); this is what I mean by those influences that are divine, when I say that “truly gracious affections do arise from those influences that are spiritual and divine.”

The true saints only have that which is spiritual; others have nothing which is divine, in the sense that has been spoken of. They not only have not these communications of the Spirit of God in so high a degree as the saints, but have nothing of that nature or kind. For the Apostle James tells us, that natural men have not the Spirit; and Christ teaches the necessity of a new birth, or of being born of the Spirit, from this, that he that is born of the flesh, has only flesh, and no spirit, <sup><400></sup>John 3:6. They have not the Spirit of God dwelling in them in any degree; for the apostle teaches, that all who have the Spirit of God dwelling in them, are some of his, <sup><400></sup>Romans 8:9-11. And a having the Spirit of God is spoken of as a certain sign that persons shall have the eternal inheritance; for it is spoken of as the earnest of it, <sup><400></sup>2 Corinthians 1:29, and <sup><405></sup>5:5, <sup><404></sup>Ephesians 1:14; and a having anything of the Spirit is mentioned as a sure sign of being in Christ, <sup><4043></sup>1 John 4:13: "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, because he hath given us of his Spirit." Ungodly men not only have not so much of the divine nature as the saints, but they are not partakers of it; which implies that they have nothing of it; for a being partaker of the divine nature is spoken of as the peculiar privilege of the true saints, <sup><4004></sup>2 Peter 1:4. Ungodly men are not "partakers of God's holiness," <sup><4021></sup>Hebrews 12:10. A natural man has no experience of any of those things that are spiritual: the apostle teaches us, that he is so far from it, that he knows nothing about them, he is a perfect stranger to them, the talk about such things is all foolishness and nonsense to him, he knows not what it means; <sup><4024></sup>1 Corinthians 2:14, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." And to the like purpose Christ teaches us that the world is wholly unacquainted with the Spirit of God, <sup><4047></sup>John 14:17: "Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." And it is further evident, that natural men have nothing in them of the same nature with the true grace of the saints, because the apostle teaches us, that those of them who go farthest in religion have no charity, or true Christian love, 1 Corinthians chap. 13. So Christ elsewhere reproves the Pharisees, those high pretenders to religion, that they "had not the love of God in them," <sup><4052></sup>John 5:42. Hence natural men have no communion or fellowship with Christ, or participation with him (as these words signify), for this is spoken of as the peculiar privilege of the saints, <sup><4003></sup>1 John 1:3, together



with ver. 6, 7, and ~~408~~1 Corinthians 1:8, 9. And the Scripture speaks of the actual being of a gracious principle in the soul, though in its first beginning, as a seed there planted, as inconsistent with a man's being a sinner, ~~409~~1 John 3:9. And natural men are represented in Scripture, as having no spiritual light, no spiritual life, and no spiritual being; and therefore conversion is often compared to opening the eyes of the blind, raising the dead, and a work of creation (wherein creatures are made entirely new), and becoming new-born children.

From these things it is evident, that those gracious influences which the saints are subjects of, and the effects of God's Spirit which they experience, are entirely above nature, altogether of a different kind from anything that men find within themselves by nature, or only in the exercise of natural principles; and are things which no improvement of those qualifications, or principles that are natural, no advancing or exalting them to higher degrees, and no kind of composition of them, will ever bring men to; because they not only differ from what is natural, and from everything that natural men experience, in degree and circumstances, but also in kind; and are of a nature vastly more excellent. And this is what I mean, by supernatural, when I say that gracious affections are from those influences that are supernatural.

From hence it follows, that in those gracious exercises and affections which are wrought in the minds of the saints, through the saving influences of the Spirit of God, there is a new inward perception or sensation of their minds, entirely different in its nature and kind, from anything that ever their minds were the subjects of before they were sanctified. For doubtless if God by his mighty power produces something that is new, not only in degree and circumstances, but in its whole nature, and that which could be produced by no exalting, varying, or compounding of what was there before, or by adding anything of the like kind; I say, if God produces something thus new in a mind, that is a perceiving, thinking, conscious thing; then doubtless something entirely new is felt, or perceived, or thought; or, which is the same thing, there is some new sensation or perception of the mind, which is entirely of a new sorts and which could be produced by no exalting, varying, or compounding of that kind of perceptions or sensations which the mind had before; or there is what some metaphysicians call a new simple idea. If grace be, in the sense above

described, an entirely new kind of principle, then the exercises of it are also entirely a new kind of exercises. And if there be in the soul a new sort of exercises which it is conscious of, which the soul knew nothing of before, and which no improvement, composition, or management of what it was before conscious or sensible of, could produce, or anything like it; then it follows that the mind has an entirely new kind of perception or sensation; and here is, as it were, a new spiritual sense that the mind has, or a principle of a new kind of perception or spiritual sensation, which is in its whole nature different from any former kinds of sensation of the mind, as tasting is diverse from any of the other senses; and something is perceived by a true saint, in the exercise of this new sense of mind, in spiritual and divine things, as entirely diverse from anything that is perceived in them, by natural men, as the sweet taste of honey is diverse from the ideas men have of honey by only looking on it, and feeling of it. So that the spiritual perceptions which a sanctified and spiritual person has, are not only diverse from all that natural men have after the manner that the ideas or perceptions of the same sense may differ one from another, but rather as the ideas and sensations of different senses do differ. Hence the work of the Spirit of God in regeneration is often in Scripture compared to the giving a new sense, giving eyes to see, and ears to hear, unstopping the ears of the deaf, and opening the eyes of them that were born blind, and turning from darkness unto light. And because this spiritual sense is immensely the most noble and excellent, and that without which all other principles of perception, and all our faculties are useless and vain; therefore the giving this new sense, with the blessed fruits and effects of it in the soul, is compared to a raising the dead, and to a new creation.

This new spiritual sense, and the new dispositions that attend it, are no new faculties, but are new principles of nature. I use the word principles for want of a word of a more determinate signification. By a principle of nature in this place, I mean that foundation which is laid in nature, either old or new, for any particular manner or kind of exercise of the faculties of the soul; or a natural habit or foundation for action, giving a personal ability and disposition to exert the faculties in exercises of such a certain kind; so that to exert the faculties in that kind of exercises may be said to be his nature. So this new spiritual sense is not a new faculty of

understanding, but it is a new foundation laid in the nature of the soul, for a new kind of exercises of the same faculty of understanding. So that new holy disposition of heart that attends this new sense is not a new faculty of will, but a foundation laid in the nature of the soul, for a new kind of exercises of the same faculty of will.

The Spirit of God, in all his operations upon the minds of natural men, only moves, impresses, assists, improves, or some way acts upon natural principles; but gives no new spiritual principle. Thus when the Spirit of God gives a natural man visions, as he did Balaam, he only impresses a natural principle, viz., the sense of seeing, immediately exciting ideas of that sense; but he gives no new sense; neither is there anything supernatural, spiritual, or divine in it. So if the Spirit of God impresses on a man's imagination, either in a dream, or when he is awake, any outward ideas of any of the senses, either voices, or shapes and colors, it is only exciting ideas of the same kind that he has by natural principles and senses. So if God reveals to any natural man any secret fact: as, for instance, something that he shall hereafter see or hear; this is not infusing or exercising any new spiritual principle, or giving the ideas of any new spiritual sense; it is only impressing, in an extraordinary manner, the ideas that will hereafter be received by sight and hearing. — So in the more ordinary influences of the Spirit of God on the hearts of sinners, he only assists natural principles to do the same work to a greater degree, which they do of themselves by nature. Thus the Spirit of God by his common influences may assist men's natural ingenuity, as he assisted Bezaleel and Aholiab in the curious works of the tabernacle: so he may assist men's natural abilities in political affairs, and improve their courage and other natural qualifications, as he is said to have put his spirit on the seventy elders, and on Saul, so as to give him another heart: so God may greatly assist natural men's reason, in their reasoning about secular things, or about the doctrines of religion, and may greatly advance the clearness of their apprehensions and notions of things of religion in many respects, without giving any spiritual sense. So in those awakenings and convictions that natural men may have, God only assists conscience, which is a natural principle, to do that work in a further degree, which it naturally does. Conscience naturally gives men an apprehension of right and wrong, and suggests the relation there is between right and wrong, and a retribution:

the Spirit of God assists men's consciences to do this in a greater degree, helps conscience against the stupefying influence of worldly objects and their lusts. And so many other ways might be mentioned wherein the Spirit acts upon, assists, and moves natural principles; but after all it is no more than nature moved, acted and improved; here is nothing supernatural and divine. But the Spirit of God in his spiritual influences on the hearts of his saints, operates by infusing or exercising new, divine, and supernatural principles; principles which are indeed a new and spiritual nature, and principles vastly more noble and excellent than all that is in natural men.

From what has been said it follows, that all spiritual and gracious affections are attended with and do arise from some apprehension, idea, or sensation of mind, which is in its whole nature different, yea, exceeding different, from all that is, or can be in the mind of a natural man; and which the natural man discerns nothing of, and has no manner of idea of (agreeable to ~~4104~~ 1 Corinthians 2:14), and conceives of no more than a man without the sense of tasting can conceive of the sweet taste of honey, or a man without the sense of hearing can conceive of the melody of a tune, or a man born blind can have a notion of the beauty of the rainbow.

But here two things must be observed, in order to the right understanding of this.

**1.** On the one hand it must be observed, that not everything which in any respect appertains to spiritual affections, is new and entirely different from what natural men can conceive of, and do experience; some things are common to gracious affections with other affections; many circumstances, appendages and effects are common. Thus a saint's love to God has a great many things appertaining to it, which are common with a man's natural love to a near relation; love to God makes a man have desires of the honor of God, and a desire to please him; so does a natural man's love to his friend make him desire his honor, and desire to please him; love to God causes a man to delight in the thoughts of God, and to delight in the presence of God, and to desire conformity to God, and the enjoyment of God; and so it is with a man's love to his friend; and many other things might be mentioned which are common to both. But yet that idea which the saint has of the loveliness of God, and that sensation, and that kind of delight he has in that view, which is as it were the marrow and

quintessence of his love, is peculiar, and entirely diverse from anything that a natural man has, or can have any notion of. And even in those things that seem to be common, there is something peculiar; both spiritual and natural love cause desires after the object beloved; but they be not the same sort of desires: there is a sensation of soul in the spiritual desires of one that loves God, which is entirely different from all natural desires: both spiritual love and natural love are attended with delight in the object beloved; but the sensations of delight are not the same, but entirely and exceedingly diverse. Natural men may have conceptions of many things about spiritual affections; but there is something in them which is as it were the nucleus, or kernel of them, that they have no more conception of, than one born blind, has of colors.

It may be clearly illustrated by this: we will suppose two men; one is born without the sense of tasting, the other has it; the latter loves honey, and is greatly delighted in it, because he knows the sweet taste of it; the other loves certain sounds and colors; the love of each has many things that appertain to it, which is common; it causes both to desire and delight in the object beloved, and causes grief when it is absent, etc., but yet that idea or sensation which he who knows the taste of honey has of its excellency and sweetness, that is the foundation of his love, is entirely different from anything the other has or can have; and that delight which he has in honey is wholly diverse from anything that the other can conceive of, though they both delight in their beloved objects. So both these persons may in some respects love the same object: the one may love a delicious kind of fruit, which is beautiful to the eye, and of a delicious taste; not only because he has seen its pleasant colors, but knows its sweet taste; the other, perfectly ignorant of this, loves it only for its beautiful colors: there are many things seen, in some respect, to be common to both; both love, both desire, and both delight; but the love and desire, and delight of the one, is altogether diverse from that of the other. The difference between the love of a natural man and a spiritual man is like to this; but only it must be observed, that in one respect it is vastly greater, viz., that the kinds of excellency which are perceived in spiritual objects, by these different kinds of persons, are in themselves vastly more diverse than the different kinds of excellency perceived in delicious fruit, by a tasting and a tasteless man; and in another respect it may not be so

great, viz., as the spiritual man may have a spiritual sense or taste, to perceive that divine and most peculiar excellency but in small beginnings, and in a very imperfect degree.

**2.** On the other hand, it must be observed that a natural man may have those religious apprehensions and affections, which may be in many respects very new and surprising to him, and what before he did not conceive of; and yet what he experiences be nothing like the exercises of a principle of new nature, or the sensations of a new spiritual sense; his affections may be very new, by extraordinarily moving natural principles in a very new degree, and with a great many new circumstances, and a new co-operation of natural affections, and a new composition of ideas; this may be from some extraordinary powerful influence of Satan, and some great delusion; but there is nothing but nature extraordinarily acted. As if a poor man that had always dwelt in a cottage and, had never looked beyond the obscure village where he was born, should in a jest be taken to a magnificent city and prince's court, and there arrayed in princely robes, and set on the throne, with the crown royal on his head, peers and nobles bowing before him, and should be made to believe that he was now a glorious monarch; the ideas he would have, and the affections he would experience, would in many respects be very new, and such as he had no imagination of before; but all this is no more than extraordinarily raising and exciting natural principles, and newly exalting, varying, and compounding such sort of ideas, as he has by nature; here is nothing like giving him a new sense.

Upon the whole, I think it is clearly manifest, that all truly gracious affections do arise from special and peculiar influences of the Spirit, working that sensible effect or sensation in the souls of the saints, which are entirely different from all that is possible a natural man should experience, not only different in degree and circumstances, but different in its whole nature; so that a natural man not only cannot experience that which is individually the same, but cannot experience anything but what is exceeding diverse, and immensely below it, in its kind; and that which the power of men or devils is not sufficient to produce the like of, or anything of the same nature.

I have insisted largely on this matter, because it is of great importance and use evidently to discover and demonstrate the delusions of Satan, in many kinds of false religious affections, which multitudes are deluded by, and probably have been in all ages of the Christian church; and to settle and determine many articles of doctrine, concerning the operations of the Spirit of God, and the nature of true grace.

Now, therefore, to apply these things to the purpose of this discourse.

From hence it appears, that impressions which some have made on their imagination, or the imaginary ideas which they have of God or Christ, or heaven, or anything appertaining to religion, have nothing in them that is spiritual, or of the nature of true grace. Though such things may attend what is spiritual, and be mixed with it, yet in themselves they have nothing that is spiritual, nor are they any part of gracious experience.

Here, for the sake of common people, I will explain what is intended by impressions on the imagination and imaginary ideas. The imagination is that power of the mind whereby it can have a conception, or idea of things of an external or outward nature (that is, of such sort of things as are the objects of the outward senses) when those things are not present, and be not perceived by the senses. It is called imagination from the word image; because thereby a person can have an image of some external thing in his mind, when that thing is not present in reality, nor anything like it. All such things as we perceive by our five external senses, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling, are external things: and when a person has an idea or image of any of these sorts of things in his mind, when they are not there, and when he does not really see, hear, smell, taste, nor feel them; that is to have an imagination of them, and these ideas are imaginary ideas: and when such kinds of ideas are strongly impressed upon the mind, and the image of them in the mind is very lively, almost as if one saw them, or heard them, etc., that is called an impression on the imagination. Thus colors and shapes, and a form of countenance, they are outward things; because they are that sort of things which are the objects of the outward sense of seeing; and therefore when any person has in his mind a lively idea of any shape, or color, or form of countenance; that is to have an imagination of those things. So if he has an idea, of such sort of light or darkness, as he perceives by the sense of seeing; that is to have an idea of

outward light, and so is an imagination. So if he has an idea of any marks made on paper, suppose letters and words written in a book; that is to have an external and imaginary idea of such kind of things as we sometimes perceive by our bodily eyes. And when we have the ideas of that kind of things which we perceive by any of the other senses, as of any sounds or voices, or words spoken; this is only to have ideas of outward things, viz., of such kind of things as are perceived by the external sense of hearing, and so that also is imagination: and when these ideas are lively impressed, almost as if they were really heard with the ears, this is to have an impression on the imagination. And so I might go on, and instance in the ideas of things appertaining to the other three senses of smelling, tasting, and feeling.

Many who have had such things have very ignorantly supposed them to be of the nature of spiritual discoveries. They have had lively ideas of some external shape, and beautiful form of countenance; and this they call spiritually seeing Christ. Some have had impressed upon them ideas of a great outward light; and this they call a spiritual discovery of God's or Christ's glory. Some have had ideas of Christ's hanging on the cross, and his blood running from his wounds; and this they call a spiritual sight of Christ crucified, and the way of salvation by his blood. Some have seen him with his arms open ready to embrace them; and this they call a discovery of the sufficiency of Christ's grace and love. Some have had lively ideas of heaven, and of Christ on his throne there, and shining ranks of saints and angels; and this they call seeing heaven opened to them. Some from time to time have had a lively idea of a person of a beautiful countenance smiling upon them; and this they call a spiritual discovery of the love of Christ to their souls, and tasting the love of Christ. And they look upon it a sufficient evidence that these things are spiritual discoveries, and that they see them spiritually because they say they do not see these things with their bodily eyes, but in their hearts; for they can see them when their eyes are shut. And in like manner, the imaginations of some have been impressed with ideas of the sense of hearing; they have had ideas of words, as if they were sunken to them, sometimes they are the words of Scripture, and sometimes other words: they have had ideas of Christ's speaking comfortable words to them. These things they have called having the inward call of Christ, hearing the voice of Christ



spiritually in their hearts, having the witness of the Spirit, and the inward testimony of the love of Christ, etc.

The common and less considerate and understanding sort of people, are the more easily led into apprehensions that these things are spiritual things, because spiritual things being invisible, and not things that can be pointed forth with the finger, we are forced to use figurative expressions in speaking of them, and to borrow names from external and sensible objects to signify them by. Thus we call a clear apprehension of things spiritual by the name of *light*; and a having such an apprehension of such or such things, by the name of seeing such things; and the conviction of the judgment, and the persuasion of the will by the word of Christ in the gospel, we signify by spiritually hearing the call of Christ: and the scripture itself abounds with such like figurative expressions. Persons hearing these often used, and having pressed upon them the necessity of having their eyes opened, and having a discovery of spiritual things, and seeing Christ in his glory and having the inward call, and the like, they ignorantly look and wait for some such external discoveries, and imaginary views as have been spoken of; and when they have them are confident, that now their eyes are opened, now Christ has discovered himself to them, and they are his children; and hence are exceedingly affected and elevated with their deliverance and happiness, and many kinds of affections are at once set in a violent motion in them.

But it is exceedingly apparent that such ideas have nothing in them which is spiritual and divine, in the sense wherein it has been demonstrated that all gracious experiences are spiritual and divine. These external ideas are in no wise of such a sort, that they are entirely, and in their whole nature diverse from all that men have by nature, perfectly different from, and vastly above any sensation which it is possible a man should have by any natural sense or principle, so that in order to have them, a man must have a new spiritual and divine sense given him, in order to have any sensations of that sort: so far from this, that they are ideas of the same sort which we have by the external senses, that are some of the inferior powers of the human nature: they are merely ideas of external objects, or ideas of that nature, of the same outward, sensitive kind: the same sort of sensations of mind (differing not in degree, but only in circumstances) that we have by those natural principles which are common to us with the beasts, viz., the

five external senses. This is a low, miserable notion of spiritual sense, to suppose that it is only a conceiving or imagining that sort of ideas which we have by our animal senses, which senses the beasts have in as great perfection as we; it is, as it were, a turning Christ, or the divine nature in the soul, into a mere animal. There is nothing wanting in the soul, as it is by nature, to render it capable of being the subject of all these external ideas, without any new principles. A natural man is capable of having an idea, and a lively idea of shapes, and colors, and sounds, when they are absent, and as capable as a regenerate man is: so there is nothing supernatural in them. And it is known by abundant experience, that it is not the advancing or perfecting human nature, which makes persons more capable of having such lively and strong imaginary ideas, but that on the contrary, the weakness of body and mind, and distempers of body, make persons abundantly more susceptible of such impressions.<sup>37</sup>

As to a truly spiritual sensation, not only is the manner of its coming into the mind extraordinary, but the sensation itself is totally diverse from all that men have, or can have, in a state of nature, as has been shown. But as to these external ideas, though the way of their coming into the mind is sometimes unusual, yet the ideas in themselves are not the better for that; they are still of no different sort from what men have by their senses; they are of no higher kind, nor a whit better. For instance, the external idea a man has now of Christ hanging on the cross, and shedding his blood, is no better in itself, than the external idea that the Jews his enemies had, who stood round his cross, and saw this with their bodily eyes. The imaginary idea which men have now of an external brightness and glory of God, is no better than the idea the wicked congregation in the wilderness had of the external glory of the Lord at Mount Sinai, when they saw it with their bodily eyes; or any better than that idea which millions of cursed reprobates will have of the external glory of Christ at the day of judgment, who shall see, and have a very lively idea of ten thousand times greater external glory of Christ, than ever yet was conceived in any man's imagination:<sup>38</sup> yea, the image of Christ, which men conceive in their imaginations, is not in its own nature of any superior kind to the idea the Papists conceive of Christ, by the beautiful and affecting images of him which they see in their churches (though the way of their receiving the idea may not be so bad); nor are the affections they have, if built primarily on

such imaginations, any better than the affections raised in the ignorant people, by the sight of those images, which oftentimes are very great; especially when these images, through the craft of the priests, are made to move, and speak, and weep, and the like.<sup>39</sup> Merely the way of persons receiving these imaginary ideas, does not alter the nature of the ideas themselves that are received; let them be received in what way they will, they are still but external ideas, or ideas of outward appearances, and so are not spiritual. Yea, if men should actually receive such external ideas by the immediate power of the most high God upon their minds, they would not be spiritual, they would be no more than a common work of the Spirit of God; as is evident in fact, in the instance of Balaam, who had impressed on his mind, by God himself, a clear and lively outward representation or idea of Jesus Christ, as “the Star rising out of Jacob, when he heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High, and saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, ” ~~Gen~~ Numbers 24:16, 17, but yet had no manner of spiritual discovery of Christ; that Day Star never spiritually rose in his heart, he being but a natural man.

And as these external ideas have nothing divine or spiritual in their nature and nothing but what natural men, without any new principles, are capable of; so there is nothing in their nature which requires that peculiar, inimitable and unparalleled exercise of the glorious power of God, in order to their production, which it has been shown there is in the production of true grace. There appears to be nothing in their nature above the power of the devil. It is certainly not above the power of Satan to suggest thoughts to men; because otherwise he could not tempt them to sin. And if he can suggest any thoughts or ideas at all, doubtless imaginary ones, or ideas of things external, are not above his power;<sup>40</sup> for the external ideas men have are the lowest sort of ideas. These ideas may be raised only by impressions made on the body, by moving the animal spirits, and impressing the brain. — Abundant experience does certainly show, that alterations in the body will excite imaginary or external ideas in the mind; as often, in the case of a high fever, melancholy, etc. These external ideas are as much below the more intellectual exercises of the soul, as the body is a less noble part of man than the soul.

And there is not only nothing in the nature of these external ideas or imaginations of outward appearances, from whence we can infer that they

are above the power of the devil; but it is certain also that the devil can excite, and often hath excited such ideas. They were external ideas which he excited in the dreams and visions of the false prophets of old, who were under the influence of lying spirits, that we often read of in Scripture, as <sup><1831></sup>Deuteronomy 13:1., <sup><1222></sup>1 Kings 22:22, <sup><2331></sup>Isaiah 33:7, <sup><2331></sup>Ezekiel 13:7. And they were external ideas that he often excited in the minds of the heathen priests, magicians and sorcerers, in their visions and ecstasies, and they were external ideas that he excited in the mind of the man Christ Jesus, when he showed him all the kingdoms of the world, with the glory of them, when those kingdoms were not really in sight.

And if Satan or any created being, has power to impress the mind with outward representations, then no particular sort of outward representations can be any evidence of a divine power. Almighty power is no more requisite to represent the shape of man to the imagination, than the shape of anything else: there is no higher kind of power necessary to form in the brain one bodily shape or color than another: it needs a no more glorious power to represent the form of the body of a man, than the form of a chip or block; though it be of a very beautiful human body, with a sweet smile in his countenance, or arms open, or blood running from the hands, feet and side: that sort of power which can represent black or darkness to the imagination, can also represent white and shining brightness: the power and skill which can well and exactly paint a straw, or a stick of wood, on a piece of paper or canvass; the same in kind, only perhaps further improved, will be sufficient to paint the body of a man, with great beauty and in royal majesty, or a magnificent city, paved with gold, full of brightness, and a glorious throne, etc. So it is no more than the same sort of power that is requisite to paint one as the other of these on the brain. The same sort of power that can put ink upon paper, can put on leaf gold. So that it is evident to a demonstration, if we suppose it to be in the devil's power to make any sort of external representation at all on the fancy (as without doubt it is, and never anyone questioned it who believed there was a devil, that had any agency with mankind): I say, if so, it is demonstrably evident, that a created power may extend to all kinds of external appearances and ideas in the mind. From hence it again clearly appears, that no such things have anything in them that is spiritual, supernatural, and divine, in the sense in which it has been proved that all

truly gracious experiences have. And though external ideas, through man's make and frame, do ordinarily in some degree attend spiritual experiences, yet these ideas are no part of their spiritual experience, any more than the motion of the blood, and beating of the pulse, that attend experiences, are a part of spiritual experience. And though undoubtedly, through men's infirmity in the present state, and especially through the weak constitution of some persons, gracious affections which are very strong, do excite lively ideas in the imagination; yet it is also undoubted, that when persons' affections are founded on imaginations, which is often the case, those affections are merely natural and common, because they are built on a foundation that is not spiritual; and so are entirely different from gracious affections, which, as has been proved, do evermore arise from those operations that are spiritual and divine.

These imaginations do oftentimes raise the carnal affections of men to an exceeding great height: <sup>41</sup> and no wonder, when the subjects of them have an ignorant, but undoubting persuasion, that they are divine manifestations, which the great Jehovah immediately makes to their souls, therein giving them testimonies in an extraordinary manner, of his high and peculiar favor.

Again, it is evident from what has been observed and proved of the manner in which gracious operations and effects in the heart are spiritual, supernatural and divine, that the immediate suggesting of the words of Scripture to the mind has nothing in it which is spiritual.

I have had occasion to say something of this already; and what has been said may be sufficient to evince it; but if the reader bears in mind what has been said concerning the nature of spiritual influences and effects, it will be more abundantly manifest that this is no spiritual effect. For I suppose there is no person of common understanding, who will say or imagine that the bringing words (let them be what words they will) to the mind is an effect of that nature which it is impossible the mind of a natural man, while he remains in a state of nature, should be the subject of, or anything like it; or that it requires any new divine sense in the soul; or that the bringing sounds or letters to the mind, is an effect of so high, holy, and excellent a nature, that it is impossible any created power should be the cause of it.

As the suggesting words of Scripture to the mind, is only the exciting in the mind ideas of certain sounds or letters; so it is only one way of exciting ideas in the imagination; for sounds and letters are external things, that are the objects of the external senses of seeing and hearing. Ideas of certain marks upon paper, such as any of the twenty-four letters, in whatever order, or any sounds of the voice, are as much external ideas, as of any other shapes or sounds whatsoever; and therefore, by what has been already said concerning these external ideas, it is evident they are nothing spiritual; and if at any time the Spirit of God suggests these letters or sounds to the mind, this is a common, and not any special or gracious influence of that Spirit. And therefore it follows from what has been already proved, that those affections which have this effect for their foundation, are no spiritual or gracious affections. But let it be observed what it is that I say, viz., when this effect, even the immediate and extraordinary manner of words of Scripture's coming to the mind, is that which excites the affections, and is properly the foundation of them, then these affections are not spiritual. It may be so, that persons may have gracious affections going with Scriptures which come to their minds, and the Spirit of God may make use of those Scriptures to excite them; when it is some spiritual sense, taste or relish they have of the divine and excellent things contained in those Scriptures, that is the thing which excites their affections, and not the extraordinary and sudden manner of words being brought to their minds. They are affected with the instruction they receive from the words, and the view of the glorious things of God or Christ, and things appertaining to them, that they contain and teach; and not because the words came suddenly, as though some person had spoken them to them, thence concluding that God did as it were immediately speak to them. Persons oftentimes are exceedingly affected on this foundation; the words of some great and high promises of Scripture came suddenly to their minds, and they look upon the words as directed immediately by God to them, as though the words that moment proceeded out of the mouth of God as spoken to them: so that they take it as a voice from God, immediately revealing to them their happy circumstances, and promising such and such great things to them: and this it is that effects and elevates them. There is no near spiritual understanding of the divine things contained in the Scripture, or new spiritual sense of the glorious things taught in that part of the Bible going before their affection, and being the

foundation of it. All the new understanding they leave, or think they have, to be the foundation of their affection, is this, that the words are spoken to them, because they come so suddenly and extraordinarily. And so this affection is built wholly on the sand! Because it is built on a conclusion for which they have no foundation. For, as has been shown, the sudden coming of the words to their minds, is no evidence that the bringing them to their minds in that manner was from God. And if it was true that God brought the words to their minds, and they certainly knew it, that would not be spiritual knowledge; it may be without any spiritual sense: Balaam might know that the words which God suggested to him, were indeed suggested to him by God, and yet have no spiritual knowledge. So that these affections which are built on that notion, that texts of Scripture are sent immediately from God, are built on no spiritual foundation, and are vain and delusive. Persons who have their affections thus raised, if they should be inquired of, whether they have a new sense of the excellency of things contained in those Scriptures, would probably say, Yes, without hesitation: but it is true no otherwise than thus, that then they have taken up that notion, that the words are spoken immediately to them, that makes them seem sweet to them, and they own the things which these Scriptures say to them, for excellent things and wonderful things. As for instance supposing these were the words which were suddenly brought to their minds, *Fear not, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom*; they having confidently taken up a notion that the words were as it were immediately spoken from heaven to them, as an immediate revelation that God was their Father, and had given the kingdom to them, they are greatly affected by it, and the words seem sweet to them; and oh, they say, "they are excellent things that are contained in those words!" But the reason why the promise seems excellent to them, is only because they think it is made to them immediately; all the sense they have of any glory in them, is only from self-love, and from their own imagined interest in the words; not that they had any view or sense of the holy and glorious nature of the kingdom of heaven and the spiritual glory of that God who gives it, and of his excellent grace to sinful men, it offering and giving them this kingdom, of his own good pleasure preceding their imagined interest in these things, and their being affected by them, and being the foundation of their affection, and hope of an interest in them. On the contrary, they first imagine they are interested, and then are highly affected with that, and

then can own these things to be excellent. So that the sudden and extraordinary way of the Scripture's coming to their mind is plainly the first foundation of the whole; which is a clear evidence of the wretched delusion they are under.

The first comfort of many persons, and what they call their conversion, is after this manner: after awakening and terror, some comfortable sweet promise comes suddenly and wonderfully to their minds; and the manner of its coming makes them conclude it comes from God to them; and this is the very thing that is all the foundation of their faith, and hope, and comfort: from hence they take their first encouragement to trust in God and in Christ, because they think that God, by some Scripture so brought, has now already revealed to them that he loves them, and has already promised them eternal life, which is very absurd; for every one of common knowledge of the principles of religion, knows that it is God's manner to reveal his love to men, and their interest in the promises, after they have believed, and not before, because they must first believe before they have any interest in the promises to be revealed. The Spirit of God is a Spirit of truth and not of lies: he does not bring Scriptures to men's minds, to reveal to them that they have an interest in God's favor and promises, when they have none, having not yet believed: which would be the case, if God's bringing texts of Scripture to men's minds, to reveal to them that their sins were forgiven, or that it was God's pleasure to give them the kingdom, or anything of that nature, went before, and was the foundation of their first faith. No promise of the covenant of grace belongs to any man, until he has first believed in Christ; for it is by faith alone that we become interested in Christ, and the promises of the new covenant made in him: and therefore whatever spirit applies the promises of that covenant to a person who has not first believed, as being already his, must be a lying spirit, and that faith which is first built on such an application of promises is built upon a lie. God's manner is not to bring comfortable texts of Scripture to give men assurance of his love, and that they shall be happy, before they have had a faith of dependence.<sup>42</sup> And if the Scripture which comes to a person's mind, be not so properly a promise, as an invitation; yet if he makes the sudden or unusual manner of the invitations coming to his mind, the ground on which he believes that he is invited, it is not true faith; because it is built on that which is not the true ground of faith. True faith is built



on no precarious foundation: but a determination that the words of such a particular text were, by the immediate power of God, suggested to the mind, at such a time, as though then spoken and directed by God to him, because the words came after such a manner, is wholly an uncertain and precarious determination, as has been now shown; and therefore is a false and sandy foundation for faith; and accordingly that faith which is built upon it is false. The only certain foundation which any person has to believe that he is invited to partake of the blessings of the gospel, is, that the word of God declares that persons so qualified as he is, are invited, and God who declares it, is true, and cannot lie. If a sinner be once convinced of the veracity of God, and that the Scriptures are his word, he will need no more to convince and satisfy him that he is invited; for the Scriptures are full of invitations to sinners, to the chief of sinners, to come and partake of the benefits of the gospel; he will not want any never speaking of God to him; what he hath spoken already will be enough with him.

As the first comfort of many persons, and their affections at the time of their supposed conversion, are built on such grounds as these which have been mentioned; so are their joys and hopes and other affections, from time to time afterwards. They have often particular words of Scripture, sweet declarations and promises suggested to them, which by reason of the manner of their coming, they think are immediately sent from God to them, at that time, which they look upon as their warrant to take them, and which they actually make the main ground of their appropriating them to themselves, and of the comfort they take in them, and the confidence they receive from them. Thus they imagine a kind of conversation is carried on between God and them; and that God, from time to time, does, as it were, immediately speak to them, and satisfy their doubts, and testifies his love to them, and promises them supports and supplies, and his blessing in such and such cases, and reveals to them clearly their interest in eternal blessings. And thus they are often elevated, and have a course of a sudden and tumultuous kind of joys, mingled with a strong confidence, and high opinion of themselves; when indeed the main ground of these joys, and this confidence, is not anything contained in, or taught by these Scriptures, as they lie in the Bible, but the manner of their coming to them; which is a certain evidence of their delusion. There is no particular promise in the word of God that is the saint's, or is any

otherwise made to him, or spoken to him, than all the promises of the covenant of grace are his, and are made to him and spoken to him;<sup>43</sup> though it be true that some of these promises may be more peculiarly adapted to his case than others, and God by his Spirit may enable him better to understand some than others, and to have a greater sense of the preciousness, and glory, and suitableness of the blessings contained in them.

But here some may be ready to say, What, is there no such thing as any particular spiritual application of the promises of Scripture by the Spirit of God? I answer, there is doubtless such a thing as a spiritual and saving application of the invitations and promises of Scripture to the souls of men; but it is also certain, that the nature of it is wholly misunderstood by many persons, to the great ensnaring of their own souls, and the giving Satan a vast advantage against them, and against the interest of religion, and the church of God. The spiritual application of a Scripture promise does not consist in its being immediately suggested to the thoughts by some extrinsic agent, and being borne into the mind with this strong apprehension, that it is particularly spoken and directed to them at that time; there is nothing of the evidence of the hand of God in this effect, as events have proved, in many notorious instances; and it is a mean notion of a spiritual application of Scripture; there is nothing in the nature of it at all beyond the power of the devil, if he be not restrained by God; for there is nothing in the nature of the effect that is spiritual, implying any vital communication of God. A truly spiritual application of the word of God is of a vastly higher nature; as much above the devil's power, as it is, so to apply the word of God to a dead corpse, as to raise it to life; or to a stone, to turn it into an angel. A spiritual application of the word of God consists in applying it to the heart, in spiritually enlightening, sanctifying influences. A spiritual application of an invitation or offer of the gospel consists, in giving the soul a spiritual sense or relish of the holy and divine blessings offered, and the sweet and wonderful grace of the offerer, in making so gracious an offer, and of his holy excellency and faithfulness to fulfill what he offers, and his glorious sufficiency for it; so leading and drawing forth the heart to embrace the offer; and thus giving the man evidence of his title to the thing offered. And so a spiritual application of the promises of Scripture, for the comfort of the saints, consists in

enlightening their minds to see the holy excellency and sweetness of the blessings promised, and also the holy excellency of the promiser, and his faithfulness and sufficiency; thus drawing forth their hearts to embrace the promiser, and thing promised; and by this means, giving the sensible actings of grace, enabling them to see their grace, and so their title to the promise. An application not consisting in this divine sense and enlightening of the mind, but consisting only in the word's being borne into the thoughts, as if immediately then spoken, so making persons believe, on no other foundation, that the promise is theirs, is a blind application, and belongs to the spirit of darkness, and not of light.

When persons have their affections raised after this manner, those affections are really not raised by the word of God; the Scripture is not the foundation of them; it is not anything contained in those Scriptures which come to their minds, that raise their affections; but truly that effect, viz., the strange manner of the word's being suggested to their minds, and a proposition from thence taken up by them, which indeed is not contained in that Scripture, nor any other; as that his sins are forgiven him, or that it is the Father's good pleasure to give him in particular the kingdom, or the like. There are propositions to be found in the Bible, declaring that persons of such and such qualifications are forgiven and beloved of God: but there are no propositions to be found in the Bible declaring that such and such particular persons, independent on any previous knowledge of any qualifications, are forgiven and beloved of God: and therefore, when any person is comforted, and affected by any such proposition, it is by another word, a word newly coined, and not any word of God contained in the Bible.<sup>44</sup> And thus many persons are vainly affected and deluded.

Again, it plainly appears from what has been demonstrated, that no revelation of secret facts by immediate suggestion, is anything spiritual and divine, in that sense wherein gracious effects and operations are so.

By secret facts, I mean things that have been done, or are come to pass, or shall hereafter come to pass, which are secret in that sense that they do not appear to the senses, nor are known by any argumentation, or any evidence to reason, nor any other way, but only by that revelation by immediate suggestion of the ideas of them to the mind. Thus for instance, if it should be revealed to me, that the next year this land would be invaded

by a fleet from France, or that such and such persons would then be converted, or that I myself should then be converted; not by enabling me to argue out these events from anything which now appears in providence, but immediately suggesting and bearing in upon my mind, in an extraordinary manner, the apprehension or ideas of these facts, with a strong suggestion or impression on my mind, that I had no hand in myself, that these things would come to pass: or if it should be revealed to me, that this day there is a battle fought between the armies of such and such powers in Europe; or that such a prince in Europe was this day converted, or is now in a converted state, having been converted formerly, or that one of my neighbors is converted, or that I myself am converted; not by having any other evidence of any of these facts, from whence I argue them, but an immediate extraordinary suggestion or excitation of these ideas, and a strong impression of them upon my mind: this is a revelation of secret facts by immediate suggestion, as much as if the facts were future; for the facts being past, present, or future, alters not the case, as long as they are secret and hidden from my senses and reason, and not spoken of in Scripture, nor known by me any other way than by immediate suggestion. If I have it revealed to me, that such a revolution is come to pass this day in the Ottoman Empire, it is the very same sort of revelation, as if it were revealed to me that such a revolution would come to pass there this day come twelvemonth; because, though one is present and the other future, yet both are equally hidden from me, any other way than by immediate revelation. When Samuel told Saul that the asses which he went to seek were found, and that his father had left caring for the asses and sorrowed for him; this was by the same kind of revelation, as that by which he told Saul, that in the plain of Tabor there should meet him three men going up to God to Bethel (<sup>(900)</sup>1 Samuel 10:2, 3), though one of these things was future, and the other was not. So when Elisha told the king of Israel the words that the king of Syria spake in his bed-chamber, it was by the same kind of revelation with that by which he foretold many things to come.

It is evident that this revelation of secret facts by immediate suggestions, has nothing of the nature of a spiritual and divine operation, in the sense forementioned; there is nothing at all in the nature of the perceptions or ideas themselves, which are excited in the mind, that is divinely excellent, and so, far above all the ideas of natural men; though the manner of exciting

the ideas be extraordinary. In those things which are spiritual, as has been shown, not only the manner of producing the effect, but the effect wrought is divine, and so vastly above all that can be in an unsanctified mind. Now simply the having an idea of facts, setting aside the manner of producing those ideas, is nothing beyond what the minds of wicked men are susceptible of, without any goodness in them; and they all, either have or will have, the knowledge of the truth of the greatest and most important facts, that have been, are, or shall be.

And as to the extraordinary manner of producing the ideas or perception of facts, even by immediate suggestion, there is nothing in it, but what the minds of natural men, while they are yet natural men, are capable of, as is manifest in Balaam, and others spoken of in the Scripture. And therefore it appears that there is nothing appertaining to this immediate suggestion of secret facts that is spiritual, in the sense in which it has been proved that gracious operations are so. If there be nothing in the ideas themselves, which is holy and divine, and so nothing but what may be in a mind not sanctified, then God can put them into the mind by immediate power without sanctifying it. As there is nothing in the idea of a rainbow itself that is of a holy and divine nature; so that nothing hinders but that an unsanctified mind may receive that idea; so God, if he pleases, and when he pleases, immediately, and in an extraordinary manner, may excite that idea in an unsanctified mind. So also, as there is nothing in the idea or knowledge that such and such particular persons are forgiven and accepted of God, and entitled to heaven, but what unsanctified minds may have and will have concerning many at the day of judgment; so God can, if he pleases, extraordinarily and immediately, suggest this to, and impress it upon an unsanctified mind now: there is no principle wanting in an unsanctified mind, to make it capable of such a suggestion or impression, nor is there anything in it to exclude, or necessarily to prevent such a suggestion.

And if these suggestions of secret facts be attended with texts of Scripture, immediately and extraordinarily brought to mind, about some other facts that seem in some respects similar, that does not make the operation to be of a spiritual and divine nature. For that suggestion of words of Scripture is no more divine, than the suggestion of the facts themselves; as has been

just now demonstrated: and two effects together, which are neither of them spiritual cannot make up one complex effect, that is spiritual.

Hence it follows, from what has been already shown, and often repeated, that those affections which are properly founded on such immediate suggestions, or supposed suggestions, of secret facts, are not gracious affections. Not but that it is possible that such suggestions may be the occasion, or accidental cause of gracious affections; for so may a mistake and delusion; but it is never properly the foundation of gracious affections: for gracious affections, as has been shown, are all the effects of an influence and operation which is spiritual, supernatural, and divine. But there are many affections, and high affections, which some have, that have such kind of suggestions or revelations for their very foundation: they look upon these as spiritual discoveries, which is a gross delusion, and this delusion is truly the spring whence their affections flow.

Here it may be proper to observe, that it is exceedingly manifest from what has been said, that what many persons call the witness of the Spirit, that they are the children of God, has nothing in it spiritual and divine; and consequently that the affections built upon it are vain and delusive. That which many call the witness of the Spirit, is no other than an immediate suggestion and impression of that fact, otherwise secret, that they are converted, or made the children of God, and so that their sins are pardoned, and that God has given them a title to heaven. This kind of knowledge, viz., knowing that a certain person is converted, and delivered from hell, and entitled to heaven, is no divine sort of knowledge in itself. This sort of fact, is not that which requires any higher or more divine kind of suggestion, in order to impress it on the mind, than any other fact which Balaam had impressed on his mind. It requires no higher sort of idea or sensation, for a man to have the apprehension of his own conversion impressed upon him, than to have the apprehension of his neighbor's conversion, in like manner impressed: but God, if he pleased, might impress the knowledge of this fact, that he had forgiven his neighbor's sins, and given him a title to heaven, as well as any other fact, without any communication of his holiness: the excellency and importance of the fact, do not at all hinder a natural man's mind being susceptible of an immediate suggestion and impression of it. Balaam had as excellent, and important, and glorious facts as this, immediately impressed on his mind, without any

gracious influence; as particularly, the coming of Christ, and his setting up his glorious kingdom, and the blessedness of the spiritual Israel in his peculiar favor, and their happiness living and dying. Yea, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, had God's special favor to a particular person, even Abraham, revealed to him, <sup><0000></sup>Genesis 20:6, 7. So it seems that he revealed to Laban his special favor to Jacob, see <sup><0024></sup>Genesis 31:24, and <sup><0455></sup>Psalms 105:15. And if a truly good man should have an immediate revelation or suggestion from God, after the like manner concerning his favor to his neighbor or himself; it would be no higher kind of influence; it would be no more than a common sort of influence of God's Spirit; as the gift of prophecy, and all revelation by immediate suggestion is; see <sup><0012></sup>1 Corinthians 13:2. And though it be true, that it is not possible that a natural man should have that individual suggestion from the Spirit of God, that he is converted, because it is not true; yet that does not arise from the nature of the influence, or because that kind of influence which suggests such excellent facts, is too high for him to be the subject of; but purely from the defect of a fact to be revealed. The influence which immediately suggests this fact, when it is true, is of no different kind from that which immediately suggests other true facts: and so the kind and nature of the influence is not above what is common to natural men, with good men.

But this is a mean, ignoble notion of the witness of the Spirit of God given to his dear children, to suppose that there is nothing in the kind and nature of that influence of the Spirit of God, in imparting this high and glorious benefit, but what is common to natural men, or which men are capable of, and be in the mean time altogether unsanctified and the children of hell; and that therefore the benefit or gift itself has nothing of the holy nature of the Spirit of God in it, nothing of a vital communication of that Spirit. This notion greatly debases that high and most exalted kind of influence and operation of the Spirit, which there is in the true witness of the Spirit. <sup><045></sup> That which is called the witness of the Spirit, <sup><0007></sup>Romans 8, is elsewhere in the New Testament called the seal of the Spirit, <sup><0022></sup>2 Corinthians 1:22, <sup><0013></sup>Ephesians 1:13, and <sup><0013></sup>4:13, alluding to the seal of princes, annexed to the instrument, by which they advanced any of their subjects to some high honor and dignity, or peculiar privilege in the kingdom, as a token of their special favor. Which is an evidence that the influence of the Spirit, of the Prince of princes, in sealing his favorites, is far from being of a common

kind; and that there is no effect of God's Spirit whatsoever, which is in its nature more divine; nothing more holy, peculiar, inimitable and distinguishing of divinity: as nothing is more royal than the royal seal; nothing more sacred, that belongs to a prince, and more peculiarly denoting what belongs to him; it being the very end and design of it, to be the most peculiar stamp and confirmation of the royal authority, and great note of distinction, whereby that which proceeds from the king, or belongs to him, may be known from everything else. And therefore undoubtedly the seal of the great King of heaven and earth enstamped on the heart, is something high and holy in its own nature, some excellent communication from the infinite fountain of divine beauty and glory; and not merely a making known a secret fact by revelation or suggestion; which is a sort of influence of the Spirit of God, that the children of the devil have often been the subjects of. The seal of the Spirit is a kind of effect of the Spirit of God on the heart, which natural men, while such, are so far from a capacity of being the subjects of; that they can have no manner of notion or idea of it, agreeable to ~~REB~~ Revelation 2:17: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it." There is all reason to suppose that what is here spoken of, is the same mark, evidence, or blessed token of special favor, which is elsewhere called the seal of the Spirit.

What has misled many in their notion of that influence of the Spirit of God we are speaking of, is the word *witness*, its being called the witness of the Spirit. Hence they have taken it, not to be any effect or work of the Spirit upon the heart, giving evidence, from whence men may argue that they are the children of God; but an inward immediate suggestion, as though God inwardly spoke to the man, and testified to him, and told him that he was his child, by a kind of a secret voice, or impression: not observing the manner in which the word witness, or testimony, is often used in the New Testament, where such terms often signify, not only a mere declaring and asserting a thing to be true, but holding forth evidence from whence a thing may be argued, and proved to be true. Thus ~~REB~~ Hebrews 2:4, God is said to "bear witness, with signs and wonders and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost." Now these miracles, here spoken of, are called God's witness, not because they are of the nature of assertions, but evidences



and proofs. So <sup><4418></sup>Acts 14:3: “Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.” And <sup><4186></sup>John 5:36: “But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent of me.” Again, chap. <sup><4125></sup>10:25: “The works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of me.” So the water and the blood are said to bear witness, <sup><4188></sup>1 John 5:8, not that they spoke or asserted anything, but they were proofs and evidences. So God’s works of providence, in the rain and fruitful seasons, are spoken of as witnesses of God’s being and goodness, i.e., they are evidences of these things. And when the Scripture speaks of the seal of the Spirit, it is an expression which properly denotes, not an immediate voice or suggestion, but some work or effect of the Spirit, that is left as a divine mark upon the soul, to be an evidence by which God’s children might be known. The seals of princes were the distinguishing marks of princes: and thus God’s seal is spoken of as God’s mark, <sup><4188></sup>Revelation 7:3: “Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads;” together with <sup><4100></sup>Ezekiel 9:4, “Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that are done in the midst thereof.” When God sets his seal on a man’s heart by his Spirit, there is some holy stamp, some image impressed and left upon the heart by the Spirit, as by the seal upon the wax. And this holy stamp, or impressed image, exhibiting clear evidence to the conscience, that the subject of it is the child of God, is the very thing which in Scripture is called the seal of the Spirit, and the witness, or evidence of the Spirit. And this image enstamped by the Spirit on God’s children’s hearts, is his own image; that is the evidence by which they are known to be God’s children, that they have the image of their Father stamped upon their hearts by the Spirit of adoption. Seals anciently had engraven on them two things, viz., the image and the name of the person whose seal it was. Therefore when Christ says to his spouse, Cant. 8:6, “Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm;” it is as much as to say, let my name and image remain impressed there. The seals of princes were wont to bear their image; so that what they set their seal and royal mark upon, had their image left on it. It was the manner of princes of old to have their image engraven on their jewels and precious stones; and the image of Augustus

engraven on a precious stone, was used as the seal of the Roman emperors, in Christ's and the Apostle's times.<sup>46</sup> And the saints are the jewels of Jesus Christ, the great potentate, who has the possession of the empire of the universe; and these jewels have his image enstamped upon them by his royal signet, which is the Holy Spirit. And this is undoubtedly what the Scripture means by the seal of the Spirit; especially when it is stamped in so fair and clear a manner, as to be plain to the eye of conscience; which is what the Scripture calls our spirit. This is truly an effect that is spiritual, supernatural and divine. This is in itself of a holy nature, being a communication of the divine nature and beauty. That kind of influence of the Spirit which gives and leaves this stamp upon the heart, is such that no natural man can be the subject of anything of the like nature with it. This is the highest sort of witness of the Spirit, which it is possible the soul should be the subject of: if there were any such thing as a witness of the Spirit by immediate suggestion or revelation, this would be vastly more noble and excellent, and as much above it as the heaven is above the earth. This the devil cannot imitate; as to an inward suggestion of the Spirit of God, by a kind of secret voice speaking, and immediately asserting and revealing a fact, he can do that which is a thousand times so like to this, as he can to that holy and divine effect, or work of the Spirit of God, which has now been spoken of.

Another thing which is a full proof that the seal of the Spirit is no revelation of any fact by immediate suggestion, but is grace itself in the soul, is, that the seal of the Spirit is called in the Scripture, the *earnest of the Spirit*. It is very plain that the seal of the Spirit is the same thing with the earnest of the Spirit, by [2 Corinthians 1:22](#): "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts;" and [Ephesians 1:13, 14](#), "In whom, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory." Now the earnest is part of the money agreed for, given in hand, as a token of the whole, to be paid in due time; a part of the promised inheritance granted now, in token of full possession of the whole hereafter. But surely that kind of communication of the Spirit of God, which is of the nature of eternal glory, is the highest and most excellent kind of communication, something that is in its own nature spiritual, holy and divine, and far from

anything that is common: and therefore high above anything of the nature of inspiration, or revelation of hidden facts by suggestion of the Spirit of God, which many natural men have had. What is the earnest, and beginning of glory, but grace itself, especially in the more lively and clear exercises of it? It is not prophecy, nor tongues, nor knowledge, but that more excellent divine thing, “charity that never faileth,” which is a prelibation and beginning of the light, sweetness and blessedness of heaven, that world of love or charity. It is grace that is the seed of glory and dawning of glory in the heart, and therefore it is grace that is the earnest of the future inheritance. What is it that is the beginning or earnest of eternal life in the soul, but spiritual life; and what is that but grace? The inheritance that Christ has purchased for the elect, is the Spirit of God; not in any extraordinary gifts, but in his vital indwelling in the heart, exerting and communicating himself there, in his own proper, holy, or divine nature; and this is the sum total of the inheritance that Christ purchased for the elect. For so are things constituted in the affair of our redemption, that the Father provides the Savior or purchaser, and the purchase is made of him; and the Son is the purchaser and the price; and the Holy Spirit is the great blessing or inheritance purchased, as is intimated, <sup><B></sup>Galatians 3:13, 14; and hence the Spirit often is spoken of as the sum of the blessings promised in the gospel, <sup><B></sup>Luke 24:49, <sup><B></sup>Acts 1:4, and chap. <sup><B></sup>2:38, 39, <sup><B></sup>Galatians 3:14, <sup><B></sup>Ephesians 1:13. This inheritance was the grand legacy which Christ left his disciples and church, in his last will and testament, John chap. 14, 15, 16. This is the sum of the blessings of eternal life, which shall be given in heaven. (Compare <sup><B></sup>John 7:37, 38, 39, and <sup><B></sup>John 4:14, with <sup><B></sup>Revelation 21:6, and <sup><B></sup>22:1, 17.) It is through the vital communications and indwelling of the Spirit that the saints have all their light, life, holiness, beauty, and joy in heaven; and it is through the vital communications and indwelling of the same Spirit that the saints have all light, life, holiness, beauty and comfort on earth; but only communicated in less measure. And this vital indwelling of the Spirit in the saints, in this less measure and small beginning is, “the earnest of the Spirit, the earnest of the future inheritance, and the first fruits of the Spirit,” as the apostle calls it, <sup><B></sup>Romans 8:22, where, by “the first fruits of the Spirit,” the apostle undoubtedly means the same vital, gracious principle that he speaks of in all the preceding part of the chapter, which he calls Spirit, and sets in opposition to flesh or corruption. — Therefore this earnest of the

Spirit, and first fruits of the Spirit, which has been shown to be the same with the seal of the Spirit, is the vital, gracious, sanctifying communication and influence of the Spirit, and not any immediate suggestion or revelation of facts by the Spirit. <sup>47</sup>

And indeed the apostle, when in that, ~~ATM~~ Romans 8:16, he speaks of the Spirit's bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, does sufficiently explain himself, if his words were but attended to. What is here expressed is connected with the two preceding verses, as resulting from what the apostle had said there as every reader may see. The three verses together are thus: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God: for ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father: the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." Here, what the apostle says, if we take it together, plainly shows that what he has respect to, when he speaks of the Spirit's giving us witness or evidence that we are God's children, is his dwelling in us, and leading us, as a spirit of adoption, or spirit of a child, disposing us to behave towards God as to a Father. This is the witness or evidence which the apostle speaks of that we are children, that we have the spirit of children, or spirit of adoption. And what is that but the spirit of love? There are two kinds of spirits the apostle speaks of, the spirit of a slave or the spirit of bondage, that is fear; and the spirit of a child, or spirit of adoption, and that is love. The apostle says, we have not received the spirit of bondage, or of slaves, which is a spirit of fear; but we have received the more ingenuous noble spirit of children, a spirit of love, which naturally disposes us to go to God as children to a father, and behave towards God as children. And this is the evidence or witness which the Spirit of God gives us that we are his children. This is the plain sense of the apostle; and so undoubtedly he here is speaking of the very same way of casting out doubting and fear and the spirit of bondage, which the Apostle John speaks of, ~~QMB~~ 1 John 4:18, viz., by the prevailing of love, that is the spirit of a child. The spirit of bondage works by fear, the slave fears the rod: but love cries, Abba, Father; it disposes us to go to God, and behave ourselves towards God as children; and it gives us clear evidence of our union to God as his children, and so casts out fear. So that it appears that the witness of the Spirit the apostle speaks of, is far from being any

whisper, or immediate suggestion or revelation; but that gracious holy effect of the Spirit of God in the hearts of the saints, the disposition and temper of children, appearing in sweet childlike love to God, which casts out fear, or a spirit of a slave.

And the same thing is evident from all the context: it is plain the apostle speaks of the Spirit, over and over again, as dwelling in the hearts of the saints as a gracious principle, set in opposition to the flesh or corruption: and so he does in the words that immediately introduce this passage we are upon, ver. 13, “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live.”

Indeed it is past doubt with me, that the apostle has a more special respect to the spirit of grace, or the spirit of love, or spirit of a child, in its more lively actings; for it is perfect love, or strong love only, which so witnesses or evidences that we are children as to cast out fear, and wholly deliver from the spirit of bondage. The strong and lively exercises of a spirit of childlike, evangelical, humble love to God, give clear evidence of the soul’s relation to God as his child; which does very greatly and directly satisfy the soul. And though it be far from being true, that the soul in this case, judges only by an immediate witness without any sign or evidence; for it judges and is assured by the greatest sign and clearest evidence; yet in this case the saint stands in no need of multiplied signs, or any long reasoning upon them. And though the sight of his relative union with God, and his being in his favor, is not without a medium, because he sees it by that medium, viz., his love; yet his sight of the union of his heart to God is immediate: love, the bond of union, is seen intuitively: the saint sees and feels plainly the union between his soul and God; it is so strong and lively, that he cannot doubt of it. And hence he is assured that he is a child. How can he doubt whether he stands in a childlike relation to God, when he plainly sees a childlike union between God and his soul, and hence does boldly, and as it were naturally and necessarily cry, Abba, Father?

And whereas the apostle says, the Spirit bears witness with our spirits; by our spirit here, is meant our conscience, which is called the spirit of man, ~~and~~ Proverbs 20:17, “The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly.” We elsewhere read of the

witness of this spirit of ours: <sup>4112</sup>2 Corinthians 1:12, “For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience.” And <sup>4113</sup>1 John 3:19, 20, 21: “And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.” When the Apostle Paul speaks of the Spirit of God bearing witness with our spirit, he is not to be understood of two spirits that are two separate, collateral, independent witnesses; but it is by one that we receive the witness of the other: the Spirit of God gives the evidence by infusing and shedding abroad the love of God, the spirit of a child, in the heart, and our spirit, or our conscience, receives and declares this evidence for our rejoicing.

Many have been the mischiefs that have arisen from that false and delusive notion of the witness of the Spirit, that it is a kind of inward voice, suggestion, or declaration from God to man, that he is beloved of him, and pardoned, elected, or the like, sometimes with, and sometimes without a text of Scripture; and many have been the false and vain (though very high) affections that have arisen from hence. And it is to be feared that multitudes of souls have been eternally undone by it. I have therefore insisted the longer on this head. But I proceed now to a second characteristic of gracious affections.

**II.** The first objective ground of gracious affections, is the transcendently excellent and amiable nature of divine things as they are themselves; and not any conceived relation they bear to self, or self-interest.

I say, that the supremely excellent nature of divine things, is the first, or primary and original objective foundation of the spiritual affections of true saints; for I do not suppose that all relation which divine things bear to themselves, and their own particular interest, is wholly excluded from all influence in their gracious affections. For this may have, and indeed has, a secondary and consequential influence in those affections that are truly holy and spiritual, as I shall show how by and by.


It was before observed that the affection of love is, as it were, the fountain of all affection; and particularly that Christian love is the fountain of all gracious affections: now the divine excellency and glory of God and Jesus Christ the word of God, the works of God, and the ways of God, etc., is

the primary reason why a true saint loves these things; and not any supposed interest that he has in them, or any conceived benefit that he has received from them, or shall receive from them, or any such imagined relation which they bear to his interest, that self-love can properly be said to be the first foundation of his love to these things.

Some say that all love arises from self-love; and that it is impossible in the nature of things, for any man to have any love to God, or any other beings, but that love to himself must be the foundation of it. But I humbly suppose it is for want of consideration that they say so. They argue, that whoever loves God, and so desires his glory or the enjoyment of him, he desires these things as his own happiness; the glory of God, and the beholding and enjoying his perfections are considered as things agreeable to him, tending to make him happy; he places his happiness in them, and desires them as things, which (if they were obtained) would be delightful to him, or would fill him with delight and joy, and so make him happy. And so, they say, it is from self-love, or a desire of his own happiness, that he desires God should be glorified, and desires to behold and enjoy his glorious perfections. But then they ought to consider a little further, and inquire how the man came to place his happiness in God's being glorified, and in contemplating and enjoying God's perfections. — There is no doubt but that after God's glory, and the beholding his perfections, are become so agreeable to him, that he places his highest happiness in these things then he will desire them, as he desires his own happiness. But how came these things to be so agreeable to him, that he esteems it his highest happiness to glorify God, etc.? Is not this the fruit of love? A man must first love God or have his heart united to him, before he will esteem God's good his own, and before he will desire the glorifying, and enjoying of God as his happiness. It is not strong arguing, that because after a man has his heart united to God in love, as a fruit of this, he desires his glory and enjoyment, as his own happiness, that therefore a desire of this happiness of his own must needs be the cause and foundation of his love; unless it be a strong arguing, that because a father begat a son, therefore his son certainly begat him. If after a man loves God, and has his heart so united to him, as to look upon God as his chief good, and on God's good as his own, it will be a consequence and fruit of this, that even self-love, or love to his own happiness, will cause him to desire the glorifying and enjoying of

God; it will not thence follow, that this very exercise of self-love, went before his love to God, and that his love to God was a consequence and fruit of that. Something else, entirely distinct from self-love, might be the cause of this, viz., a change made in the views of his mind, and relish of his heart; whereby he apprehends a beauty, glory, and supreme good, in God's nature, as it is in itself. This may be the thing that first draws his heart to him, and causes his heart to be united to him, prior to all considerations of his own interest or happiness, although after this, and as a fruit of this, he necessarily seeks his interest and happiness in God.

There is such a thing as a kind of love or affection that a man may have towards persons or things, which does properly arise from self-love; a preconceived relation to himself, or some respect already manifested by another to him, or some benefit already received or depended on, is truly the first foundation of his love, and what his affection does wholly arise from; and is what precedes any relish of, or delight in the nature and qualities inherent in the being beloved, as beautiful and amiable. When the first thing that draws a man's benevolence to another, is the beholding those qualifications and properties in him, which appear to him lovely in themselves; and the subject of them, on this account, worthy of esteem and good will, love arises in a very different manners than when it first arises from some gift bestowed by another or depended on from him, as a judge loves and favors a man that has bribed him; or from the relation he supposes another has to him, as a man who loves another, because he looks upon him as his child. When love to another arises thus, it does truly and properly arise from self-love.

That kind of affection to God or Jesus Christ, which does thus properly arise from self-love, cannot be a truly gracious and spiritual love, as appears from what has been said already: for self-love is a principle entirely natural, and as much in the hearts of devils as angels; and therefore surely nothing that is the mere result of it can be supernatural and divine, in the manner before described.<sup>48</sup> Christ plainly speaks of this kind of love, as what is nothing beyond the love of wicked men:  Luke 6:32, "If ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? For sinners also love those that love them." And the devil himself knew that that kind of respect to God which was so mercenary, as to be only for benefits received or depended on (which is all one), is worthless in the sight of



God; otherwise he never would have made use of such a slander before God, against Job, as in ~~819~~ Job 1:9, 10: “Doth Job serve God for naught? Has not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house,” etc. Nor would God ever have implicitly allowed the objection to have been good, in case the accusation had been true, by allowing that that matter should be tried, and that Job should be so dealt with, that it might appear in the event, whether Job’s respect to God was thus mercenary or no, and by putting the proof of the sincerity and goodness of his respect upon that issue.

It is unreasonable to think otherwise, than that the first foundation of a true love to God, is that whereby he is in himself lovely, or worthy to be loved, or the supreme loveliness of his nature. This is certainly what makes him chiefly amiable. What chiefly makes a man, or any creature lovely, is his excellency; and so what chiefly renders God lovely, and must undoubtedly be the chief ground of true love, is his excellency. God’s nature, or the divinity, is infinitely excellent; yea it is infinite beauty, brightness, and glory itself. But how can that be true love of this excellent and lovely nature, which is not built on the foundation of its true loveliness? How can that be true love of beauty and brightness which is not for beauty and brightness’ sake? How can that be a true prizing of that which is in itself infinitely worthy and precious, which is not for the sake of its worthiness and preciousness? This infinite excellency of the divine nature, as it is in itself, is the true ground of all that is good in God in any respect; but how can a man truly and rightly love God, without loving him for that excellency in him, which is the foundation of all that is in any manner of respect good or desirable in him? They whose affection to God is founded first on his profitableness to them, their affection begins at the wrong end; they regard God only for the utmost limit of the stream of divine good, where it touches them, and reaches their interest; and have no respect to that infinite glory of God’s nature, which is the original good, and the true fountain of all good, the first fountain of all loveliness of every kind, and so the first foundation of all true love.

A natural principle of self-love may be the foundation of great affections towards God and Christ, without seeing anything of the beauty and glory of the divine nature. There is a certain gratitude that is a mere natural thing. Gratitude is one of the natural affections of the soul of man, as well as

anger, and there is a gratitude that arises from self-love, very much in the same manner that anger does. Anger in men is an affection excited against another, or in opposition to another, for something in him that crosses self-love: gratitude is an affection one has towards another, for loving him, or gratifying him, or for something in him that suits self-love. And there may be a kind of gratitude, without any true or proper love: as there may be anger without any proper hatred, as in parents towards their children, that they may be angry with, and yet at the same time have a strong habitual love to them. This gratitude is the principle which is an exercise in wicked men, in that which Christ declares concerning them, in the 6th of Luke, where he says, sinners love those that love them; and which he declares concerning even the publicans, who were some of the most carnal and profligate sort of men, <sup><4154></sup>Matthew 5:46. This is the very principle that is wrought upon by bribery, in unjust judges; and it is a principle that even the brute beasts do exercise; a dog will love his master that is kind to him. And we see in innumerable instances, that mere nature is sufficient to excite gratitude in men, or to affect their hearts with thankfulness to others for kindnesses received; and sometimes towards them, whom at the same time they have a habitual enmity against. Thus Saul was once and again greatly affected, and even dissolved with gratitude towards David, for sparing his life, and yet remained a habitual enemy to him. And as men, from mere nature, may be thus affected towards men; so they may towards God. There is nothing hinders but that the same self-love may work after the same manner towards God as towards men. And we have manifest instances of it in Scripture; as indeed the children of Israel, who sang God's praises at the Red Sea, but soon forgot God's works: and in Naaman the Syrian, who was greatly affected with the miraculous cure of his leprosy, so as to have his heart engaged thenceforward to worship the God that had healed him, and him only, excepting when it would expose him to be ruined in his temporal interest. So was Nebuchadnezzar greatly affected with God's goodness to him, in restoring him to his reason and kingdom, alter his dwelling with the beasts.

Gratitude being thus a natural principle, it renders ingratitude so much the more vile and heinous; because it shows a dreadful prevalence of wickedness, when it even overbears and suppresses the better principles of human nature: as it is mentioned as an evidence of the high degree of the

wickedness of many of the heathen, that they were without natural affection, ~~ROM~~ Romans 2:31. But that the want of gratitude, or natural affection, is evidence of a high degree of vice, is no argument that all gratitude and natural affection has the nature of virtue, or saving grace.

Self-love, through the exercise of mere natural gratitude, may be the foundation of a sort of love to God many ways. A kind of love may arise from a false notion of God, that men have been educated in, or have some way imbibed; as though he were only goodness and mercy, and not revenging justice; or as though the exercises of his goodness were necessary, and not free and sovereign; or as though his goodness were dependent on what is in them, and as it were constrained by them. Men on such grounds as these, may love a God of their own forming in their imaginations, when they are far from loving such a God as reigns in heaven.

Again, self-love may be the foundation of an affection in men towards God, through a great insensibility of their state with regard to God, and for want of conviction of conscience to make them sensible how dreadfully they have provoked God to anger; they have no sense of the heinousness of sin, as against God, and of the infinite and terrible opposition of the holy nature of God against it: and so, having formed in their minds such a God as suits them, and thinking God. to be such a one as themselves, who favors and agrees with them, they may like him very well, and feel a sort of love to him, when they are far from loving the true God. And men's affections may be much moved towards God, from self-love, by some remarkable outward benefits received from God; as it was with Naaman, Nebuchadnezzar, and the children of Israel at the Red Sea.

Again, a very high affection towards God may, and often does, arise in men, from an opinion of the favor and love of God to them, as the first foundation of their love to him. After awakenings and distress, through fears of hell, they may suddenly get a notion, through some impression on their imagination, or immediate suggestion with or without texts of Scripture, or by some other means, that God loves them, and has forgiven their sins, and made them his children; and this is the first thing that causes their affections to flow towards God and Jesus Christ: and then after this, and upon this foundation, many things in God may appear lovely to them,

and Christ may seem excellent. And if such persons are asked, whether God appears lovely and amiable in himself, they would perhaps readily answer, yes; when indeed, if the matter be strictly examined, this good opinion of God was purchased and paid for before ever they afforded it, in the distinguishing and infinite benefits they imagined they received from God: and they allow God to be lovely in himself, no otherwise than that he has forgiven them, and accepted them, and loves them above most in the world, and has engaged to improve all his infinite power and wisdom in preferring, dignifying, and exalting them, and will do for them just as they would have him. When once they are firm in this apprehension, it is easy to own God and Christ to be lovely and glorious, and to admire and extol them. It is easy for them to own Christ to be a lovely person, and the best in the world, when they are first firm in it, that he, though Lord of the universe, is captivated with love to them, and has his heart swallowed up in them, and prizes them far beyond most of their neighbors, and loved them from eternity, and died for them, and will make them reign in eternal glory with him in heaven. When this is the case with carnal men, their very lusts will make him seem lovely: pride itself will prejudice them in favor of that which they call Christ: selfish, proud man naturally calls that lovely that greatly contributes to his interest, and gratifies his ambition.

And as this sort of persons begin, so they go on. Their affections are raised from time to time, primarily on this foundation of self-love and a conceit of God's love to them. Many have a false notion of communion with God, as though it were carried on by impulses, and whispers, and external representations, immediately made to their imagination. These things they often have; which they take to be manifestations of God's great love to them, and evidences of their high exaltation above others of mankind; and so their affections, we often renewedly set agoing.


Whereas the exercises of true and holy love in the saints arise in another way. They do not first see that God loves them, and then see that he is lovely, but they first see that God is lovely, and that Christ is excellent and glorious, and their hearts are first captivated with this view, and the exercises of their love are wont from time to time to begin here, and to arise primarily from these views; and then, consequentially, they see God's love, and great favor to them.<sup>49</sup> The saint's affections begin with God; and self-love has a hand in these affections consequentially, and

secondarily only. On the contrary, those false affections begin with self, and an acknowledgment of an excellency in God, and an affectedness with it, is only consequential and dependent. In the love of the true saint God is the lowest foundation; the love of the excellency of his nature is the foundation of all the affections which come afterwards wherein self-love is concerned as a handmaid: on the contrary, the hypocrite lays himself at the bottom of all, as the first foundation, and lays on God as the superstructure; and even his acknowledgment of God's glory itself depends on his regard to his private interest.

Self-love may not only influence men, so as to cause them to be affected with God's kindness to them separately; but also with God's kindness to them as parts of a community: as a natural principle of self-love, without any other principle, may be sufficient to make a man concerned for the interest of the nation to which he belongs: as for instance, in the present war, self-love may make natural men rejoice at the successes of our nation, and sorry for their disadvantages, they being concerned as members of the body. So the same natural principle may extend further, and even to the world of mankind, and might be affected with the benefits the inhabitants of the earth have, beyond those of the inhabitants of other planets, if we knew that such there were, and how it was with them. So this principle may cause men to be affected with the benefits that mankind have received beyond the fallen angels. And hence men, from this principle, may be much affected with the wonderful goodness of God to mankind, his great goodness in giving his Son to die for fallen man, and the marvelous love of Christ in suffering such great things for us, and with the great glory they hear God has provided in heaven for us; looking on themselves as persons concerned and interested, as being some of this species of creatures so highly favored: the same principle of natural gratitude may influence men here, as in the case of personal benefits.

But these things that I have said do by no means imply, that all gratitude to God is a mere natural thing, and that there is no such thing as a spiritual gratitude, which is a holy and divine affection: they imply no more, than that there is a gratitude which is merely natural, and that when persons have affections towards God only or primarily for benefits received, their affection is only the exercise of a natural gratitude. There is doubtless such

a thing as a gracious gratitude, which does greatly differ from all that gratitude which natural men experience. It differs in the following respects:

**1.** True gratitude or thankfulness to God for his kindness to us, arises from a foundation laid before, of love to God for what he is in himself, whereas a natural gratitude has no such antecedent foundation. The gracious stirrings of grateful affection to God, for kindness received, always are from a stock of love already in the heart, established in the first place on other grounds, viz., God's own excellency; and hence the affections are disposed to flow out on occasions of God's kindness. The saint, having seen the glory of God, and his heart being overcome by it, and captivated with love to him on that account, his heart hereby becomes tender, and easily affected with kindnesses received. If a man has no love to another, yet gratitude be moved by some extraordinary kindness; as in Saul towards David: but this is not the same kind of thing, as a man's gratitude to a dear friend, that his heart was before possessed with a high esteem of, and love to; whose heart by this means became tender towards him, and more easily affected with gratitude, and affected in another manner. Self-love is not excluded from a gracious gratitude; the saints love God for his kindness to them:  Psalm 116:1, "I love the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplication." But something else is included; and another love prepares the way, and lays the foundation for these grateful affections.

**2.** In a gracious gratitude men are affected with the attribute of God's goodness and free grace not only as they are concerned in it, or as it affects their interest, but as a part of the glory and beauty of God's nature. That wonderful and unparalleled grace of God, which is manifested in the work of redemption, and shines forth in the face of Jesus Christ, is infinitely glorious in itself, and appears so to the angels; it is a great part of the moral perfection and beauty of God's nature. This would be glorious, whether it were exercised towards us or no; and the saint who exercises a gracious thankfulness for it, sees it to be so, and delights in it as such: though his concern in it serves the more to engage his mind and raise the attention and affection; and self-love here assists as a handmaid, being subservient to higher principles, to lead forth the mind to the view and contemplation, and engage and fix the attention, and heighten the joy and love. — God's kindness to them is a glass that God sets before them, wherein to behold the beauty of the attribute of God's goodness: the

exercises and displays of this attribute, by this means, are brought near to them, and set right before them. So that in a holy thankfulness to God, the concern our interest has in God's goodness is not the first foundation of our being affected with it; that was laid in the heart before, in that stock of love which was to God, for his excellency in himself, that makes the heart tender and susceptible of such impressions from his goodness to us. Poor is our own interest, or the benefits we have received, the only, or the chief objective ground of the present exercises of the affection, but God's goodness, as part of the beauty of his nature; although the manifestations of that lovely attribute, set immediately before our eyes, in the exercises of it for us, be the special occasion of the mind's attention to that beauty, at that time, and serves to fix the attention, and heighten the affection.

Some may perhaps be ready to object against the whole that has been said, that text, ~~Gen~~ 1 John 4:19: "We love him, because he first loved us," as though this implied that God's love to the true saints were the first foundation of their love to him.

In answer to this, I would observe, that the apostle's drift in these words, is to magnify the love of God to us from hence, that he loved us, while we had no love to him; as will be manifest to anyone who compares this verse and the two following with the 9th, 10th, and 11th verses. And that God loved us, then we had no love to him, the apostle proves by this argument, that God's love to the elect is the ground of their love to him. And that it is three ways. —

1. The saints' love to God is the fruit of God's love to them, as it is the gift of that love. God gave them a spirit of love to him, because he loved them from eternity. And in this respect God's love to his elect is the first foundation of their love to him as it is the foundation of their regeneration, and the whole of their redemption.
2. The exercises and discoveries that God has made of his wonderful love to sinful men, by Jesus Christ, in the work of redemption, is one of the chief manifestations, which God has made of the glory of his moral perfection, to both angels and men; and so is one main objective ground of the love of both to God; in a good consistence with what was said before.

**3.** God's love to a particular elect person, discovered by his conversion, is a great manifestation of God's moral perfection and glory to him, and a proper occasion of the excitation of the love of holy gratitude, agreeable to what was before said. And that the saints do in these respects love God, because he first loved them, fully answers the design of the apostle's argument in that place. So that no good argument can be drawn from hence, against a spiritual and gracious love in the saints, arising primarily from the excellency of divine things, as they are in themselves, and not from any conceived relation they bear to their interest.

And as it is with the love of the saints, so it is with their joy, and spiritual delight and pleasure: the first foundation of it is not any consideration or conception of their interest in divine things; but it primarily consists in the sweet entertainment their minds have in the view of contemplation of the divine and holy beauty of these things, as they are in themselves. And this is indeed the very main difference between the joy of the hypocrite, and the joy of the true saint. The former rejoices in himself; self is the first foundation of his joy: the latter rejoices in God. The hypocrite has his mind pleased and delighted, in the first place, with his own privilege, and the happiness which he supposes he has attained to, or shall attain to. True saints have their minds, in the first place, inexpressibly pleased and delighted with the sweet ideas of the glorious and amiable nature of the things of God. And this is the spring of all their delights, and the cream of all their pleasures: it is the joy of their joy. This sweet and ravishing entertainment they have in the view of the beautiful and delightful nature of divine things, is the foundation of the joy that they have afterwards, in the consideration of their being theirs. But the dependence of the affections of hypocrites is in a contrary order: they first rejoice and are elevated with it, that they are made so much of by God; and then on that ground he seems, in a sort, lovely to them.

The first foundation of the delight a true saint has in God, is his own perfection; and the first foundation of the delight he has in Christ, is his own beauty; he appears in himself the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. The way of salvation by Christ is a delightful way to him, for the sweet and admirable manifestations of the divine perfections in it: the holy doctrines of the gospel, by which God is exalted and man



abased, holiness honored and promoted, and sin greatly disgraced and discouraged, and free and sovereign love manifested, are glorious doctrines in his eyes, and sweet to his taste, prior to any conception of his interest in these things. Indeed the saints rejoice in their interest in God, and that Christ is theirs: and so they have great reason, but this is not the first spring of their joy. They first rejoice in God as glorious and excellent in himself, and then secondarily rejoice in it, that so glorious a God is theirs. — They first have their hearts filled with sweetness, from the view of Christ's excellency, and the excellency of his grace and the beauty of the way of salvation by him, and then they have a secondary joy in that so excellent a Savior, and such excellent grace are theirs.<sup>50</sup> But that which is the true saint's superstructure is the hypocrite's foundation. When they hear of the wonderful things of the gospel, of God's great love in sending his Son, of Christ's diving love to sinners, and the great things Christ has purchased and promised to the saints, and hear these things lively and eloquently set forth; they may bear with a great deal of pleasure, and be lifted up with what they hear; but if their joy be examined, it will be found to have no other foundation than this, that they look upon these things as theirs, all this exalts them, they love to hear of the great love of Christ, so vastly distinguishing some from others; for self-love, and even pride itself makes them affect great distinction from others. No wonder, in this confident opinion of their own good estate, that they feel well under such doctrine, and are pleased in the highest degree, in hearing how much God and Christ makes of them. So that their joy is really a joy in themselves, and not in God.

And because the joy of hypocrites is in themselves, hence it comes to pass that in their rejoicings and elevations, they are wont to keep their eye upon themselves: having received what they call spiritual discoveries or experience, their minds are taken up about them, admiring their own experiences; and what they are principally taken and elevated with, is not the glory of God, or beauty of Christ, but the beauty of their experiences. They keep thinking with themselves, What a good experience is this! What a great discovery is this! What wonderful things have I met with! And so they put their experiences in the place of Christ, and his beauty and fullness; and instead of rejoicing in Christ Jesus, they rejoice in their admirable experiences; instead of feeding and fasting their souls in the view

of what is without them, viz., the innate, sweet refreshing amiableness of the things exhibited in the gospel, their eyes are off from these things, or at least they view them only as it were sideways; but the object that fixes their contemplation, is their experience; and they are feeding their souls, and feasting a selfish principle, with a view of their discoveries: they take more comfort in their discoveries than in Christ discovered, which is the true notion of living upon experiences and frames, and not a using experiences as the signs on which they rely for evidence of their good estate, which some call living on experiences; though it be very observable, that some of them who do so are most notorious for living upon experiences, according to the true notion of it.

The affections of hypocrites are very often after this manner; they are first much affected with some impression on their imagination, or some impulse which they take to be an immediate suggestion or testimony from God of his love and their happiness, and high privileges in some respect, either with or without a text of Scripture; they are mightily taken with this as a great discovery, and hence arise high affections. And when their affections are raised, then they view those high affections, and call them great and wonderful experiences; and they have a notion that God is greatly pleased with those affections; and this affects them more; and so they are affected with their affections. And thus their affections rise higher and higher, until they sometimes are perfectly swallowed up: and self-conceit, and a fierce zeal rises withal; and all is built like a castle in the air, on no other foundation but imagination, self-love, and pride.

And as the thoughts of this sort of persons are, so is their talk; for out of the abundance of their heart their mouth speaketh. As in their high affections they keep their eye upon the beauty of their experiences, and greatness of their attainments; so they are great talkers about themselves. — The true saint, when under great spiritual affections, from the fullness of his heart, is ready to be speaking much of God, and his glorious perfections and works, and of the beauty and amiableness of Christ, and the glorious things of the gospel: but hypocrites, in their high affections, talk more of the discovery, than they do of the thing discovered; they are full of talk about the great things they have met with, the wonderful discoveries they have had, how sure they are of the love of God to them,

how safe their condition is, and how they know they shall go to heaven, etc.

A true saint, when in the enjoyment of true discoveries of the sweet glory of God and Christ, has his mind too much captivated and engaged by what he views without himself, to stand at that time to view himself, and his own attainments: it would be a diversion and loss which he could not bear, to take his eye off from the ravishing object of his contemplation, to survey his own experience, and to spend time in thinking with himself, what a high attainment this is, and what a good story I now have to tell others. Nor does the pleasure and sweetness of his mind at that time chiefly arise from the consideration of the safety of his state, or anything he has in view of his own qualifications, experiences, or circumstances; but from the divine and supreme beauty of what is the object of his direct views without himself; which sweetly entertains, and strongly holds his mind.

As the love and joy of hypocrites are all from the source of self love, so it is with their other affections, their sorrow for sin, their humiliation and submission, their religious desires and zeal: everything is, as it were, paid tail beforehand, in God's highly gratifying their self-love, and their lusts, by making so much of them, and exalting them so highly, as things are in their imagination. It is easy for nature, as corrupt as it is, under a notion of being already some of the highest favorites of heaven, and having a God who does so protect them and favor them in their sins, to love this imaginary God that suits them so well, and to extol him, and submit to him, and to be fierce and zealous for him. The high affections of many are all built on the supposition of their being eminent saints. If that opinion which they have of themselves were taken away, if they thought they were some of the lower form of saints (though they should yet suppose themselves to be real saints), their high affections would fall to the ground. If they only saw a little of the sinfulness and vileness of their own hearts, and their deformity, in the midst of their best duties and their best affections, it would knock their affections on the head; because their affections are built upon self, therefore self-knowledge would destroy them. But as to truly gracious affections, they are built elsewhere; they have their foundation out of self in God and Jesus Christ; and therefore a discovery of themselves, of their own deformity, and the meanness of

their experiences, though it will purify their affections, yet it will not destroy them, but in some respects sweeten and heighten them.

**III.** Those affections that are truly holy, are primarily founded on the loveliness of the moral excellency of divine things. Or (to express it otherwise) a love to divine things for the beauty and sweetness of their moral excellency is the first beginning and spring of all holy affections.

Here, for the sake of the more illiterate reader, I will explain what I mean by the moral excellency of divine things.

And it may be observed, that the word *moral* is not to be understood here according to the common and vulgar acceptation of the word when men speak of morality, and a moral behavior; meaning an outward conformity to the duties of the moral law, and especially the duties of the second table; or intending no more at farthest, than such seeming virtues, as proceed from natural principles, in opposition to those virtues that are more inward, spiritual, and divine; as the honesty, justice, generosity, good nature, and public spirit of many of the heathen are called moral virtues, in distinction from the holy faith, love, humility, and heavenly-mindedness of true Christians: I say, the word *moral* is not to be understood thus in this place.

But in order to a right understanding what is meant, it must be observed, that divines commonly make a distinction between moral good and evil, and natural good and evil. By moral evil, they mean the evil of sin, or that evil which is against duty, and contrary to what is right and ought to be. By natural evil, they do not mean that evil which is properly opposed to duty; but that which is contrary to mere nature, without any respect to a rule of duty. So the evil of suffering is called natural evil, such as pain and torment, disgrace, and the like: these things are contrary to mere nature, contrary to the nature of both bad and good, hateful to wicked men and devils, as well as good men and angels. So likewise natural defects are called natural evils, as if a child be monstrous or a natural fool; these are natural evils, but are not moral evils, because they have not properly the nature of the evil of sin. On the other hand, as by moral evil, divines mean the evil of sin, or that which is contrary to what is right; so by moral good, they mean that which is contrary to sin, or that good in beings who have will and choice, whereby, as voluntary agents, they are, and act, as it

becomes them to be and to act, or so as is most fit, and suitable, and lovely. By natural good, they mean that good that is entirely of a different kind from holiness or virtue, viz., that which perfects or suits nature, considering nature abstractly from any holy or unholy qualifications, and without any relation to any rule or measure of right and wrong.

Thus pleasure is a natural good; so is honor, so is strength; so is speculative knowledge, human learning, and policy. — Thus there is a distinction to be made between the natural good that men are possessed of, and their moral good; and also between the natural and moral good of the angels in heaven: the great capacity of their understandings, and their great strength, and the honorable circumstances they are in as the great ministers of God's kingdom, whence they are called thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, is the natural good which they are possessed of; but their perfect and glorious holiness and goodness, their pure and flaming love to God, and to the saints and to one another, is their moral good. So divines make a distinction between the natural and moral perfections of God: by the moral perfections of God, they mean those attributes which God exercises as a moral agent, or whereby the heart and will of God are good, right, and infinitely becoming and lovely; such as his righteousness, truth, faithfulness, and goodness; or, in one word, his holiness. By God's natural attributes or perfections, they mean those attributes, wherein, according to our way of conceiving of God, consists, not the holiness or moral goodness of God, but his greatness, such as his power, his knowledge, whereby he knows all things, and his being eternal, from everlasting to everlasting, his omnipresence, and his awful and terrible majesty.

The moral excellency of an intelligent voluntary being is more immediately seated in the heart or will of moral agents. That intelligent being, whose will is truly right and lovely, is morally good or excellent.

This moral excellency of an intelligent being, when it is true and real, and not only external or merely seeming and counterfeit, is holiness. Therefore holiness comprehends all the true moral excellency of intelligent beings: there is no other true virtue, but real holiness. Holiness comprehends all the true virtue of a good man, his love to God, his gracious love to men, his justice, his charity, and bowels of mercies, his gracious meekness and

gentleness, and all other true Christian virtues that he has, belong to his holiness. So the holiness of God in the more extensive sense of the word, and the sense in which the word is commonly, if not universally used concerning God in Scripture, is the same with the moral excellency of the divine nature, or his purity and beauty as a moral agent, comprehending all his moral perfections, his righteousness faithfulness, and goodness. As in holy men, their charity, Christian kindness and mercy, belong to their holiness; so the kindness and mercy of God belong to his holiness. Holiness in man is but the image of God's holiness; there are not more virtues belonging to the image than are in the original: derived holiness has not more in it than is in that underived holiness which is its fountain: there is no more than grace for grace, or grace in the image, answerable to grace in the original.

As there are two kinds of attributes in God, according to our way of conceiving of him, his moral attributes, which are summed up in his holiness, and his natural attributes of strength, knowledge, etc., that constitute the greatness of God; so there is a twofold image of God in man, his moral or spiritual image, which is his holiness, that is the image of God's moral excellency (which image was lost by the fall), and God's natural image, consisting in man's reason and understanding, his natural ability, and dominion over the creatures, which is the image of God's natural attribute.

From what has been said, it may easily be understood what I intend, when I say that a love to divine things for the beauty of their moral excellency, is the beginning and spring of all holy affections. It has been already shown, under the former head, that the first objective ground of all holy affections is the supreme excellency of divine things as they are in themselves, or in their own nature; I now proceed further, and say more particularly, that that kind of excellency of the nature of divine things, which is the first objective ground of all holy affections, is their moral excellency, or their holiness. Holy persons, in the exercise of holy affections, do love divine things primarily for their holiness: they love God, in the first place, for the beauty of his holiness or moral perfection, as being supremely amiable in itself. Not that the saints, in the exercise of gracious affections, do love God only for his holiness; all his attributes are amiable and glorious in their eyes; they delight in every divine perfection; the contemplation of the

infinite greatness, power, knowledge, and terrible majesty of God, is pleasant to them. But their love to God for his holiness is what is most fundamental and essential in their love. Here it is that true love to God begins; all other holy love to divine things flows from hence: this is the most essential and distinguishing thing that belongs to a holy love to God, with regard to the foundation of it. A love to God for the beauty of his moral attributes leads to, and necessarily causes a delight in God for all his attributes; for his moral attributes cannot be without his natural attributes: for infinite holiness supposes infinite wisdom, and an infinite capacity and greatness; and all the attributes of God do as it were imply one another.

The true beauty and loveliness of all intelligent beings does primarily and most essentially consist in their moral excellency or holiness. Herein consists the loveliness of the angels, without which, with all their natural perfections, their strength, and their knowledge, they would have no more loveliness than devils. It is a moral excellency alone, that is in itself, and on its own account, the excellency of intelligent beings: it is this that gives beauty to, or rather is the beauty of their natural perfections and qualifications. Moral excellency is the excellency of natural excellencies. Natural qualifications are either excellent or otherwise, according as they are joined with moral excellency or not. Strength and knowledge do not render any being lovely, without holiness, but more hateful; though they render them more lovely, when joined with holiness. Thus the elect angels are the more glorious for their strength and knowledge, because these natural perfections of theirs are sanctified by their moral perfection. But though the devils are very strong, and of great natural understanding, they be not the more lovely: they are more terrible indeed, but not the more amiable; but on the contrary, the more hateful. The holiness of an intelligent creature, is the beauty of all his natural perfections. And so it is in God, according to our way of conceiving of the divine Being: holiness is in a peculiar manner the beauty of the divine nature. Hence we often read of the beauty of holiness, ~~PSALM~~ Psalm 29:2, ~~PSALM~~ Psalm 96:9, and ~~PSALM~~ 110:3. This renders all his other attributes glorious and lovely. It is the glory of God's wisdom, that it is a holy wisdom, and not a wicked subtlety and craftiness. This makes his majesty lovely; and not merely dreadful and horrible, that it is a holy majesty. It is the glory of God's immutability, that it is a holy immutability, and not an flexible obstinacy in wickedness.

And therefore it must needs be, that a sight of God's loveliness must begin here. A true love to God must begin with a delight in his holiness, and not with a delight in any other attribute; for no other attribute is truly lovely without this, and no otherwise than as (according to our way of conceiving of God) it derives its loveliness from this; and therefore it is impossible that other attributes should appear lovely, in their true loveliness, until this is seen; and it impossible that any perfection of the divine nature should be loved with true love until this is loved. If the true loveliness of all God's perfections arises from the loveliness of his holiness; then the true love of all his perfections arises from the love of his holiness. They that do not see the glory of God's holiness, cannot see anything of the true glory of his mercy and grace: they see nothing of the glory of those attributes, as any excellency of God's nature, as it is in itself; though they may be affected with them, and love them, as they concern their interest: for these attributes are no part of the excellency of God's nature, as that is excellent in itself, any otherwise than as they are included in his holiness, more largely taken; or as they are a part of his moral perfection.

As the beauty of the divine nature does primarily consist in God's holiness, so does the beauty of all divine things. Herein consists the beauty of the saints, that they are saints, or holy ones; it is the moral image of God in them, which is their beauty; and that is their holiness. Herein consists the beauty and brightness of the angels of heaven, that they are holy angels, and so not devils. <sup><2043></sup>Daniel 4:13, 17, 23; <sup><4153></sup>Matthew 25:31, <sup><4033></sup>Mark 8:38, <sup><4412></sup>Acts 10:22, <sup><6440></sup>Revelation 14:10. Herein consists the beauty of the Christian religion, above all other religions, that it is so holy a religion. Herein consists the excellency of the word of God, that it is so holy: <sup><3340></sup>Psalms 119:140, "Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it." Ver. 128, "I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way." Ver. 138, "Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous, and very faithful." And 172, "My tongue shall speak of thy word; for all thy commandments are righteousness." And <sup><3410></sup>Psalms 19:7-10, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true, and



righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey, and the honey comb.” Herein does primarily consist the amiableness and beauty of the Lord Jesus, whereby he is the chief among ten thousands, and altogether lovely, even in that he is the holy one of God, <sup>(484)</sup>Acts 3:14, and God’s holy child, <sup>(402)</sup>Acts 4:27, and he that is holy, and he that is true, <sup>(600)</sup>Revelation 3:7. All the spiritual beauty of his human nature, consisting in his meekness, lowliness, patience, heavenliness, love to God, love to men, condescension to the mean and vile, and compassion to the miserable, etc., all is summed up in his holiness. And the beauty of his divine nature, of which the beauty of his human nature is the image and reflection, does also primarily consist in his holiness. Herein primarily consists the glory of the gospel, that it is a holy gospel, and so bright an emanation of the holy beauty of God and Jesus Christ: herein consists the spiritual beauty of its doctrines, that they are holy doctrines, or doctrines according to goodness. And herein does consist the spiritual beauty of the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, that it is so holy a way. And herein chiefly consists the glory of heaven, that it is the holy city, the holy Jerusalem, the habitation of God’s holiness, and so of his glory, <sup>(266)</sup>Isaiah 63:15. All the beauties of the new Jerusalem, as it is described in the two last chapters of Revelation, are but various representations of this. See chap. <sup>(620)</sup>21:2, 10, 11, 18, 21, 27, chap. <sup>(621)</sup>22:1, 3.

And therefore it is primarily on account of this kind of excellency, that the saints do love all these things. Thus they love the word of God, because it is very pure. It is on this account they love the saints; and on this account chiefly it is, that heaven is lovely to them, and those holy tabernacles of God amiable in their eyes: it is on this account that they love God; and on this account primarily it is, that they love Christ, and that their hearts delight in the doctrines of the gospel, and sweetly acquiesce in the way of salvation therein revealed. <sup>51</sup>

Under the head of the first distinguishing characteristic of gracious affections, I observed, that there is given to those that are regenerated, a new supernatural sense, that is as it were a certain divine spiritual taste, which is, in its whole nature, diverse from any former kinds of sensation of the mind, as tasting is diverse from sight in the exercise of this new sense of mind, in spiritual and divine things as entirely different from

anything that is perceived in them by natural men, as the sweet taste of honey is diverse from the ideas men get of honey by looking on it or feeling it. Now this that I have been speaking of, viz., the beauty of holiness, is that thing in spiritual and divine things, which is perceived by this spiritual sense, that is so diverse from all that natural men perceive in them; this kind of beauty is the quality that is the immediate object of this spiritual sense; this is the sweetness that is the proper object of this spiritual taste. The Scripture often represents the beauty and sweetness of holiness as the grand object of a spiritual taste and spiritual appetite. This was the sweet food of the holy soul of Jesus Christ, ~~READ~~ John 4:32, 34: “I have meat to eat that ye know not of—My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.” I know of no part of the holy Scriptures, where the nature and evidences of true and sincere godliness are so much of set purpose and so fully and largely insisted on and delineated, as the 119th Psalm; the Psalmist declares his design in the first verses of the Psalm, and he keeps his eye on this design all along, and pursues it to the end: but in this Psalm the excellency of holiness is represented as the immediate object of a spiritual taste, relish, appetite, and delight of God’s law; that grand expression and emanation of the holiness of God’s natures and prescription of holiness to the creature, is all along represented as the food and entertainment, and as the great object of the love, the appetite, the complacence and rejoicing of the gracious nature, which prizes God’s commandments above gold, yea, the finest gold, and to which they are sweeter than the honey and honey comb; and that upon account of their holiness, as I observed before. The same Psalmist declares, that this is the sweetness that a spiritual taste relishes in God’s law: ~~READ~~ Psalm 19:7, 8, 9, 10, “The law of the Lord is perfect; the commandment of the Lord is pure; the fear of the Lord is clean; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; — the judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether; more to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honey comb.”

A holy love has a holy object. The holiness of love consists especially in this, that it is the love of that which is holy, as holy, or for its holiness; so that it is the holiness of the object, which is the quality whereon it fixes and terminates. A holy nature must needs love that in holy things chiefly, which is most agreeable to itself; but surely that in divine things, which

above all others is agreeable to a holy nature, is holiness, because holiness must be above all other things agreeable to holiness; for nothing can be more agreeable to any nature than itself; holy nature must be above all things agreeable to holy nature: and so the holy nature of God and Christ, and the word of God, and other divine things, must be above all other things agreeable to the holy nature that is in the saints.

And again, a holy nature doubtless loves holy things, especially on the account of that for which sinful nature has enmity against them; but that for which chiefly sinful nature is at enmity against holy things, is their holiness; it is for this, that the carnal mind is at enmity against God, and against the law of God, and the people of God. Now it is just arguing from contraries; from contrary causes to contrary effects; from opposite natures to opposite tendencies. We know that holiness is of a directly contrary nature to wickedness; as therefore it is the nature of wickedness chiefly to oppose and hate holiness; so it must be the nature of holiness chiefly to tend to, and delight in holiness.

The holy nature in the saints and angels in heaven (where the true tendency of it best appears) is principally engaged by the holiness of divine things. This is the divine beauty which chiefly engages the attention, admiration, and praise of the bright and burning seraphim: <sup>2008</sup>Isaiah 6:3, “One cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.” And <sup>6008</sup>Revelation 4:8, “They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” So the glorified saints chap. <sup>6094</sup>15:4, “Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy.”

And the Scriptures represent the saints on earth as adoring God primarily on this account, and admiring and extolling all God’s attributes, either as deriving loveliness from his holiness, or as being a part of it. Thus when they praise God for his power, his holiness is the beauty that engages them: <sup>6090</sup>Psalms 98:1, “O sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory.” So when they praise him for his justice and terrible majesty: <sup>6090</sup>Psalms 99:2, 3, “The Lord is great in Zion, and he is high above all people. Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy.” Ver. 5,

“Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.” Ver. 8, 9, “Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions. Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his holy hill: for the Lord our God, is holy.” So when they praise God for his mercy and faithfulness: <sup><1971></sup>Psalm 97:11, 12, “Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.” <sup><1972></sup>1 Samuel 2:2, “There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none besides thee; neither is there any rock like our God.”

By this therefore all may try their affections, and particularly their love and joy. Various kinds of creatures show the difference of their natures, very much in the different things they relish as their proper good, one delighting in that which another abhors. Such a difference is there between true saints, and natural men: natural men have no sense of the goodness and excellency of holy things at least for their holiness; they have no taste for that kind of good; and so may be said not to know that divine good, or not to see it; it is wholly hid from them; but the saints, by the mighty power of God, have it discovered to them; they have that supernatural, most noble and divine sense given them, by which they perceive it; and it is this that captivates their hearts, and delights them above all things; it is the most amiable and sweet thing to the heart of a true saint, that is to be found in heaven or earth; that which above all others attracts and engages his soul; and that whereby above all things, he places his happiness, and which he lobs upon for solace and entertainment to his mind, in this world, and full satisfaction and blessedness in another. By this, you may examine your love to God, and to Jesus Christ, and to the word of God, and your joy in them, and also your love to the people of God, and your desires after heaven; whether they be from a supreme delight in this sort of beauty, without being primarily moved from your imagined interest in them, or expectations from them. There are many high affections, great seeming love and rapturous joys, which have nothing of this holy relish belonging to them.

Particularly, by what has been said you may try your discoveries of the glory of God’s grace and love, and your affections arising from them. The grace of God may appear lovely two ways; either as *bonum utile*, a profitable good to me, that which greatly serves my interest, and so suits

my self-love; or as *bonum formosum*, a beautiful good in itself, and part of the moral and spiritual excellency of the divine nature. In this latter respect it is that the true saints have their hearts affected, and love captivated by the free grace of God in the first place.

From the things that have been said, it appears, that if persons have a great sense of the natural perfections of God, and are greatly affected with them, or have any other sight or sense of God than that which consists in, or implies a sense of the beauty of his moral perfections, it is no certain sign of grace; as particularly men's having a great sense of the awful greatness and terrible majesty of God; for this is only God's natural perfection, and what men may see and yet be entirely blind to the beauty of his moral perfection, and have nothing of that spiritual taste which relishes this divine sweetness.

It has been shown already, in what was said upon the first distinguishing mark of gracious affections, that that which is spiritual, is entirely different in its nature, from all that it is possible any graceless person should be the subject of, while he continues graceless. But it is possible that those who are wholly without grace should have a clear sight and very great and affecting sense of God's greatness, his mighty power, and awful majesty; for this is what the devils have, though they have lost the spiritual knowledge of God, consisting in a sense of the amiableness of his moral perfections; they are perfectly destitute of any sense or relish of that kind of beauty, yet they have a very great knowledge of the natural glory of God (if I may so speak), or his awful greatness and majesty; this they behold, and are affected with the apprehensions of, and therefore tremble before him. This glory of God all shall behold at the day of judgment; God will make all rational beings to behold it to a great degree indeed, angels and devils, saints and sinners: Christ will manifest his infinite greatness, and awful majesty, to everyone, in a most open, clear, and convincing manner, and in a light that none can resist, "when he shall come in the glory of his Father, and every eye shall see him;" when they shall cry to the mountains to fall upon them, to hide them from the face of him that sits upon the throne, they are represented as seeing the glory of God's majesty, <sup><20></sup>Isaiah 2:10, 19, 21. God will make all his enemies to behold this, and to live in a most clear and affecting view of it, in hell, to all eternity. God hath often declared his immutable purpose to make all his

enemies to know him in this respect, in so often annexing these words to the threatenings he denounces against them: "And they shall know that I am the Lord;" yea he hath sworn that all men shall see his glory in this respect: <sup>(1442)</sup>Numbers 14:21, "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." And this kind of manifestation of God is very often spoken of in Scripture, as made, or to be made, in the sight of God's enemies in this world, <sup>(1443)</sup>Exodus 9:16, and chap. <sup>(1448)</sup>14:18, and <sup>(1456)</sup>15:16, <sup>(1468)</sup>Psalms 66:3, and 46:10, and other places innumerable. This was a manifestation which God made of himself in the sight of that wicked congregation at Mount Sinai; deeply affecting them with it; so that all the people in the camp trembled. Wicked men and devils will see, and have a great sense of everything that appertains to the glory of God, but only the beauty of his moral perfection; they will see his infinite greatness and majesty, his infinite power, and will be fully convinced of his omniscience, and his eternity and immutability; and they will see and know everything appertaining to his moral attributes themselves, but only the beauty and amiableness of them; they will see and know that he is perfectly just, and righteous, and true, and that he is a holy God, of purer eyes than to behold evil, who cannot look on iniquity; and they will see the wonderful manifestations of his infinite goodness and free grace to the saints; and there is nothing will be hid from their eyes, but only the beauty of these moral attributes, and that beauty of the other attributes, which arises from it. And so natural men in this world are capable of having a very affecting sense of everything else that appertains to God, but this only.

Nebuchadnezzar had a great and very affecting sense of the infinite greatness and awful majesty of God, of his supreme and absolute dominion, and mighty and irresistible power, and of his sovereignty, and that he, and all the inhabitants of the earth were nothing before him; and also had a great conviction in his conscience of his justice, and an affecting sense of his great goodness, <sup>(1469)</sup>Daniel 4:1, 2, 3, 34, 35, 37. And the sense that Darius had of God's perfections, seems to be very much like his, <sup>(1475)</sup>Daniel 6:25, etc. But the saints and angels do behold the glory of God consisting in the beauty of his holiness; and it is this sight only that will melt and humble the hearts of men, and wean them from the world, and draw them to God, and effectually change them. A sight of the awful greatness of God, may overpower men's strength, and be more than they can endure; but if the moral beauty of God be hid, the enmity of the heart

will remain in its full strength, no love will be enkindled, all will not be effectual to gain the will, but that will remain inflexible; whereas the first glimpse of the moral and spiritual glory of God shining into the heart, produces all these effects as it were with omnipotent power, which nothing can withstand.

The sense that natural men may have of the awful greatness of God may affect them various ways; it may not only terrify them, but it may elevate them, and raise their joy and praise, as their circumstances may be. This will be the natural effect of it, under the real or supposed receipt of some extraordinary mercy from God, by the influence of mere principles of nature. It has been shown already, that the receipt of kindness may, by the influence of natural principles, affect the heart with gratitude and praise to God; but if a person, at the same time that he receives remarkable kindness from God, has a sense of his infinite greatness, and that he is but nothing in comparison of him, surely this will naturally raise his gratitude and praise the higher, for kindness to one so much inferior. A sense of God's greatness had this effect upon Nebuchadnezzar, under the receipt of that extraordinary favor of his restoration, after he had been driven from men, and had his dwelling with the beasts: a sense of God's exceeding greatness raises his gratitude very high; so that he does, in the most lofty terms, extol and magnify God, and calls upon all the world to do it with him; and much more if a natural man, at the same time that he is greatly affected with God's infinite greatness and majesty, entertains a strong conceit that this great God has made him his child and special favorite, and promised him eternal glory in his highest love, will this have a tendency, according to the course of nature, to raise his joy and praise to a great height.

Therefore, it is beyond doubt that too much weight has been laid, by many persons of late, on discoveries of God's greatness, awful majesty, and natural perfection, operating after this manner, without any real view of the holy majesty of God. And experience does abundantly witness to what reason and Scripture declare as to this matter; there having been very many persons, who have seemed to be overpowered with the greatness and majesty of God, and consequently elevated in the manner that has been spoken of, who have been very far from having appearances of a Christian spirit and temper, in any manner of proportion, or fruits in

practice in any wise agreeable; but their discoveries have worked in a way contrary to the operation of truly spiritual discoveries.

Not that a sense of God's greatness and natural attributes is not exceeding useful and necessary. For, as I observed before, this is implied in a manifestation of the beauty of God's holiness. Though that be something beyond it, it supposes it, as the greater supposes the less. And though natural men may have a sense of the natural perfections of God; yet undoubtedly this is more frequent and common with the saints than with natural men; and grace tends to enable men to see these things in a better manner than natural men do; and not only enables them to see God's natural attributes, but that beauty of those attributes, which (according to our way of conceiving of God) is derived from his holiness.

**IV.** Gracious affections do arise from the mind's being enlightened, richly and spiritually to understand or apprehend divine things.

Holy affections are not heat without light; but evermore arise from the information of the understanding, some spiritual instruction that the mind receives, some light or actual knowledge. The child of God is graciously affected, because he sees and understands something more of divine things than he did before, more of God or Christ, and of the glorious things exhibited in the gospel; he has some clearer and better view than he had before, when he was not affected: either he receives some understanding of divine things that is new to him; or has his former knowledge renewed after the view was decayed: <sup><600></sup>1 John 4:7, "Everyone that loveth, knoweth God." <sup><600></sup>Philippians 1:9, "I pray that your love may abound more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment." <sup><600></sup>Romans 10:2, "They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." <sup><600></sup>Colossians 3:10, "The new man, which is renewed in knowledge." <sup><600></sup>Psalms 43:3, 4, "O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy holy hill." <sup><600></sup>John 6:45, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Knowledge is the key that first opens the hard heart, and enlarges the affections, and so opens the way for men into the kingdom of heaven; <sup><600></sup>Luke 11:52, "Ye have taken away the key of knowledge."



Now there are many affections which do not arise from any light in the understanding. And when it is thus, it is a sure evidence that these affections are not spiritual, let them be ever so high.<sup>52</sup> Indeed they have some new apprehensions which they had not before. Such is the nature of man, that it is impossible his mind should be affected, unless it be by something that he apprehends, or that his mind conceives of. But in many persons those apprehensions or conceptions that they have, wherewith they are affected, have nothing of the nature of knowledge or instruction in them. As for instance, when a person is affected with a lively idea, suddenly excited in his mind, of some shape or very beautiful pleasant form of countenance, or some shining light, or other glorious outward appearance: here is something apprehended or conceived by the mind; but there is nothing of the nature of instruction in it; persons become never the wiser by such things, or more knowing about God, or a Mediator between God and man, or the way of salvation by Christ, or anything contained in any of the doctrines of the gospel. Persons by these external ideas have no further acquaintance with God, as to any of the attributes or perfections of his nature; nor have they any further understanding of his word, or any of his ways or works. Truly spiritual and gracious affections are not raised after this manner; these arise from the enlightening of the understanding to understand the things that are taught of God and Christ, in a new manner, the coming to a new understanding of the excellent nature of God, and his wonderful perfections, some new view of Christ in his spiritual excellencies and fullness, or things opened to him in a new manner, that appertain to the way of salvation by Christ, whereby he now sees how it is, and understands those divine and spiritual doctrines which once were foolishness to him. Such enlightenings of the understanding as these, are things entirely different in their nature from strong ideas of shapes and colors, and outward brightness and glory, or sounds and voices. That all gracious affections do arise from some instruction or enlightening of the understanding, is therefore a further proof, that affections which arise from such impression on the imagination, are not gracious affections, besides the things observed before, which make this evident.

Hence also it appears, that affections arising from texts of Scripture coming to the mind: are vain, when no instruction received in the understanding from those texts, or anything taught in those texts, is the

ground of the affection, but the manner of their coming to the mind. When Christ makes the Scripture a means of the heart's burning with gracious affection, it is by opening the Scriptures to their understandings; ~~and~~ Luke 24:32, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" It appears also that the affection which is occasioned by the coming of a text of Scripture must be vain, when the affection is founded on some thing that is supposed to be taught by it, which really is not contained in it nor in any other Scripture; because such supposed instruction is not real instruction, but a mistake and misapprehension of the mind. As for instance, when persons suppose that they are expressly taught by some Scripture coming to their minds, that they in particular are beloved of God, or that their sins are forgiven, that God is their Father, and the like, this is a mistake or misapprehension; for the Scripture nowhere reveals the individual persons who are beloved, expressly; but only by consequence, by revealing the qualifications of persons that are beloved of God: and therefore this matter is not to be learned from Scripture any other way than by consequence, and from these qualifications; for things are not to be learned from the Scripture any other way than they are taught in the Scripture.

Affections really arise from ignorance, rather than instruction, in these instances which have been mentioned; as likewise in some others that might be mentioned. As some, when they find themselves free of speech in prayer, they call it God's being with them; and this affects them more; and so their affections are set agoing and increased; when they look not into the cause of this freedom of speech, which may arise many other ways besides God's spiritual presence. So some are much affected with some apt thoughts that come into their minds about the Scripture, and call it the Spirit of God teaching them. So they ascribe many of the workings of their own minds, which they have a high opinion of, and are pleased and taken with, to the special immediate influences of God's Spirit; and so are mightily affected with their privilege. And there are some instances of persons, in whom it seems manifest, that the first ground of their affection is some bodily sensation. The animal spirits, by some cause (and probably sometimes by the devil) are suddenly and unaccountably put into a very agreeable motion, causing persons to feel pleasantly in their bodies; the animal spirits are put into such a motion as is wont to be connected with

the exhilaration of the mind; and the soul, by the laws of the union of soul and body, hence feels pleasure. The motion of the animal spirits does not first arise from any affection or apprehension of the mind whatsoever; but the very first thing that is felt, is an exhilaration of the animal spirits, and a pleasant external sensation it may be in their breasts. Hence through ignorance the person being surprised, begins to think, surely this is the Holy Ghost coming into him. And then the mind begins to be affected and raised. There is first great joy; and then many other affections, in a very tumultuous manner putting all nature, both body and mind, into a mighty ruffle. For though, as I observed before, it is the soul only that is the seat of the affections; yet this hinders not but that bodily sensations may, in this manner, be an occasion of affections in the mind.

And if men's religious affections do truly arise from some instruction or light in the understanding; yet the affection is not gracious, unless the light which is the ground of it be spiritual. Affections may be excited by that understanding of things, which they obtain merely by human teaching, with the common improvement of the faculties of the mind. Men may be much affected by knowledge of things of religion that they obtain this way; as some philosophers have been mightily affected and almost carried beyond themselves, by the discoveries they have made in mathematics and natural philosophy. So men may be much affected from common illuminations of the Spirit of God, in which God assists men's faculties to a greater degree of that kind of understanding of religious matters, which they have in some degree, by only the ordinary exercise and improvement of their own faculties. Such illuminations may much affect the mind; as in many whom we read of in Scripture, that were once enlightened; but these affections are not spiritual.

There is such a thing, if the Scriptures are of any use to teach us anything, as a spiritual, supernatural understanding of divine things, that is peculiar to the saints, and which those who are not saints have nothing of. It is certainly a kind of understanding, apprehending or discerning of divine things, that natural men have nothing of, which the apostle speaks of, <sup>4124</sup>1 Corinthians 2:14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." It is certainly a kind of seeing or discerning spiritual things peculiar to the saints, which is spoken

of, <sup><106></sup>1 John 3:6: “Whosoever sinneth, hath not been him, neither known him.” <sup><111></sup>3 John 11, “He that doeth evil, hath not seen God.” And <sup><160></sup>John 6:40, “This is the will of him that sent me, that everyone that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life.” Chap. <sup><149></sup>14:19, “The world seeth me no more; but ye see me.” Chap. <sup><173></sup>17:3, “This is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” <sup><112></sup>Matthew 11:27, “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.” <sup><125></sup>John 12:45, “He that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.” <sup><109></sup>Psalm 9:10, “They that know thy name, will put their trust in thee.” <sup><108></sup>Philippians 3:8, “I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.” — ver. 10, “That I may know him.” And innumerable other places there are, all over the Bible, which show the same. And that there is such a thing as an understanding of divine things, which in its nature and kind is wholly different from all knowledge that natural men have, is evident from this, that there is an understanding of divine things, which the scripture calls spiritual understanding, <sup><109></sup>Colossians 1:9: “We do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” It has been already shown, that that which is spiritual, in the ordinary use of the word in the New Testament, is entirely different in nature and kind, from all which natural men are, or can be the subjects of.

From hence it may be surely inferred wherein spiritual understanding consists. For if there be in the saints a kind of apprehension or perception, which is in its nature perfectly diverse from all that natural men have, or that it is possible they should have, until they have a new nature; it must consist in their having a certain kind of ideas or sensations of mind, which are simply diverse from all that is or can be in the minds of natural men. And that is the same thing as to say, that it consists in the sensations of a new spiritual sense, which the souls of natural men have not; as is evident by what has been before, once and again observed. But I have already shown what that new spiritual sense is which the saints have given them in regeneration, and what is the object of it. I have shown that the immediate object of it is the supreme beauty and excellency of the nature of divine things, as they are in themselves. And this is agreeable to the

Scripture; the apostle very plainly teaches, that the great thing discovered by spiritual light, and understood by spiritual knowledge, is the glory of divine things, <sup>2</sup>Corinthians 4:3, 4: “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them;” together with ver. 6: “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.” And chap. <sup>3</sup>:18, preceding: “But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” And it must needs be so, for, as has been before observed, the Scripture often teaches that all true religion summarily consists in the love of divine things. And therefore that kind of understanding or knowledge, which is the proper foundation of true religion, must be the knowledge of the loveliness of divine things. For doubtless, that knowledge which is the proper foundation of love, is the knowledge of loveliness. What that beauty of divine things is, which is the proper and immediate object of a spiritual sense of mind, was showed under the last head insisted on, viz., that it is the beauty of their moral perfection. Therefore it is in the view or sense of this, that spiritual understanding does more immediately and primarily consist. And indeed it is plain it can be nothing else; for (as has been shown) there is nothing pertaining to divine things besides the beauty of their moral excellency, and those properties and qualities of divine things which this beauty is the foundation of, but what natural men and devils can see and know, and will know fully and clearly to all eternity.

From what has been said, therefore, we come necessarily to this conclusion, concerning that wherein spiritual understanding consists, viz., that it consists in “a sense of the heart, of the supreme beauty and sweetness of the holiness or moral perfection of divine things, together with all that discerning and knowledge of things of religion, that depends upon, and flows from such a sense.”

Spiritual understanding consists primarily in a sense of heart of that spiritual beauty. I say, a sense of heart; for it is not speculation merely that is concerned in this kind of understanding; nor can there be a clear distinction made between the two faculties of understanding and will, as


acting distinctly and separately, in this matter. When the mind is sensible of the sweet beauty and amiableness of a thing, that implies a sensibleness of sweetness and delight in the presence of the idea of it: and this sensibleness of the amiableness or delightfulness of beauty, carries in the very nature of it the sense of the heart; or an effect and impression the soul is the subject of, as a substance possessed of taste, inclination and will.

There is a distinction to be made between a mere notional understanding wherein the mind only beholds things in the exercise of a speculative faculty; and the sense of the heart, wherein the mind does not only speculate and behold, but relishes and feels. That sort of knowledge, by which a man has a sensible perception of amiableness and loathsomeness, or of sweetness and nauseousness, is not just the same sort of knowledge with that by which he knows what a triangle is, and what a square is. The one is mere speculative knowledge, the other sensible knowledge, in which more than the mere intellect is concerned; the heart is the proper subject of it, or the soul, as a being that not only beholds, but has inclination, and is pleased or displeased. And yet there is the nature of instruction in it; as he that has perceived the sweet taste of honey, knows much more about it, than he who has only looked upon, and felt of it.

The apostle seems to make a distinction between mere speculative knowledge of the things of religion, and spiritual knowledge, in calling that the form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law, ◀121 Romans 2:20, "Which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law." The latter is often represented by relishing, smelling, or tasting ◀124 2 Corinthians 2:14, "Now thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ Jesus, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge in every place." ◀163 Matthew 16:23, "Thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those things that be of men." ◀101 1 Peter 2:2, 3, "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." Cant. 1:3, "Because of the savor of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee;" compared with ◀121 1 John 2:20, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."

Spiritual understanding primarily consists in this sense, of taste of the moral beauty of divine things; so that no knowledge can be called spiritual, any further than it arises from this, and has this in it. But secondarily it includes all that discerning and knowledge of things of religion, which depend upon and flow from such a sense.

When the true beauty and amiableness of the holiness or true moral good that is in divine things is discovered to the soul, it as it were opens a new world to its views. This shows the glory of all the perfections of God, and of everything appertaining to the divine Being. For, as was observed before, the beauty of all arises from God's moral perfection. This shows the glory of all God's works, both of creation and providence. For it is the special glory of them, that God's holiness, righteousness, faithfulness, and goodness, are so manifested in them; and without these moral perfections, there would be no glory in that power and skill with which they are wrought. The glorifying of God's moral perfections, is the special end of all the works of God's hands. By this sense of the moral beauty of divine things, is understood the sufficiency of Christ as a mediator; for it is only by the discovery of the beauty of the moral perfection of Christ, that the believer is let into the knowledge of the excellency of his person, so as to know anything more of it than the devils do; and it is only by the knowledge of the excellency of Christ's person, that any know his sufficiency as a mediator; for the latter depends upon, and arises from the former. It is by seeing the excellency of Christ's person, that the saints are made sensible of the preciousness of his blood, and its sufficiency to atone for sin; for therein consists the preciousness of Christ's blood, that it is the blood of so excellent and amiable a person. And on this depends the meritoriousness of his obedience, and sufficiency and prevalence of his intercession. By this sight of the moral beauty of divine things, is seen the beauty of the way of salvation by Christ; for that consists in the beauty of the moral perfections of God, which wonderfully shines forth in every step of this method of salvation, from beginning to end. By this is seen the fitness and suitableness of this way: for this wholly consists in its tendency to deliver us from sin and hell, and to bring us to the happiness which consists in the possession and enjoyment of moral good, in a way sweetly agreeing with God's moral perfections. And in the way's being contrived so as to attain these ends, consists the excellent wisdom of that

way. By this is seen the excellency of the word of God. Take away all the moral beauty and sweetness in the word, and the Bible is left wholly a dead letter, a dry, lifeless, tasteless thing. By this is seen the true foundation of our duty, the worthiness of God to be so esteemed, honored, loved, submitted to, and served, as he requires of us, and the amiableness of the duties themselves that are required of us. And by this is seen the true evil of sin; for he who sees the beauty of holiness, must necessarily see the hatefulness of sin, its contrary. By this men understand the true glory of heaven, which consists in the beauty and happiness that is in holiness. By this is seen the amiableness and happiness of both saints and angels. He that sees the beauty of holiness, or true moral good, sees the greatest and most important thing in the world, which is the fullness of all things, without which all the world is empty, no better than nothing, yea, worse than nothing. Unless this is seen, nothing is seen that is worth the seeing; for there is no other true excellency or beauty. Unless this be understood, nothing is understood that is worthy of the exercise of the noble faculty of understanding. This is the beauty of the Godhead, and the divinity of divinity (if I may so speak), the good of the infinite fountain of good; without which, God himself (if that were possible) would be an infinite evil; without which we ourselves had better never have been; and without which there had better have been no being. He therefore in effect knows nothing, that knows not this; his knowledge is but the shadow of knowledge, or the form of knowledge, as the apostle calls it. Well therefore may the Scriptures represent those who are destitute of that spiritual sense by which is perceived the beauty of holiness, as totally blind, deaf, and senseless, yea, dead. And well may regeneration, in which this divine sense is given to the soul by its Creator, be represented as opening the blind eyes, and raising the dead, and bringing a person into a new world. For if what has been said be considered, it will be manifest, that when a person has this sense and knowledge given him, he will view nothing as he did before; though before he knew all things “after the flesh, yet henceforth he will know them so no more; and he is become a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new;” agreeable to  2 Corinthians 5:16, 17.

And besides the things that have been already mentioned, there arises from this sense of spiritual beauty, all true experimental knowledge of religion,



which is of itself as it were a new world of knowledge. He that sees not the beauty of holiness, knows not what one of the graces of God's Spirit is, he is destitute of any idea or conception of all gracious exercises of the soul, and all holy comforts and delights, and all effects of the saving influences of the Spirit of God on the heart; and so is ignorant of the greatest works of God, the most important and glorious effects of his power upon the creature; and also is wholly ignorant of the saints as saints, he knows not what they are; and in effect is ignorant of the whole spiritual world.

Things being thus, it plainly appears, that God's implanting that spiritual supernatural sense which has been spoken of, makes a great change in a man. And were it not for the very imperfect degree, in which this sense is commonly given at first, or the small degree of this glorious light, that first dawns upon the soul; the change made by this spiritual opening of the eyes in conversion, would be much greater and more remarkable every way, than if a man, who had been born blind, and with only the other four senses, should continue so a long time, and then at once should have the sense of seeing imparted to him, in the midst of the clear light of the sun, discovering a world of visible objects. For though sight be more noble than any of the other external senses, yet this spiritual sense which has been spoken of, is infinitely more noble than that, or any other principle of discerning that a man naturally has, and the object of this sense infinitely greater and more important.

This sort of understanding or knowledge, is that knowledge of divine things from whence all truly gracious affections do proceed; by which therefore all affections are to be tried. Those affections that arise wholly from any other kind of knowledge, or do result from any other kind of apprehensions of mind, are vain.

From what has been said, may be learned wherein the most essential difference lies between that light or understanding which is given by the common influences of the Spirit of God, on the hearts of natural men, and that saving instruction which is given to the saints. The latter primarily and most essentially lies in beholding the holy beauty that is in divine things; which is the only true moral good, and which the soul of fallen man is by nature totally blind to. The former consists only in a further

understanding, through the assistance of natural principles, of those things which men may know, in some measure, by the alone ordinary exercise of their faculties. And this knowledge consists only in the knowledge of those things pertaining to religion, which are natural. Thus for instance, in those awakenings of the conscience, that natural men are often subject to, the Spirit of God gives no knowledge of the true moral beauty which is in divine things; but only assists the mind to a clearer idea of the guilt of sin, or its relation to punishment, and connection with the evil of suffering (without any sight of its moral evil, or odiousness as sin), and a clearer idea of the natural perfections of God, wherein consists, not his holy beauty and glory, but his awful and terrible greatness. It is a clear sight of this, that will fully awaken the consciences of wicked men at the day of judgment, without any spiritual light. And it is a less degree of the same that awakens the consciences of natural men, without spiritual light in this world. The same discoveries are in some measure given in the conscience of an awakened sinner in this world, which will be given more fully, in the consciences of sinners at the day of judgment. The same kind of sight or apprehension of God, in a less degree, makes awakened sinners in this world sensible of the dreadful guilt of sin, against so great and terrible a God, and sensible of its amazing punishment, and fills them with fearful apprehensions of divine wrath, that will thoroughly convince all wicked men, of the infinitely dreadful nature and guilt of sin, and astonish them with apprehensions of wrath, when Christ shall come in the glory of his power and majesty, and every eye shall see him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. And in those common illuminations which are sometimes given to natural men, exciting in them some kind of religious desire, love, and joy, the mind is only assisted to a clearer apprehension of the natural good that is in divine things. Thus sometimes, under common illuminations, men are raised with the ideas of the natural good that is in heaven; as its outward glory; its ease, its honor and advancement, a being there the object of the high favor of God, and the great respect of men, and angels, etc. So there are many things exhibited in the gospel concerning God and Christ, and the way of salvation, that have a natural good in them, which suits the natural principle of self-love. Thus in that great goodness of God to sinners, and the wonderful dying love of Christ, there is a natural good which all men love, as they love themselves; as well as a spiritual and holy beauty, which is seen only by the regenerate. Therefore

there are many things appertaining to the word of God's grace delivered in the gospel, which may cause natural men, when they hear it, anon with joy to receive it. All that love which natural men have to God and Christ, and Christian virtues, and good men, is not from any sight of the amiableness of the holiness, or true moral excellency of these things; but only for the sake of the natural good there is in them. All natural men's hatred of sin, is as much from principles of nature, as men's hatred of a tiger for his rapaciousness, or their aversion to a serpent for his poison and hurtfulness; and all their love of Christian virtue, is from no higher principle, than their love of a man's good nature, which appears amiable to natural men; but no otherwise than silver and gold appears amiable in the eyes of a merchant, or than the blackness of the soil is beautiful in the eyes of the farmer.

From what has been said of the nature of spiritual understanding, it appears that spiritual understanding does not consist in any new doctrinal knowledge or in having suggested to the mind any new proposition, not before read or heard of; for it is plain that this suggesting of new propositions, is a thing entirely diverse from giving the mind a new taste or relish of beauty and sweetness.<sup>53</sup> It is also evident that spiritual knowledge does not consist in any new doctrinal explanation of any part of the Scripture; for still, this is but doctrinal knowledge, or the knowledge of propositions; the doctrinal explaining of an part of Scripture, is only giving us to understand what are the propositions contained or taught in that part of Scripture.

Hence it appears, that the spiritual understanding of the Scripture, does not consist in opening to the mind the mystical meaning of the Scripture, in its parables, types, and allegories; for this is only a doctrinal explication of the Scripture. He that explains what is meant by the stony ground, and the seed's springing up suddenly, and quickly withering away, only explains what propositions or doctrines are taught in it. So he that explains what is typified by Jacob's ladder, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it, or what was typified by Joshua's leading Israel through Jordan, only shows what propositions are hid in these passages. And many men can explain these types who have no spiritual knowledge. It is possible that a man might know how to interpret all the types, parables, enigmas, and allegories in the Bible, and not have one beam of spiritual

light in his mind; because he may not have the least degree of that spiritual sense of the holy beauty of divine things which has been spoken of, and may see nothing of this kind of glory in anything contained in any of these mysteries, or any other part of the Scripture. It is plain, by what the apostle says, that a man might understand all such mysteries, and have no saving grace, <sup><K&P></sup>1 Corinthians 13:2: “And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” They therefore are very foolish, who are exalted in an opinion of their own spiritual attainments, from notions that come into their minds, of the mystical meaning of these and those passages of Scripture, as though it was a spiritual understanding of these passages, immediately given them by the Spirit of God, and hence have their affections highly raised; and what has been said shows the vanity of such affections.

From what has been said, it is also evident, that it is not spiritual knowledge for persons to be informed of their duty, by having it immediately suggested to their minds, that such and such outward actions or deeds are the will of God. If we suppose that it is truly God’s manner thus to signify his will to his people, by immediate inward suggestions, such suggestions have nothing of the nature of spiritual light. Such kind of knowledge would only be one kind of doctrinal knowledge; a proposition concerning the will of God, is as properly a doctrine of religion, as a proposition concerning the nature of God, or a work of God; and a having either of these kinds of propositions, or any other proposition, declared to a man, either by speech, or inward suggestion, differs vastly from a having the holy beauty of divine things manifested to the soul, wherein spiritual knowledge does most essentially consist. Thus there was no spiritual light in Balaam; though he had the will of God immediately suggested to him by the Spirit of God from time to time, concerning the way that he should go, and what he should do and say.

It is manifest, therefore, that a being led and directed in this manner, is not that holy and spiritual leading of the Spirit of God, which is peculiar to the saints, and a distinguishing mark of the sons of God, spoken of, <sup><K&A></sup>Romans 8:14: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God.”

<sup><K&A></sup>Galatians 5:18, “But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.”

And if persons have the will of God concerning their actions, suggested to them by some text of Scripture, suddenly and extraordinarily brought to their minds, which text, as the words lay in the Bible before they came to their minds, related to the action and behavior of some other person, but they suppose, as God sent the words to them, he intended something further by them, and meant such a particular action of theirs; I say, if persons should have the will of God thus suggested to them with texts of Scripture, it alters not the case. The suggestion being accompanied with an apt text of Scripture, does not make the suggestion to be the nature of spiritual instruction. As for instance, if a person in New England, on some occasion, were at a loss whether it was his duty to go into some popish or heathenish land, where he was like to be exposed to many difficulties and dangers, and should pray to God that he would show him the way of his duty; and after earnest prayer, should have those words which God spake to Jacob, <sup>(441)</sup>Genesis 46, suddenly and extraordinarily brought to his mind, as if they were spoken to him; “Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will go with thee; and I will also surely bring you up again.” In which words, though as they lay in the Bible before they came to his mind, they related only to Jacob, and his behavior; yet he supposes that God has a further meaning, as they were brought and applied to him; that thus they are to be understood in a new sense, that by Egypt is to be understood this particular country he has in his mind, and that the action intended is his going thither, and that the meaning of the promise is, that God would bring him back into New England again. There is nothing of the nature of a spiritual or gracious leading of the Spirit in this; for there is nothing of the nature of spiritual understanding in it. Thus to understand texts of Scripture, is not to have a spiritual understanding of them. Spiritually to understand the Scriptures, is rightly to understand what is in the Scripture, and what was in it before it was understood: it is to understand rightly, what used to be contained in the meaning of it, and not the making of a new meaning. When the mind is enlightened spiritually and rightly to understand the Scripture, it is enabled to see that in the Scripture, which before was not seen by reason of blindness. But if it was by reason of blindness, that is an evidence that the same meaning was in it before, otherwise it would have been no blindness not to see it; it is no blindness not to see a meaning which is not there. Spiritually enlightening the eyes to understand the Scripture, is to open the eyes: <sup>(442)</sup>Psalm 119:18, “Open

thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law;” which argues that the reason why the same was not seen in the Scripture before, was that the eyes were shut; which would not be the case, if the meaning that is now understood was not there before, but is now newly added to the Scripture, by the manner of the Scripture’s coming to my mind. This making a new meaning to the Scripture, is the same thing as making a new Scripture; it is properly adding to the word, which is threatened with so dreadful a curse. Spiritually to understand the Scripture, is to have the eyes of the mind opened, to behold the wonderful spiritual excellency of the glorious things contained in the true meaning of it, and that always were contained in it, ever since it was written; to behold the amiable and bright manifestations of the divine perfections, and of the excellency and sufficiency of Christ, and the excellency and suitableness of the way of salvation by Christ, and the spiritual glory of the precepts and promises of the Scripture, etc., which things are, and always were in the Bible, and would have been seen before, if it had not been for blindness, without having any new sense added, by the words being sent by God to a particular person, and spoken anew to him, with a new meaning.

And as to a gracious leading of the Spirit, it consists in two things: partly in instructing a person in his duty by the Spirit, and partly in powerfully inducing him to comply with that instruction. But so far as the gracious leading of the Spirit lies in instruction, it consists in a person’s being guided by a spiritual and distinguishing taste of that which has in it true moral beauty. I have shown that spiritual knowledge primarily consists in a taste or relish of the amiableness and beauty of that which is truly good and holy: this holy relish is a thing that discerns and distinguishes between good and evil, between holy and unholy, without being at the trouble of a train of reasoning. As he who has a true relish of external beauty, knows what is beautiful by looking upon it; he stands in no need of a train of reasoning about the proportion of the features, in order to determine whether that which he sees be a beautiful countenance or no; he needs nothing, but only the glance of his eye. He who has a rectified musical ear, knows whether the sound he hears be true harmony; he does not need first to be at the trouble of the reasonings of a mathematician about the proportion of the notes. He that has a rectified palate knows what is good food, as soon as he tastes it, without the reasoning of a physician about it.

There is a holy beauty and sweetness in words and actions, as well as a natural beauty in countenances and sounds, and sweetness in food: <sup><821></sup>Job 12:11, “Doth not the ear try words, and the mouth taste his meat?” When a holy and amiable action is suggested to the thoughts of a holy soul, that soul, if in the lively exercise of its spiritual taste, at once sees a beauty in it, and so inclines to it, and closes with it. On the contrary, if an unworthy, unholy action be suggested to it, its sanctified eye sees no beauty in it, and is not pleased with it; its sanctified taste relishes no sweetness in it, but on the contrary, it is nauseous to it. Yea, its holy taste and appetite leads it to think of that which is truly lovely, and naturally suggests it; as a healthy taste and appetite naturally suggests the idea of its proper object. Thus a holy person is led by the Spirit, as he is instructed and led by his holy taste and disposition of heart; whereby, in the lively exercise of grace, he easily distinguishes good and evil, and knows at once what is a suitable amiable behavior towards God, and towards man, in this case and the other, and Judges what is right, as it were spontaneously, and of himself, without a particular deduction, by any other arguments than the beauty that is seen, and goodness that is tasted. Thus Christ blames the Pharisees, that they “did not, even of their own selves, judge what was right,” without needing miracles to prove it, <sup><825></sup>Luke 12:57. The apostle seems plainly to have respect to this way of judging of spiritual beauty, in <sup><810></sup>Romans 12:2: “Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God.”

There is such a thing as good taste of natural beauty (which learned men often speak of) that is exercised about temporal things, in judging of them, as about the justness of a speech, the goodness of style, the beauty of a poem, the gracefulness of deportment, etc. A late great philosopher of our nation writes thus upon it: <sup>54</sup> “To have a taste, is to give things their real value, to be touched with the good, to be shocked with the ill; not to be dazzled with false lusters, out in spite of all colors, and everything that might deceive or amuse, to judge soundly. Taste and judgment, then, should be the same thing; and yet it is easy to discern a difference. The judgment forms its opinions from reflection: the reason on this occasion fetches a kind of circuit, to arrive at its end; it supposes principles, it draws consequences, and it judges; but not without a thorough knowledge of the case; so that after it has pronounced, it is ready to render a reason of

its decrees. Good taste observes none of these formalities; ere it has time to consult, it has taken its side; as soon as ever the object is presented, the impression is made, the sentiment formed, ask no more of it. As the ear is wounded with a harsh sound, as the smell is soothed with an agreeable odor, before ever the reason have meddled with those objects to judge of them, so the taste opens itself at once, and prevents all reflection. They may come afterwards to confirm it, and discover the secret reasons of its conduct; but it was not in its power to wait for them. Frequently it happens not to know them at all, and what pains soever it uses, cannot discover what it was determined it to think as it did. This conduct is very different from what the judgment observes in its decisions: unless we choose to say, that good taste is, as it were, a first motion, or a kind of instinct of right reason, which hurries on with rapidity and conducts more securely, than all the reasonings she could make; it is a first glance of the eye, which discovers to us the nature and relations of things in a moment.

Now as there is such a kind of taste of the mind as this, which philosophers speak of, whereby persons are guided in their judgment, of the natural beauty, gracefulness, propriety, nobleness, and sublimity of speeches and action, whereby they judge as it were by the glance of the eye, or by inward sensation, and the first impression of the object; so there is likewise such a thing as a divine taste, given and maintained by the Spirit of God, in the hearts of the saints, whereby they are in like manner led and guided in discerning and distinguishing the true spiritual and holy beauty of actions; and that more easily, readily, and accurately, as they have more or less of the Spirit of God dwelling in them. And thus “the sons of God are led by the Spirit of God, in their behavior in the world.”

A holy disposition and spiritual taste, where grace is strong and lively, will enable the soul to determine what actions are right and becoming Christians, not only more speedily, but far more exactly, than the greatest abilities without it. This may be illustrated by the manner in which some habits of mind, and dispositions of heart, of a nature inferior to true grace, will teach and guide a man in his actions. As for instance, if a man be a very good natured man, his good nature will teach him better how to act benevolently amongst mankind, and will direct him, on every occasion, to those speeches and actions, which are agreeable to rules of goodness, than the strongest reason will a man of a morose temper. So if a man’s heart be



under the influence of an entire friendship, and most endeared affection to another; though he be a man of an indifferent capacity, yet this habit of his mind will direct him, far more readily and exactly, to a speech and deportment, or manner of behavior, which shall in all respects be sweet and kind, and agreeable to a benevolent disposition of heart, than the greatest capacity without it. He has as it were a spirit within him, that guides him; the habit of his mind is attended with a taste, by which he immediately relishes that air and mien which is benevolent, and disrelishes the contrary, and causes him to distinguish between one and the other in a moment, more precisely, than the most accurate reasonings can find out in many hours. As the nature and inward tendency of a stone, or other heavy body, that is let fall from aloft, shows the way to the center of the earth, more exactly in an instant, than the ablest mathematician, without it, could determine, by his most accurate observations, in a whole day. Thus it is that a spiritual disposition and taste teaches and guides a man in his behavior in the world. So an eminently humble, or meek, or charitable disposition, will direct a person of mean capacity to such a behavior, as is agreeable to Christian rules of humility, meekness and charity far more readily and precisely than the most diligent study, and elaborate reasonings, of a man of the strongest faculties, who has not a Christian spirit within him. So also will a spirit of love to God, and holy fear and reverence towards God, and filial confidence in God, and a heavenly disposition, teach and guide a man in his behavior.

It is an exceedingly difficult thing for a wicked man, destitute of Christian principles in his heart to guide him, to know how to demean himself like a Christian with the life and beauty, and heavenly sweetness of a truly holy, humble, Christ like behavior. He knows not how to put on these garments, neither do they fit him: <sup>2006</sup>Ecclesiastes 10:2, 3, “A wise man’s heart is at his right hand; but a fool’s heart is at his left. Yea also, when he that is a fool walketh by the ways his wisdom faileth him, and he saith to everyone that he is a fool;” with ver. 15, “The labor of the foolish wearieth everyone of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city.” <sup>2006</sup>Proverbs 10:32, “The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable.” Chap. <sup>2006</sup>15:2, “The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright; but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.” And chap. <sup>2006</sup>16:23, “The heart of the righteous teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.” The saints in thus

judging of actions by a spiritual taste, have not a particular recourse to express rules of God's word, with respect to every word and action that is before them, the good or evil of which they thus judge: but yet their taste itself, in general, is subject to the rule of God's word, and must be tried by that, and a right reasoning upon it. As a man of a rectified palate judges of particular morsels by his taste; but yet his palate itself must be judged of, whether it be right or no, by certain rules and reasons. But a spiritual taste of soul mightily helps the soul in its reasonings on the word of God, and in judging of the true meaning of its rules: as it removes the prejudices of a depraved appetite, and naturally leads the thoughts in the right channel, casts a light on the word of God, and causes the true meaning most naturally to come to mind, through the harmony there is between the disposition and relish of a sanctified soul, and the true meaning of the rules of God's word. Yea, this harmony tends to bring the texts themselves to mind, on proper occasions; as the particular state of the stomach and palate tends to bring such particular meats and drinks to mind, as are agreeable to that state. "Thus the children of God are led by the Spirit of God," in judging of actions themselves, and in their meditations upon, and judging of, and applying the rules of God's holy word: and so God "teaches them his statutes, and causes them to understand the way of his precepts;" which the Psalmist so often prays for.

But this leading of the Spirit is a thing exceedingly diverse from that which some call so; which consists not in teaching them God's statutes and precepts, that he has already given; but in giving them new precepts, by immediate inward speech or suggestion, and has in it no tasting the true excellency of things, or judging or discerning the nature of things at all. They do not determine what is the will of God by any taste or relish, or any manner of judging of the nature of things, but by an immediate dictate concerning the thing to be done; there is no such thing as any judgment or wisdom in the case. Whereas in that leading of the Spirit which is peculiar to God's children, is imparted that true wisdom, and holy discretion, so often spoken of in the word of God; which is high above the other way, as the stars are higher than a glow worm; and that which Balaam and Saul (who sometimes were led by the Spirit in that other way) never had, and no natural man can have, without a change of nature.

What has been said of the nature of spiritual understanding, as consisting most essentially in a divine supernatural sense and relish of the heart, not only shows that there is nothing of it in this falsely supposed leading of the Spirit, which has been now spoken of; but also shows the difference between spiritual understanding, and all kinds and forms of enthusiasm, all imaginary sights of God, and Christ, and heaven, all supposed witnessing of the Spirit, and testimonies of the love of God by immediate inward suggestion: and all impressions of future events, and immediate revelations of any secret facts whatsoever; all enthusiastical impressions and applications of words of Scripture, as though they were words now immediately spoken by God to a particular person, in a new meaning, and carrying something more in them, than the words contain as they lie in the Bible; and all interpretations of the mystical meaning of the Scripture, by supposed immediate revelation. None of these things consists in a divine sense and relish of the heart, of the holy beauty and excellency of divine things; nor have they anything to do with such a sense; but all consists in impressions in the head; all are to be referred to the head of impressions on the imagination, and consist in the exciting external ideas in the mind, either in ideas of outward shapes and colors, or words spoken, or letters written, or ideas of things external and sensible, belonging to actions done, or events accomplished or to be accomplished. An enthusiastical supposed manifestation of the love of God, is made by the exciting an idea of a smiling countenance, or some other pleasant outward appearance, or by the idea of pleasant words spoken, or written, excited in the imagination, or some pleasant bodily sensation. So when persons have an imaginary revelation of some secret fact, it is by exciting external ideas; either of some words, implying a declaration of that fact, or some visible or sensible circumstances of such a fact. So the supposed leading of the Spirit, to do the will of God, in outward behavior, is either by exciting the idea of words (which are outward things) in their minds, either the words of Scripture, or other words, which they look upon as an immediate command of God; or else by exciting and impressing strongly the ideas of the outward actions themselves. So when an interpretation of a Scripture type or allegory, is immediately, in an extraordinary way, strongly suggested, it is by suggesting words, as though one secretly whispered and told the meaning, or by exciting other ideas in the imagination.

Such sort of experiences and discoveries as these, commonly raise the affections of such as are deluded by them, to a great height, and make a mighty uproar in both soul and body. And a very great part of the false religion that has been in the world, from one age to another, consists in such discoveries as these, and in the affections that flow from them. In such things consisted the experiences of the ancient Pythagoreans among the heathen, and many others among them, who had strange ecstasies and raptures, and pretended to a divine afflatus, and immediate revelations from heaven. In such things as these seem to have consisted the experiences of the Essenes, an ancient sect among the Jews, at and after the time of the apostles. In such things as these consisted the experiences of many of the ancient Gnostics, and the Montanists, and many Other sects of ancient heretics, in the primitive ages of the Christian church. And in such things as these consisted the pretended immediate converse with God and Christ, and saints and angels of heaven, of the Monks, Anchorites, and Recluses, that formerly abounded in the Church of Rome. In such things consisted the pretended high experiences and great spirituality of many sects of enthusiasts, that swarmed in the world after the Reformation; such as the Anabaptists, Antinomians, and Familists, the followers of N. Stork, Th. Muncer, Jo. Becold, Henry Pfeiser, David George, Casper Swenckfield, Henry Nicolas Johannes Agrcola Eislebius; and the many wild enthusiasts that were in England in the days of Oliver Cromwell; and the followers of Mrs. Hutchison in New England; as appears by the particular and large accounts given of all these sects by that eminently holy man, Mr. Samuel Rutherford, in his “Display of the Spiritual Antichrist.” And in such things as these consisted the experiences of the late French prophets, and their followers. And in these things seems to lie the religion of the many kinds of enthusiasts of the present day. It is by such sort of religion as this, chiefly, that Satan transforms himself into an angel of light: and it is that which he has ever most successfully made use of to confound hopeful and happy revivals of religion, from the beginning of the Christian church to this day. When the Spirit of God is poured out, to begin a glorious work, then the old serpent, as fast as possible, and by all means, introduces this bastard religion, and mingles it with the true; which has from time to time soon brought all things into confusion. The pernicious consequence of it is not easily imagined or conceived of, until we see and are amazed with the awful effects of it, and

the dismal desolation it has made. If the revival of true religion be very great in its beginning, yet if this bastard comes in, there is danger of its doing as Gideon's bastard Abimelech did, who never left until he had slain all his threescore and ten true-born sons, excepting one, that was forced to fly. Great and strict therefore should be the watch and guard that ministers maintain against such things, especially at a time of great awakening: for men, especially the common people, are easily bewitched with such things; they having such a glaring and glistering show of high religion; and the devil biding his own shape, and appearing as an angel of light, that men may not be afraid of him, but may adore him.

The imagination or phantasy seems to be that wherein are formed all those delusions of Satan, which those are carried away with, who are under the influence of false religion, and counterfeit graces and affections. Here is the devil's grand lurking place, the very nest of foul and delusive spirits. It is very much to be doubted, whether the devil can come at the soul of man at all to affect it, or to excite any thought, or motion, or produce any effect whatsoever in it, any other way, than by the phantasy; which is that power of the soul, by which it receives, and is the subject of the species, or ideas of outward and sensible things. As to the laws and means which the Creator has established, for the intercourse and communication of unbodied spirits, we know nothing about them; we do not know by what medium they manifest their thoughts to each other, or excite thoughts in each other. But as to spirits that are united to bodies, those bodies God has united them to, are their medium of communication. They have no other medium of acting on other creatures, or being acted on by them, than the body. Therefore it is not to be supposed that Satan can excite any thought, or produce any effect in the soul of man, any otherwise, than by some motion of the animal spirits, or by causing some motion or alteration in some thing which appertains to the body. There is this reason to think that the devil cannot produce thoughts in the soul immediately, or any other way than by the medium of the body, viz., that he cannot immediately see or know the thoughts of the soul: it is abundantly declared in the Scripture, to be peculiar to the omniscient God to do that. But it is not likely that the devil can immediately produce an effect, which is out of the reach of his immediate view. It seems unreasonable to suppose, that his immediate agency should be out of his own sight, or that

it should be impossible for him to see what he himself immediately does. Is it not unreasonable to suppose, that any spirit or intelligent agent, should by the act of his will, produce effects according to his understanding, or agreeable to his own thoughts, and that immediately, and yet the effects produced be beyond the reach of his understanding, or where he can have no immediate perception or discerning at all? But if this be so, that the devil cannot produce thoughts in the soul immediately, or any other way than by the animal spirits, or by the body, then it follows, that he never brings to pass anything in the soul, but by the imagination or phantasy, or by exciting external ideas. For we know that alterations in the body do immediately excite no other sort of ideas in the mind, but external ideas, or ideas of the outward senses, or ideas which are of the same outward nature. As to reflection, abstraction, reasoning, etc., and those thoughts and inward motions which are the fruits of these acts of the mind, they are not the next effects of impressions on the body. So that it must be only by the imagination, that Satan has access to the soul, to tempt and delude it, or suggest anything to it.<sup>55</sup> And this seems to be the reason why persons that are under the disease of melancholy, are commonly so visibly and remarkably subject to the suggestions and temptations of Satan; that being a disease which peculiarly affects the animal spirits, and is attended with weakness of that part of the body which is the fountain of the animal spirits, even the brain, which is, as it were, the seat of the phantasy. It is by impressions made on the brain, that any ideas are excited in the mind, by the motion of the animal spirits, or any changes made in the body. The brain being thus weakened and diseased, it is less under the command of the higher faculties of the soul, and yields the more easily to extrinsic impressions, and is overpowered by the disordered motions of the animal spirits; and so the devil has greater advantage to affect the mind, by working on the imagination. And thus Satan, when he casts in those horrid suggestions into the minds of many melancholy persons, in which they have no hand themselves, he does it by exciting imaginary ideas, either of some dreadful words or sentences, or other horrid outward ideas. And when he tempts other persons who are not melancholy, he does it by presenting to the imagination, in a lively and alluring manner, the objects of their lusts, or by exciting ideas of words, and so by them exciting thoughts; or by promoting an imagination of outward actions, events, circumstances, etc. Innumerable are the ways by

which the mind might be led on to all kind of evil thoughts, by exciting external ideas in the imagination.

If persons keep no guard at these avenues of Satan, by which he has access to the soul, to tempt and delude it, they will be likely to have enough of him. And especially, if instead of guarding against him, they lay themselves open to him, and seek and invite him, because he appears as an angel of light, and counterfeits the illuminations and graces of the Spirit of God, by inward whispers, and immediate suggestions of facts and events, pleasant voices, beautiful images, and other impressions on the imagination. There are many who are deluded by such things, and are lifted up with them, and seek after them, that have a continued course of them, and can have them almost when they will; and especially when their pride and vainglory has most occasion for them, to make a show of them before company. It is with them, something as it is with those who are professors of the art of telling where lost things are to be found, by impressions made on their imaginations; they laying themselves open to the devil, he is always on hand to give them the desired impression.

Before I finish what I would say on this head of imaginations, counterfeiting spiritual light, and affections arising from them, I would renewedly (to prevent misunderstanding of what has been said) desire it may be observed, that I am far from determining, that no affections are spiritual which are attended with imaginary ideas. Such is the nature of man, that he can scarcely think of anything intensely, without some kind of outward ideas. They arise and interpose themselves unavoidably, in the course of a man's thoughts; though oftentimes they are very confused, and are not what the mind regards. When the mind is much engaged, and the thoughts intense, oftentimes the imagination is more strong, and the outward idea more lively, especially in persons of some constitutions of body. But there is a great difference between these two things viz., lively imaginations arising from strong affections, and strong affections arising from lively imaginations. The former may be, and doubtless often is, in case of truly gracious affections. The affections do not arise from the imagination, nor have any dependence upon it; but on the contrary, the imagination is only the accidental effect, or consequent of the affection, through the infirmity of human nature. But when the latter is the case, as it often is, that the affection arises from the imagination, and is built upon it,

as its foundation, instead of a spiritual illumination or discovery, then is the affection, however elevated, worthless and vain. And this is the drift of what has been now said, of impressions on the imagination. Having observed this, I proceed to another mark of gracious affections.

**V.** Truly gracious affections are attended with a reasonable and spiritual conviction of the judgment, of the reality and certainty of divine things.

This seems to be implied in the text that was laid as the foundation of this discourse: “Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.”

All those who are truly gracious persons have a solid, full, thorough and effectual conviction of the truth of the great things of the gospel; I mean, that they no longer halt between two opinions; the great doctrines of the gospel cease to be any longer doubtful things, or matters of opinion, which, though probable, are yet disputable; but with them, they are points settled and determined, as undoubted and indisputable, so that they are not afraid to venture their all upon their truth. Their conviction is an effectual conviction; so that the great spiritual mysterious and invisible things of the gospel, have the influence of real and certain things upon them; they have the weight and power of real things in their hearts; and accordingly rule in their affections, and govern them through the course of their lives. With respect to Christ’s being the Son of God, and Savior of the world, and the great things he has revealed concerning himself, and his Father, and another world, they have not only a predominating opinion that these things are true, and so yield their assent, as they do in many other matters of doubtful speculation; but they see that it is really so; their eyes are opened, so that they see that really Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. And as to the things which Christ has revealed, of God’s eternal purposes and designs, concerning fallen man, and the glorious and everlasting things prepared for the saints in another world, they see that they are so indeed; and therefore these things are of great weight with them, and have a mighty power upon their hearts, and influence over their practice, in some measure answerable to their infinite importance.

That all true Christians have such a kind of conviction of the truth of the things of the gospel, is abundantly manifest from the Holy Scriptures. I will mention a few places of many: <sup><0165</sup>Matthew 16:15, 16, 17, “But whom



say ye that I am? Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; — My Father which is in heaven hath revealed it unto thee.” <sup><B7B></sup>John 6:68, 69 “Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the son of the living God.” <sup><B7C></sup>John 17:6, 7, 8, “I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.” <sup><B7D></sup>Acts 8:37, “If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest.” <sup><B7E></sup>2 Corinthians 4:11, 12, 13, 14, “We which live, are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake. — Death worketh in us. — We having the spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; knowing, that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.” Together with ver. 16, “For which cause we faint not.” And ver. 18 “While we look not at the things which are seen,” etc. And chap. <sup><B7F></sup>5:1, “For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God.” And ver. 6, 7, 8, “Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord.” <sup><B7G></sup>2 Timothy 1:12, “For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” <sup><B7H></sup>Hebrews 3:6, “Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” <sup><B7I></sup>Hebrews 11:1, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen;” together with that whole chapter. <sup><B7J></sup>1 John 4:13, 14, 15, 16, “Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us.” Chap. <sup><B7K></sup>5:4, 5, “For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world,

even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

Therefore truly gracious affections are attended with such a kind of conviction and persuasion of the truth of the things of the gospel, and sight of their evidence and reality, as these and other Scriptures speak of.

There are many religious affections, which are not attended with such a conviction of the judgment. There are many apprehensions and ideas which some have, that they call divine discoveries, which are affecting, but not convincing. Though for a little while they may seem to be more persuaded of the truth of the things of religion than they used to be, and may yield a forward assent, like many of Christ's hearers, who believed for a while; yet they have no thorough and effectual conviction; nor is there any great abiding change in them, in this respect, that whereas formerly they did not realize the great things of the gospel, now these things, with regard to reality and certainty, appear new to them, and they behold them, quite in another view than they used to do. There are many persons who have been exceedingly raised with religious affections, and think they have been converted, that do not go about the world any more convinced of the truth of the gospel, than they used to be; or at least, there is no remarkable alteration: they are not men who live under the influence and power of a realizing conviction of the infinite and eternal things which the gospel reveals; if they were, it would be impossible for them to live as they do. Because their affections are not attended with a thorough conviction of the mind, they are not at all to be depended on; however great a show and noise they make, it is like the blaze of tow, or crackling of thorns, or like the forward flourishing blade on stony ground, that has no root, nor deepness of earth to maintain its life.

Some persons, under high affections, and a confident persuasion of their good estate, have that, which they very ignorantly call a seeing the truth of the word of God, and which is very far from it, after this manner; they have some text of Scripture coming to their minds in a sudden and extraordinary manner, immediately declaring unto them (as they suppose) that their sins are forgiven, or that God loves them, and will save them; and it may be, have a chain of Scriptures coming one after another, to the same purpose; and they are convinced that it is truth; i.e., they are

confident that it is certainly so, that their sins are forgiven, and God does love them, etc. — they say they know it is so; and when the words of Scripture are suggested to them, and as they suppose immediately spoken to them by God, in this meaning, they are ready to cry out, Truth, truth! It is certainly so! The word of God is true! And this they call a seeing the truth of the word of God. Whereas the whole of their faith amounts to no more, than only a strong confidence of their own good estate, and so a confidence that these words are true, which they suppose tell them they are in a good estate: when indeed (as was shown before) there is no Scripture which declares that any person is in a good estate directly, or any other way than by consequence. So that this, instead of being a real sight of the truth of the word of God, is a sight of nothing but a phantom, and is wholly a delusion. Truly to see the truth of the word of God, is to see the truth of the gospel; which is the glorious doctrine the word of God contains, concerning God, and Jesus Christ, and the way of salvation by him, and the world of glory that he is entered into, and purchased for all them who believe; and not a revelation that such and such particular persons are true Christians, and shall go to heaven. Therefore those affections which arise from no other persuasion of the truth of the word of God than this, arise from delusion, and not true conviction; and consequently are themselves delusive and vain.

But if the religious affections that persons have, do indeed arise from a strong persuasion of the truth of the Christian religion, their affections are not the better, unless their persuasion be a reasonable persuasion or conviction. By a reasonable conviction, I mean, a conviction founded on real evidence, or upon that which is a good reason, or just ground of conviction. Men may have a strong persuasion that the Christian religion is true, when their persuasion is not at all built on evidence, but altogether on education, and the opinion of others; as many Mahometans are strongly persuaded of the truth of the Mahometan religion, because their fathers, and neighbors, and nation believe it. That belief of the truth of the Christian religion, which is built on the very same grounds with a Mahometan's belief of the Mahometan religion, is the same sort of belief. And though the thing believed happens to be better, yet that does not make the belief itself to be of a better sort; for though the thing believed happens to be true, yet the belief of it is not owing to this truth, but to

education. So that as the conviction is no better than the Mahometan's conviction; so the affections that flow from it, are no better in themselves, than the religious affections of Mahometans.

But if that belief of Christian doctrines, which persons' affections arise from, be not merely from education, but indeed from reasons and arguments which are offered, it will not from thence necessarily follow, that their affections are truly gracious: for in order to that, it is requisite not only that the belief which their affections arise from, should be a reasonable, but also a spiritual belief or conviction. I suppose none will doubt but that some natural men do yield a kind of assent of their judgments to the truth of the Christian religion, from the rational proofs or arguments that are offered to evince it. Judas, without doubt, thought Jesus to be the Messiah, from the things which he saw and heard; but yet all along was a devil. So in <sup><4023></sup>John 2:23, 24, 25, we read of many that believed in Christ's name, when they saw the miracles that he did; whom yet Christ knew had not that within them, which was to be depended on. So Simon the sorcerer believed, when he beheld the miracles and signs which were done; but yet remained in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, <sup><4023></sup>Acts 8:13, 23. And if there is such a belief or assent of the judgment in some natural men, none can doubt but that religious affections may arise from that assent or belief; as we read of some who believed for a while, that were greatly affected, and anon with joy received the word.

It is evident that there is such a thing as a spiritual belief or conviction of the truth of the things of the gospel, or a belief that is peculiar to those who are spiritual, or who are regenerated, and have the Spirit of God, in his holy communications, and dwelling in them as a vital principle. So that the conviction they have, does not only differ from that which natural men have, in its concomitants, in that it is accompanied with good works; but the belief itself is diverse, the assent and conviction of the judgment is of a kind peculiar to those who are spiritual, and that which natural men are wholly destitute of. This is evident by the Scripture, if anything at all is so: <sup><4078></sup>John 17:8, "They have believed that thou didst send me." <sup><4000></sup>Titus 1:1, "According to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness." <sup><4067></sup>John 16:27, "The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." <sup><4015></sup>1 John 4:15, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of

God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.” Chap. <sup>¶151</sup>5:1, “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.” Ver. 10, “He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself.”

What a spiritual conviction of the judgment is, we are naturally led to determine from what has been said already under the former head of a spiritual understanding. The conviction of the judgment arises from the illumination of the understanding; the passing of a right judgment on things, depends on having aright apprehension or idea of things. And therefore it follows, that a spiritual conviction of the truth of the great things of the gospel, is such a conviction, as arises from having a spiritual view or apprehension of those things in the mind. And this is also evident from the Scripture, which often represents, that a saving belief of the reality and divinity of the things proposed and exhibited to us in the gospel, is from the Spirit of God’s enlightening the mind, to have right apprehensions of the nature of those things, and so as it were unveiling things, or revealing them, and enabling the mind to view them and see them as they are. <sup>¶152</sup>Luke 10:21, 22, “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.” <sup>¶153</sup>John 6:40, “And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life.” Where it is plain, that true faith arises from a spiritual sight of Christ. And <sup>¶154</sup>John 17:6, 7, 8, “I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.” Where Christ’s manifesting God’s name to the disciples, or giving them a true apprehension and view of divine things, was that whereby they knew that Christ’s doctrine was of God, and that Christ himself was of him, and was sent by him:

<sup>¶155</sup>Matthew 16:16, 17, “Simon Peter said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my

Father which is in heaven.” <sup><G50></sup>1 John 5:10, “He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself.” <sup><R01H></sup>Galatians 1:14, 16, 16, “Being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.”

If it be so, that that is a spiritual conviction of the divinity and reality of the things exhibited in the gospel, which arises from a spiritual understanding of those things; I have shown already what that is, viz., a sense and taste of the divine, supreme, and holy excellency and beauty of those things. So that then is the mind spiritually convinced of the divinity and truth of the great things of the gospel, when that conviction arises, either directly or remotely, from such a sense or view of their divine excellency and glory as is there exhibited. This clearly follows, from things that have been already said: and for this the Scripture is very plain and express, <sup><G002></sup>2 Corinthians 4:3-6: “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.” Together with the last verse of the foregoing chapter, which introduces this, “but we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” Nothing can be more evident, than that a saving belief of the gospel is here spoken of, by the apostle, as arising from the mind’s being enlightened to behold the divine glory of the things it exhibits.

This view or sense of the divine glory, and unparalleled beauty of the things exhibited to us in the gospel, has a tendency to convince the mind of their divinity, two ways; directly, and more indirectly, and remotely. 1. A view of this divine glory directly convinces the mind of the divinity of these things, as this glory is in itself a direct, clear, and all-conquering evidence of it; especially when clearly discovered, or when this supernatural sense is given in a good degree.

He that has his judgment thus directly convinced and assured of the divinity of the things of the gospel, by a clear view of their divine glory, has a reasonable conviction; his belief and assurance is altogether agreeable to reason; because the divine glory and beauty of divine things is, in itself, real evidence of the divinity, and the most direct and strong evidence. He that truly sees the divine transcendent, supreme glory of those things which are divine, does as it were know their divinity intuitively: he not only argues that they are divine, but he sees that they are divine; he sees that in them wherein divinity chiefly consists, for in this glory which is so vastly and inexpressibly distinguished from the glory of artificial things, and all other glory, does mainly consist the true notion of divinity. God is God, and distinguished from all other beings, and exalted above them, chiefly by his divine beauty, which is infinitely diverse from all other beauty. — They therefore that see the stamp of this glory in divine things, they see divinity in them, they see God in them, and see them to be divine; because they see that in them wherein the truest idea of divinity does consist. Thus a soul may have a kind of intuitive knowledge of the divinity of the things exhibited in the gospel; not that he judges the doctrines of the gospel to be from God, without any argument or deduction at all; but it is without any long chain of arguments; the argument is but one, and the evidence direct; the mind ascends to the truth of the gospel but by one step, and that is its divine glory.

It would be very strange, if any professing Christian should deny it to be possible, that there should be an excellency in divine things, which is so transcendent, and exceedingly different from what is in other things, that if it were seen, would evidently distinguish them. We cannot rationally doubt, but that things that are divine, that appertain to the Supreme Being, are vastly different from things that are human: that there is a Godlike, high, and glorious excellency in them, that does so distinguish them from the things which are of men, that the difference is inevitable; and therefore such as, if seen, will have a most convincing, satisfying influence upon anyone, that they are what they are, viz., divine. Doubtless there is that glory and excellency in the divine Being, by which he is so infinitely distinguished from all other beings, that if it were seen, he might be known by it. It would therefore be very unreasonable to deny, that it is possible for God to give manifestations of this distinguishing excellency, in things

by which he is pleased to make himself known; and that this distinguishing excellency may be clearly seen in them. There are natural excellencies, that are very evidently distinguishing of the subjects or authors, to anyone who beholds them. How vastly is the speech of an understanding man different from that of a little child! And how greatly distinguished is the speech of some men of great genius, as Homer, Cicero, Milton, Locke, Addison, and others, from that of many other understanding men! There are no limits to be set to the degrees of manifestation of mental excellency, that there may be in speech. But the appearances of the natural perfections of God, in the manifestations he makes of himself, may doubtless be unspeakably more evidently distinguishing, than the appearances of those excellencies of worms of the dust, in which they differ one from another. He that is well acquainted with mankind, and their works, by viewing the sun, may know it is no human work. And it is reasonable to suppose, that when Christ comes at the end of the world, in the glory of his Father, it will be with such ineffable appearances of divinity, as will leave no doubt to the inhabitants of the world, even the most obstinate infidels, that he who appears is a divine person. But above all, do the manifestations of the moral and spiritual glory of the divine Being (which is the proper beauty of the divinity) bring their own evidence, and tend to assure the heart. Thus the disciples were assured that Jesus was the Son of God, “for they beheld his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,” <sup>4114</sup> John 1:14. When Christ appeared in the glory of his transfiguration to his disciples, with that outward glory to their bodily eyes, which was a sweet and admirable symbol and semblance of his spiritual glory, together with his spiritual glory itself, manifested to their minds; the manifestation of glory was such, as did perfectly, and with good reason, assure them of his divinity; as appears by what one of them, viz., the Apostle Peter, says concerning it, <sup>4115</sup> 2 Peter 1:16, 17, 18, “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father, honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.” The apostle calls that mount, the holy mount, because the manifestations of Christ which were there made to their minds, and which their minds



were especially impressed and ravished with, were the glory of his holiness, or the beauty of his moral excellency; or, as another of these disciples, who saw it, expresses it, “his glory, as full of grace and truth.”

Now this distinguishing glory of the divine Being has its brightest appearance and manifestation, in the things proposed and exhibited to us in the gospel, the doctrines there taught, the word there spoken, and the divine counsels, acts and works there revealed. These things have the clearest, most admirable, and distinguishing representations and exhibitions of the glory of God’s moral perfections, that ever were made to the world. And if there be such a distinguishing, evidential manifestation of divine glory in the gospel, it is reasonable to suppose that there may be such a thing as seeing it. What should hinder but that it may be seen? It is no argument that it cannot be seen, that some do not see it; though they may be discerning men in temporal matters. If there be such ineffable, distinguishing, evidential excellencies in the gospel, it is reasonable to suppose, that they are such as are not to be discerned, but by the special influence and enlightenings of the Spirit of God. There is need of uncommon force of mind to discern the distinguishing excellencies of the works of authors of great genius: those things in Milton, which, to mean judges, appear tasteless and imperfections, are his inimitable excellencies in the eyes of those, who are of greater discerning and better taste. And if there be a book, which God is the author of, it is most reasonable to suppose, that the distinguishing glories of his word are of such a kinds as that the corruption of men’s hearts, which above all things alienates men from the Deity, and makes the heart dull and stupid to any sense or taste of those things wherein the moral glory of the divine perfections consists: I say, it is but reasonable to suppose, that this would blind men from discerning the beauties of such a book; and that therefore they will not see them, but as God is pleased to enlighten them, and restore a holy taste, to discern and relish divine beauties.

This sense of the spiritual excellency and beauty of divine things, does also tend directly to convince the mind of the truth of the gospel, as there are very many of the most important things declared in the gospel, that are hid from the eyes of natural men, the truth of which does in effect consist in this excellency, or does so immediately depend upon it, and result from it, that in this excellency’s being seen, the truth of those things is seen. As

soon as ever the eyes are opened to behold the holy beauty and amiableness that is in divine things, a multitude of most important doctrines of the gospel that depend upon it (which all appear strange and dark to natural men) are at once seen to be true. As for instance, hereby appears the truth of what the word of God declares concerning the exceeding evil of sin; for the same eye that discerns the transcendent beauty of holiness, necessarily therein sees the exceeding odiousness of sin: the same taste which relishes the sweetness of true moral good, tastes the bitterness of moral evil. And by this means a man sees his own sinfulness and loathsomeness; for he has now a sense to discern objects of this nature; and so sees the truth of what the word of God declares concerning the exceeding sinfulness of mankind, which before he did not see. He now sees the dreadful pollution of his heart, and the desperate depravity of his nature, in a new manner; for his soul has now a sense given it to feel the pain of such a disease; and this shows him the truth of what the Scripture reveals concerning the corruption of man's nature, his original sin, and the ruinous, undone condition man is in, and his need of a Savior, his need of the mighty power of God to renew his heart and change his nature. Men, by seeing the true excellency of holiness, do see the glory of all those things, which both reason and Scripture show to be in the divine Being; for it has been shown, that the glory of them depends on this: and hereby they see the truth of all that the Scripture declares concerning: God's glorious excellency and majesty, his being the fountain of all good, the only happiness of the creature, etc. And this again shows the mind the truth of what the Scripture teaches concerning the evil of sin against so glorious a God; and also the truth of what it teaches concerning sin's just desert of that dreadful punishment which it reveals; and also concerning the impossibility of our offering any satisfaction, or sufficient atonement for that which is so infinitely evil and heinous. And this again shows the truth of what the Scripture reveals concerning the necessity of a Savior, to offer an atonement of infinite value for sin. And this sense of spiritual beauty that has been spoken of, enables the soul to see the glory of those things which the gospel reveals concerning the person of Christ; and so enables to see the exceeding beauty and dignity of his person, appearing in what the gospel exhibits of his word, works, acts, and life: and this apprehension of the superlative dignity of his person shows the truth of what the gospel declares concerning the value of his blood and

righteousness, and so the infinite excellency of that offering he has made to God for us, and so its sufficiency to atone for our sins, and recommend us to God. And thus the Spirit of God discovers the way of salvation by Christ; thus the soul sees the fitness and suitableness of this way of salvation, the admirable wisdom of the contrivance, and the perfect answerableness of the provision that the gospel exhibits (as made for us) to our necessities. A sense of true divine beauty being given to the soul, the soul discerns the beauty of every part of the gospel scheme. This also shows the soul the truth of what the word of God declares concerning man's chief happiness, as consisting in holy exercises and enjoyments. This shows the truth of what the gospel declares concerning the unspeakable glory of the heavenly state. And what the prophecies of the Old Testaments and the writings of the apostles declare concerning the glory of the Messiah's kingdom, is now all plain; and also what the Scripture teaches concerning the reasons and grounds of our duty. The truth of all these things revealed in the Scripture, and many more that might be mentioned, appears to the soul, only by imparting that spiritual taste of divine beauty, which has been spoken of; they being hidden things to the soul before.

And besides all this, the truth of all those things which the Scripture says about experimental religion, is hereby known; for they are now experienced. And this convinces the soul, that one who knew the heart of man, better than we know our own hearts, and perfectly knew the nature of virtue and holiness, was the author of the Scriptures. And the opening to view, with such clearness, such a world of wonderful and glorious truth in the gospel, that before was unknown, being quite above the view of a natural eye, but now appearing so clear and bright, has a powerful and invincible influence on the soul, to persuade of the divinity of the gospel.

Unless men may come to a reasonable, solid persuasion and conviction of the truth of the gospel, by the internal evidences of it, in the way that has been spoken, viz., by a sight of its glory; it is impossible that those who are illiterate, and unacquainted with history, should have any thorough and effectual conviction of it at all. They may without this, see a great deal of probability of it; it may be reasonable for them to give much credit to what learned men and historians tell them; and they may tell them so much, that it may look very probable and rational to them, that the Christian religion

is true; and so much that they would be very unreasonable not to entertain this opinion. But to have a conviction, so clear, and evident, and assuring, as to be sufficient to induce them, with boldness to sell all, confidently and fearlessly to run the venture of the loss of all things, and of enduring the most exquisite and long continued torments, and to trample the world under foot, and count all things but dung for Christ, the evidence they can have from history, cannot be sufficient. It is impossible that men, who have not something of a general view of the historical world, or the series of history from age to age, should come at the force of arguments for the truth of Christianity, drawn from history, to that degree, as effectually to induce them to venture their all upon it. After all that learned men have said to them, there will remain innumerable doubts on their minds; they will be ready, when pinched with some great trial of their faith, to say, "How do I know this, or that? How do I know when these histories were written? Learned men tell me these histories were so and so attested in the day of them; but how do I know that there were such attestations then? They tell me there is equal reason to believe these facts, as any whatsoever that are related at such a distance; but how do I know that other facts which are related of those ages, ever were? Those who have not something of a general view of the series of historical events, and of the state of mankind from age to age, cannot see the clear evidence from history of the truth of facts, in distant ages; but there will endless doubts and scruples remain.

But the gospel was not given only for learned men. There are at least nineteen in twenty, if not ninety-nine in a hundred, of those for whom the Scriptures were written, that are not capable of any certain or effectual conviction of the divine authority of the Scriptures, by such arguments as learned men make use of. If men who have been brought up in Heathenism, must wait for a clear and certain conviction of the truth of Christianity, until they have learning and acquaintance with the histories of politer nations, enough to see clearly the force of such kind of arguments; it will make the evidence of the gospel to then immensely cumbersome, and will render the propagation of the gospel among them infinitely difficult. Miserable is the condition of the Houssatunnuck Indians, and others, who have lately manifested a desire to be instructed in Christianity, if they can

come at no evidence of the truth of Christianity, sufficient to induce them to sell all for Christ, in any other way but this.

It is unreasonable to suppose, that God has provided for his people no more than probable evidence of the truth of the gospel. He has with great care, abundantly provided, and given them, the most convicting, assuring, satisfying and manifold evidence of his faithfulness in the covenant of grace; and as David says, “made a covenant, ordered in all things and sure.” Therefore it is rational to suppose, that at the same time, he would not fail of ordering the matter so, that there should not be wanting, as great, and clear evidence, that this is his covenant, and that these promises are his promises; or, which is the same thing, that the Christian religion is true, and that the gospel is his word. Otherwise in vain are those great assurances he has given of his faithfulness in his covenant, by confirming it with his oath, and so variously establishing it by seals and pledges. For the evidence that it is his covenant, is properly the foundation on which all the force and effect of those other assurances do stand. We may therefore undoubtedly suppose and conclude, that there is some sort of evidence which God has given, that this covenant, and these promises are his, beyond all mere probability; that there are some grounds of assurance of it held forth, which, if we were not blind to them, tend to give a higher persuasion, than any arguing from history, human traditions etc., which the illiterate and unacquainted with history are capable of; yea, that which is good ground of the highest and most perfect assurance, that mankind have in any case whatsoever, agreeable to those high expressions which the apostle uses, <sup><802></sup>Hebrews 10:22, “Let us draw near in full assurance of faith.” And <sup><800></sup>Colossians 2:2, “That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.” It is reasonable to suppose, that God would give the greatest evidence of those things which are greatest, and the truth of which is of greatest importance to us: and that we therefore, if we are wise, and act rationally, shall have the greatest desire of having full, undoubting and perfect assurance of. But it is certain, that such an assurance is not to be attained by the greater part of them who live under the gospel, by arguments fetched from ancient traditions, histories, and monuments.

And if we come to fact and experience, there is not the least reason to suppose, that one in a hundred of those who have been sincere Christians, and have had a heart to sell all for Christ, have come by their convection of the truth of the gospel this way. If we read over the histories of the many thousands that died martyrs for Christ, since the beginning of the Reformation, and have cheerfully undergone extreme tortures in a confidence of the truth of the gospel, and consider their circumstances and advantages; how few of them were there, that we can reasonably suppose, ever came by their assured persuasion this way; or indeed for whom it was possible, reasonably to receive so full and strong an assurance, from such arguments! Many of them were weak women and children, and the greater part of them illiterate persons, many of whom had been brought up in popish ignorance and darkness, and were but newly come out of it, and lived and died in times wherein those arguments for the truth of Christianity, from antiquity and history had been but very imperfectly handled. And indeed, it is but very lately that these arguments have been set in a clear and convincing light, even by learned men themselves: and since it has been done, there never were fewer thorough believers among those who have been educated in the true religion; infidelity never prevailed so much, in any age, as in this, wherein these arguments are handled to the greatest advantage.

The true martyrs of Jesus Christ, are not those who have only been strong in opinion that the gospel of Christ is true, but those that have seen the truth of it; as the very name of martyrs or witnesses (by which they are called in Scripture) implies. Those are very improperly called witnesses of the truth of any thing, who only declare they are very much of opinion that such a thing is true. Those only are proper witnesses, who can, and do testify, that they have seen the truth of the thing they assert. <sup><B></sup>John 3:11, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen." <sup><B></sup>John 1:34, "And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God." <sup><B></sup>1 John 4:14, "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world." <sup><B></sup>Acts 22:14, 15, "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know his will, and see that just one, and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth; for thou shalt be his witness unto all men, of what thou hast seen and heard." But the true martyrs of Jesus Christ are called his witnesses; and all the saints, who by their holy

practice under great trials, declare that faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, are called witnesses, ~~scri~~ Hebrews 11:1, and ~~scri~~ 12:1, because by their profession and practice, they declare their assurance of the truth and divinity of the gospel, having had the eyes of their minds enlightened to see divinity in the gospel, or to behold that unparalleled, ineffably excellent, and truly divine glory shining in it, which is altogether distinguishing, evidential, and convincing: so that they may truly be said to have seen God in it, and to have seen that it is indeed divine; and so can speak in the style of witnesses; and not only say, that they think the gospel is divine, but say, that it is divine, giving it in as their testimony, because they have seen it to be so. Doubtless Peter, James and John, after they had seen that excellent glory of Christ in the mount, would have been ready, when they came down, to speak in the language of witnesses, and to say positively that Jesus is the Son of God; as Peter says, they were eyewitnesses, ~~scri~~ 2 Peter 1:16. And so all nations will be ready positively to say this, when they shall behold his glory at the day of judgment; though what will be universally seen, will be only his natural glory, and not his moral and spiritual glory, which is much more distinguishing. But yet it must be noted, that among those who have a spiritual sight of the divine glory of the gospel, there is a great variety of decrees of strength of faith, as there is a vast variety of the degrees of clearness of views of this glory: but there is no true and saving faith, or spiritual conviction of the judgment, of the truth of the gospel, that has nothing in it, of this manifestation of its internal evidence in some degree. The gospel of the blessed God does not go abroad a begging for its evidence, so much as some think; it has its highest and most proper evidence in itself. Though great use may be made of external arguments, they are not to be neglected, but highly prized and valued; for they may be greatly serviceable to awaken unbelievers, and bring them to serious consideration, and to confirm the faith of true saints; yea, they may be in some respect subservient to the begetting of a saving faith in men. Though what was said before remains true, that there is no spiritual conviction of the judgment, but what arises from an apprehension of the spiritual beauty and glory of divine things: for, as has been observed, this apprehension or view has a tendency to convince the mind of the truth of the gospel, two ways, either directly or indirectly. Having therefore already observed how it does this directly, I proceed now,

**2.** To observe how a view of this divine glory does convince the mind of the truth of Christianity, more indirectly.

**First**, it doth so, as the prejudices of the heart against the truth of divine things are hereby removed, so that the mind thereby lies open to the force of the reasons which are offered. The mind of man is naturally full of enmity against the doctrines of the gospel; which is a disadvantage to those arguments that prove their truth, and causes them to lose their force upon the mind; but when a person has discovered to him the divine excellency of Christian doctrines, this destroys that enmity, and removes the prejudices, and sanctifies the reason, and causes it to be open and free. Hence is a vast difference, as to the force that arguments have to convince the mind. Hence was the very different effect, which Christ's miracles had to convince the disciples, from what they had to convince the Scribes and Pharisees: not that they had a stronger reasons or had their reason more improved; but their reason was sanctified, and those blinding prejudices, which the Scribes and Pharisees were under, were removed by the sense they had of the excellency of Christ and his doctrine.

**Secondly**, It not only removes the hindrances of reason, but positively helps reason. It makes even the speculative notions more lively. It assists and engages the attention of the mind to that kind of objects which causes it to have a clearer view of them, and more clearly to see their mutual relations. The ideas themselves, which otherwise are dim and obscure, by this means have a light cast upon them, and are impressed with greater strength, so that the mind can better judge of them; as he that beholds the objects on the face of the earth, when the light of the sun is cast upon them, is under greater advantage to discern them, in their true forms, and mutual relations, and to see the evidences of divine wisdom and skill in their contrivance, than he that sees them in a dim starlight, or twilight.

What has been said, may serve in some measure to show the nature of a spiritual conviction of the judgment of the truth and reality of divine things; and so to distinguish truly gracious affections from others; for gracious affections are evermore attended with such a conviction of the judgment.



But before I dismiss this head, it will be needful to observe the ways whereby some are deceived, with respect to this matter; and take notice of several things, that are sometimes taken for a spiritual and saving belief of the truth of the things of religion, which are indeed very diverse from it.

**1.** There is a degree of conviction of the truth of the great things of religion, that arises from the common enlightenings of the Spirit of God. That more lively and sensible apprehension of the things of religion, with respect to what is natural in them, such as natural men have who are under awakenings and common illuminations, will give some degree of conviction of the truth of divine things, beyond what they had before they were thus enlightened. For hereby they see the manifestations there are, in the revelation made in the holy Scriptures, and things exhibited in that revelation, of the natural perfections of God; such as his greatness, power, and awful majesty; which tends to convince the minds that this is the word of a great and terrible God. From the tokens there are of God's greatness and majesty in his word and works, which they have a great sense of, from the common influence of the Spirit of God, they may have a much greater conviction that these are indeed the words and works of a very great invisible Being. And the lively apprehension of the greatness of God, which natural men may have, tends to make them sensible of the great guilt which sin against such a God brings, and the dreadfulfulness of his wrath for sin. And this tends to cause them more easily and fully to believe the revelation the Scripture makes of another world, and of the extreme misery it threatens there to be indicted on sinners. And so from that sense of the great natural good there is in the things of religion, which is sometimes given in common illuminations, men may be the more induced to believe the truth of religion. These things persons may have, and yet have no sense of the beauty and amiableness of the moral and holy excellency that is in the things of religion; and therefore no spiritual conviction of their truth. But yet such convictions are sometimes mistaken for saving convictions, and the affections flowing from them, for saving affections.

**2.** The extraordinary impressions which are made on the imaginations of some persons, in the visions and immediate strong impulses and suggestions that they have, as though they saw sights, and had words spoken to them, may, and often do beget a strong persuasion of the truth

of invisible things. Though the general tendency of such things, in their final issue, is to draw men off from the word of God, and to cause them to reject the gospel, and to establish unbelief and Atheism; yet for the present, they may, and often do beget a confident persuasion of the truth of some things that are revealed in the Scriptures; however their confidence is founded in delusion, and so nothing worth. As for instance, if a person has by some invisible agent, immediately and strongly impressed on his imagination, the appearance of a bright light, and glorious form of a person seated on a throne, with great external majesty and beauty, uttering some remarkable words, with great force and energy; the person who is the subject of such an operation, may be from hence confident, that there are invisible agents, spiritual beings, from what he has experienced, knowing that he had no hand himself in this extraordinary effect, which he has experienced: and he may also be confident, that this is Christ whom he saw and heard speaking: and this may make him confident that there is a Christ, and that Christ reigns on a throne in heaven, as he saw him; and may be confident that the words which he heard him speak are true, etc. — In the same manner, as the lying miracles of the Papists may, for the present, beget in the minds of the ignorant deluded people, a strong persuasion of the truth of many things declared in the New Testament. Thus when the images of Christ, in Popish churches, are on some extraordinary occasions, made by priestcraft to appear to the people as if they wept, and shed fresh blood, and moved, and uttered such and such words; the people may be verily persuaded that it is a miracle wrought by Christ himself; and from thence may be confident there is a Christ, and that what they are told of his death and sufferings, and resurrection, and ascension, and present government or the world is true; for they may look upon this miracle, as a certain evidence of all these things, and a kind of ocular demonstration of them. This may be the influence of these lying wonders for the present; though the general tendency of them is not to convince that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, but finally to promote Atheism. Even the intercourse which Satan has with witches, and their often experiencing his immediate power, has a tendency to convince them of the truth of some of the doctrines of religion; as particularly the reality of an invisible world, or world of spirits, contrary to the doctrine of the Sadducees. The general tendency of Satan's influence is delusion: but yet

he may mix some truth with his lies, that his lies may not be so easily discovered.

There are multitudes that are deluded with a counterfeit faith, from impressions on their imagination, in the manner which has been now spoken of. They say they know that there is a God, for they have seen him; they know that Christ is the Son of God, for they have seen him in his glory; they know that Christ died for sinners, for they have seen him hanging on the cross, and his blood running from his wounds; they know there is a heaven and a hell, for they have seen the misery of the damned souls in hell, and the glory of saints and angels in heaven (meaning some external representations strongly impressed on their imagination); they know that the Scriptures are the word of God, and that such and such promises in particular are his word, for they have heard him speak them to them, they came to their minds suddenly and immediately from God, without their having any hand in it.

**3.** Persons may seem to have their belief of the truth of the things of religion greatly increased, when the foundation of it is only a persuasion they have received of their interest in them. They first, by some means or other, take up a confidence, that if there be a Christ and heaven, they are theirs; and this prejudices them more in favor of the truth of them. When they hear of the great and glorious things of religion, it is with this notion, that all these things belong to them; and hence easily become confident that they are true; they look upon it to be greatly for their interest that they should be true. It is very obvious what a strong influence men's interest and inclinations have on their judgments. While a natural man thinks, that if there be a heaven and hell, the latter, and not the former, belongs to him; then he will be hardly persuaded that there is a heaven or hell: but when he comes to be persuaded, that hell belongs only to other folks, and not to him, then he can easily allow the reality of hell, and cry out of others' senselessness and sottishness in neglecting means of escape from it: and being confident that he is a child of God, and that God has promised heaven to him, he may seem strong in the faith of its reality, and may have a great zeal against that infidelity which denies it.

But I proceed to another distinguishing sign of gracious affections.

## **VI.** Gracious affections are attended with evangelical humiliation.

Evangelical humiliation is a sense that a Christian has of his own utter insufficiency, despicableness, and odiousness, with an answerable frame of heart.

There is a distinction to be made between a legal and evangelical humiliation. The former is what men may be the subjects of, while they are yet in a state of nature, and have no gracious affections; the latter is peculiar to true saints: the former is from the common influence of the Spirit of God, assisting natural principles, and especially natural conscience; the latter is from the special influences of the Spirit of God, implanting and exercising supernatural and divine principles: the former is from the mind's being assisted to a greater sense of the things of religion, as to their natural properties and qualities, and particularly of the natural perfections of God, such as his greatness, terrible majesty, etc., which were manifested to the congregation of Israel, in giving the law at mount Sinai; the latter is from a sense of the transcendent beauty of divine things in their moral qualities: in the former, a sense of the awful greatness, and natural perfections of God, and of the strictness of his law, convinces men that they are exceeding sinful, and guilty, and exposed to the wrath of God, as it will wicked men and devils at the day of judgment; but they do not see their own odiousness on the account of sin; they do not see the hateful nature of sin; a sense of this is given in evangelical humiliation, by a discovery of the beauty of God's holiness and moral perfection. In a legal humiliation, men are made sensible that they are little and nothing before the great and terrible God, and that they are undone, and wholly insufficient to help themselves; as wicked men will be at the day of judgment: but they have not an answerable frame of heart, consisting in a disposition to abase themselves, and exalt God alone; this disposition is given only in evangelical humiliation, by overcoming the heart, and changing its inclination, by a discovery of God's holy beauty: in a legal humiliation, the conscience is convinced; as the consciences of all will be most perfectly at the day of judgment; but because there is no spiritual understanding, the will is not bowed, nor the inclination altered: this is done only in evangelical humiliation. In legal humiliation, men are brought to despair of helping themselves; in evangelical, they are brought voluntarily to deny and renounce themselves: in the former, they are

subdued and forced to the ground; in the latter, they are brought sweetly to yield, and freely and with delight to prostrate themselves at the feet of God.

Legal humiliation has in it no spiritual good, nothing of the nature of true virtue; whereas evangelical humiliation is that wherein the excellent beauty of Christian grace does very much consist. Legal humiliation is useful, as a means in order to evangelical; as a common knowledge of the things of religion is a means requisite in order to spiritual knowledge. Men may be legally humbled and have no humility: as the wicked at the day of judgment will be thoroughly convinced that they have no righteousness, but are altogether sinful, and exceedingly guilty, and justly exposed to eternal damnation, and be fully sensible of their own helplessness, without the least mortification of the pride of their hearts: but the essence of evangelical humiliation consists in such humility, as becomes a creature, in itself exceeding sinful, under a dispensation of grace; consisting in a mean esteem of himself, as in himself nothing, and altogether contemptible and odious; attended with a mortification of a disposition to exalt himself, and a free renunciation of his own glory.

This is a great and most essential thing in true religion. The whole frame of the gospel, and everything appertaining to the new covenant, and all God's dispensations towards fallen man, are calculated to bring to pass this effect in the hearts of men. They that are destitute of this, have no true religion, whatever profession they may make, and how high soever their religious affections may be: <sup><310></sup>Habakkuk 2:4, "Behold, his soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith;" i.e., he shall live by his faith on God's righteousness and grace, and not his own goodness and excellency. God has abundantly manifested in his word, that this is what he has a peculiar respect to in his saints, and that nothing is acceptable to him without it. <sup><1918></sup>Psalm 34:18, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." <sup><1517></sup>Psalm 51:17, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." <sup><1306></sup>Psalm 138:6, "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly." <sup><1034></sup>Proverbs 3:34, "He giveth grace unto the lowly." <sup><2575></sup>Isaiah 57:15, "Thus saith the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to

revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” <sup><261></sup>Isaiah 66:1, 2, “Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.” <sup><300></sup>Micah 6:8, “He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee; but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” <sup><400></sup>Matthew 5:3, “Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of God.” <sup><400></sup>Matthew 18:3, 4, “Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” <sup><415></sup>Mark 10:15, “Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.” The centurion, that we have an account of, Luke 7, acknowledged that he was not worthy that Christ should enter under his roof, and that he was not worthy to come to him. See the manner of the woman’s coming to Christ, that was a sinner, <sup><415></sup>Luke 7:37, etc.: “And behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head.” She did not think the hair of her head, which is the natural crown and glory of a woman (<sup><415></sup>1 Corinthians 11:15), too good to wipe the feet of Christ withal. Jesus most graciously accepted her, and says to her, “thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.” The woman of Canaan submitted to Christ, in his saying, “it is not meet to take the children’s bread and cast it to dogs,” and did as it were own that she was worthy to be called a dog; whereupon Christ says unto her, “O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee, even as thou wilt,” <sup><415></sup>Matthew 15:26, 27, 28. The prodigal son said, “I will arise and go to my father, and I will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants,” <sup><415></sup>Luke 15:18, etc. See also <sup><415></sup>Luke 18:9, etc.: “And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, etc. The publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for everyone that exalteth himself,

shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted.”

Matthew 28:9, “And they came, and held him by the feet and worshipped him.” Colossians 3:12, “Put ye on, as the elect of God, humbleness of mind.” Ezekiel 20:41, 42, “I will accept you with your sweet savor, when I bring you out from the people, etc. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled, and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, for all your evils that ye have committed.” Chap. 36:26, 27, 31, “A new heart also will I give unto you-and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, etc. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations.” Chap. 16:63, “That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord.” Job 42:6, “I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

As we would therefore make the holy Scriptures our rule in judging of the nature of true religion, and judging of our own religious qualifications and state; it concerns us greatly to look at this humiliation, as one of the most essential things pertaining to true Christianity.<sup>56</sup> This is the principal part of the great Christian duty of self-denial. That duty consists in two things, viz., first, in a man’s denying his worldly inclinations, and in forsaking and renouncing all worldly objects and enjoyments; and, secondly, in denying his natural self-exaltation, and renouncing his own dignity and glory and in being emptied of himself; so that he does freely and from his very heart, as it were renounce himself, and annihilate himself. Thus the Christian doth in evangelical humiliation. And this latter is the greatest and most difficult part of self-denial: although they always go together, and one never truly is, where the other is not; yet natural men can come much nearer to the former than the latter. Many Anchorites and Recluses have abandoned (though without any true mortification) the wealth, and pleasures, and common enjoyments of the world, who were far from renouncing their own dignity and righteousness; they never denied themselves for Christ, but only sold one lust to feed another, sold a beastly lust to pamper a devilish one; and so were never the better, but their latter end was worse than their beginning; they turned out one black devil, to let in seven white

ones, that were worse than the first, though of a fairer countenance. It is inexpressible, and almost inconceivable, how strong a self-righteous, self-exalting disposition is naturally in man; and what he will not do and suffer to feed and gratify it: and what lengths have been gone in a seeming self-denial in other respects, by Essenes and Pharisees among the Jews, and by Papists, many sects of heretics, and enthusiasts, among professing Christians; and by many Mahometans; and by Pythagorean philosophers, and others among the Heathen; and all to do sacrifice to this Moloch of spiritual pride or self-righteousness; and that they may have something wherein to exalt themselves before God, and above their fellow creatures.

That humiliation which has been spoken of, is what all the most glorious hypocrites, who make the most splendid show of mortification to the world, and high religious affection, do grossly fail in. Were it not that this is so much insisted on in Scripture, as a most essential thing in true grace, one would be tempted to think that many of the heathen philosophers were truly gracious, in whom was so bright an appearance of many virtues, and also great illuminations, and inward fervors and elevations of mind, as though they were truly the subjects of divine illapses and heavenly communications.<sup>57</sup> It is true, that many hypocrites make great pretenses to humility, as well as other graces; and very often there is nothing whatsoever which they make a higher profession of. They endeavor to make a great show of humility in speech and behavior; but they commonly make bungling work of it, though glorious work in their own eyes. They cannot find out what a humble speech and behavior is, or how to speak and act so that there may indeed be a savor of Christian humility in what they say and do: that sweet humble air and mien is beyond their art, being not led by the Spirit, or naturally guided to a behavior becoming holy humility, by the vigor of a lowly spirit within them. And therefore they have no other way, many of them, but only to be much in declaring that they be humble, and telling how they were humbled to the dust at such and such times, and abounding in very bad expressions which they use about themselves; such as, "I am the least of all saints, I am a poor vile creature, I am not worthy of the least mercy, or that God should look upon me! Oh, I have a dreadful wicked heart! My heart is worse than the devil! Oh, this cursed heart of mine," etc. Such expressions are very often used, not with a heart that is broken, not with



spiritual mourning, not with the tears of her that washed Jesus's feet, not as "remembering and being confounded, and never opening their mouth more because of their shame, when God is pacified," as the expression is, ~~John~~ Ezekiel 16:63, but with a light air, with smiles in the countenance, or with a pharisaical affectation: and we must believe that they are thus humble, and see themselves so vile, upon the credit of their say so; for there is nothing appears in them of any savor of humility, in the manner of their deportment and deeds that they do. There are many that are full of expressions of their own vileness, who yet expect to be looked upon as eminent and bright saints by others, as their due; and it is dangerous for any, so much as to hint the contrary, or to carry it towards them any otherwise, than as if we looked upon them as some of the chief of Christians. There are many that are much in crying out of their wicked hearts, and their great short comings, and unprofitableness, and speaking as though they looked on themselves as the meanest of the saints; who yet, if a minister should seriously tell them the same things in private, and should signify, that he feared they were very low and weak Christians, and thought they had reason solemnly to consider of their great barrenness and unprofitableness, and falling so much short of many others, it would be more than they could digest; they would think themselves highly injured; and there would be a danger of a rooted prejudice in them against such a minister.

There are some that are abundant in talking against legal doctrines, legal preaching, and a legal spirit, who do but little understand the thing they talk against. A legal spirit is a more subtle thing than they imagine; it is too subtle for them. It lurks, and operates, and prevails in their hearts, and they are most notoriously guilty of it, at the same time, when they are inveighing against it. So far as a man is not emptied of himself, and of his own righteousness and goodness, in whatever form or shape, so far he is of a legal spirit. A spirit of pride of man's own righteousness, morality, holiness, affection, experience, faith, humiliation, or any goodness whatsoever, is a legal spirit. It was no pride in Adam before the fall, to be of a legal spirit; because of his circumstances, he might seek acceptance by his own righteousness. But a legal spirit in a fallen, sinful creature, can be nothing else but spiritual pride; and reciprocally, a spiritually proud spirit is a legal spirit. There is no man living that is lifted up with a conceit of his

own experiences and discoveries, and upon the account of them glisters in his own eyes, but what trusts in his experiences, and makes a righteousness of them; however he may use humble terms, and speak of his experiences as of the great things God has done for him, and it may be calls upon others to glorify God for them; yet he that is proud of his experiences, arrogates something to himself, as though his experiences were some dignity of his. And if he looks on them as his own dignity, he necessarily thinks that God looks on them so too; for he necessarily thinks his own opinion of them, to be true; and consequently judges that God looks on them as he does; and so unavoidably imagines that God looks on his experiences as a dignity in him, as he looks on them himself; and that he glisters as much in God's eyes, as he does in his own. And thus he trusts in what is inherent in him, to make him shine in God's sight, and recommend him to God: and with this encouragement he goes before God in prayer; and this makes him expect much from God; and this makes him think that Christ loves him, and that he is willing clothe him with his righteousness; because he supposes that he is taken with his experiences and graces. And this is a high degree of living on his own righteousness; and such persons are in the high road to hell. Poor deluded wretches, who think they look so glistening in God's eyes, when they are smoke in his nose, and are many of them more odious to him, than the most impure beast in Sodom, that makes no pretense to religion! To do as these do, is to live upon experiences, according to the true notion of it; and not to do as those who only make use of spiritual experiences, as evidences of a state of grace, and in that way receive hope and comfort from them.



There is a sort of men, who indeed abundantly cry down works, and cry up faith in opposition to works, and set up themselves very much as evangelical persons, in opposition to those that are of a legal spirit, and make a fair show of advancing Christ and the gospel, and the way of free grace; who are indeed some of the greatest enemies to the gospel way of free grace, and the most dangerous opposers of pure humble Christianity.

There is a pretended great humiliation, and being dead to the law, and emptied of self, which is one of the biggest and most elated things in the world. Some there are, who have made great profession of experience of a thorough work of the law on their hearts, and of being brought fully off from works; whose conversation has savored most of a self-righteous

spirit of any that ever I had opportunity to observe. And some who think themselves quite emptied of themselves, and are confident that they are abased in the dust, are full as they can hold with the glory of their own humility, and lifted up to heaven with a high opinion of their own abasement. Their humility is a swelling, self-conceited, confident, showy, noisy, assuming humility. It seems to be the nature of spiritual pride to make men conceited and ostentatious of their humility. This appears in that first born of pride among the children of men, that would be called his holiness, even the man of sin, that exalts himself above all that is called God or is worshipped; he styles himself Servant of servants; and to make a show of humility, washes the feet of a number of poor men at his inauguration.

For persons to be truly emptied of themselves, and to be poor in spirit, and broken in heart, is quite another thing, and has other effects, than many imagine. It is astonishing how greatly many are deceived about themselves as to this matter, imagining themselves most humble, when they are most proud, and their behavior is really the most haughty. The deceitfulness of the heart of man appears in no one thing so much as this of spiritual pride and self-righteousness. The subtlety of Satan appears in its height, in his managing of persons with respect to this sin. And perhaps one reason may be, that here he has most experience; he knows the way of its coming in; he is acquainted with the secret springs of it: it was his own sin. — Experience gives vast advantage in leading souls, either in good or evil.

But though spiritual pride be so subtle and secret an iniquity, and commonly appears under a pretext of great humility; yet there are two things by which it may (perhaps universally and surely) be discovered and distinguished.

The first thing is this; he that is under the prevalence of this distemper, is apt to think highly of his attainments in religion, as comparing himself with others. It is natural for him to fall into that thought of himself, that he is an eminent saint, that he is very high amongst the saints, and has distinguishingly good and great experiences. That is the secret language of his heart:  Luke 18:11, “God, I thank thee that I am not as other men.” And  Isaiah 65:5, “I am holier than thou.” Hence such are apt to put

themselves forward among God's people, and as it were to take a high seat among them, as if there was no doubt of it but it belonged to them. They, as it were, naturally do that which Christ condemns, <sup><241></sup>Luke 14:7, etc., take the highest room. This they do, by being forward to take upon them the place and business of the chief; to guide, teach, direct, and manage; "they are confident that they are guides to the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, instructors of the foolish, teachers of babes," <sup><242></sup>Romans 2:19, 20. It is natural for them to take it for granted, that it belongs to them to do the part of dictators and masters in matters of religion; and so they implicitly affect to be called of men Rabbi, which is by interpretation Master, as the Pharisees did, <sup><243></sup>Matthew 23:6, 7, i.e., they are yet apt to expect that others should regard them, and yield to them, as masters in matters of religion.<sup>58</sup>

But he whose heart is under the power of Christian humility, is of a contrary disposition. If the Scriptures are at all to be relied on, such a one is apt to think his attainments in religion to be comparatively mean, and to esteem himself low among the saints, and one of the least of saints. Humility, or true lowliness of mind, disposes persons to think others better than themselves: <sup><244></sup>Philippians 2:3, "In lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than themselves." Hence they are apt to think the lowest room belongs to them, and their inward disposition naturally leads them to obey that precept of our Savior, <sup><245></sup>Luke 14:10. It is not natural to them to take it upon them to do the part of teachers; but on the contrary, they are disposed to think that they are not the persons, that others are fitter for it than they; as it was with Moses and Jeremiah (<sup><246></sup>Exodus 3:11, <sup><247></sup>Jeremiah 1:6), though they were such eminent saints, and of great knowledge. It is not natural to them to think that it belongs to them to teach, but to be taught; they are much more eager to hear, and to receive instruction from others, than to dictate to others: <sup><248></sup>James 1:19, "Be ye swift to hear, slow to speak." And when they do speak, it is not natural to them to speak with a bold, masterly air; but humility disposes them rather to speak, trembling. <sup><249></sup>Hosea 13:1, "When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died." They are not apt to assume authority, and to take upon them to be chief managers and masters; but rather to be subject to others: <sup><250></sup>James 3:1, 2, "Be not many masters." <sup><251></sup>1 Peter 5:5, "All of you be subject one to another, and

be clothed with humility.” ~~483~~ Ephesians 5:21, “Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”

There are some persons’ experiences that naturally work that way, to make them think highly of them; and they do often themselves speak of their experiences as very great and extraordinary; they freely speak of the great things they have met with. This may be spoken and meant in a good sense. In one sense, every degree of saving mercy is a great thing: it is indeed a thing great, yea, infinitely great, for God to bestow the least crumb of children’s bread on such dogs as we are in ourselves; and the more humble a person is that hopes that God has bestowed such mercy on him, the more apt will he be to call it a great thing that he has met with in this sense. But if by great things which they have experienced they mean comparatively great spiritual experiences, or great compared with others’ experiences, or beyond what is ordinary, which is evidently oftentimes the case; then for a person to say, I have met with great things, is the very same thing as to say, I am an eminent saint, and have more grace than ordinary: for to have great experiences, if the experiences be true and worth the telling of, is the same thing as to have great grace: there is no true experience, but the exercise of grace; and exactly according to the degree of true experience, is the degree of grace and holiness. The persons that talk thus about their experiences, when they give an account of them, expect that others should admire them. Indeed they do not call it boasting to talk after this manner about their experiences, nor do they look upon it as any sign of pride; because they say, “they know that it was not they that did it, it was free grace, they are things that God has done for them, they would acknowledge the great mercy God has shown them, and not make light of it.” But so it was with the Pharisee that Christ tells us of, Luke 18. He in words gave God the glory of making him to differ from other men; God, I thank thee, says he, that I am not as other men. <sup>59</sup> Their verbally ascribing it to the grace of God, that they are holier than other saints, does not hinder their forwardness to think so highly of their holiness, being a sure evidence of the pride and vanity of their minds. If they were under the influence of a humble spirit, their attainments in religion would not be so apt to shine in their own eyes, nor would they be so much in admiring their own beauty. The Christians that are really the most eminent saints, and therefore have the most excellent experiences,

and are the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, humble themselves as a little child, ~~and~~ Matthew 8:4; because they look on themselves as but little children in grace, and their attainments to be but the attainments of babes in Christ, and are astonished at, and ashamed of the low degrees of their love, and their thankfulness, and their little knowledge of God. Moses, when he had been conversing with God in the mount, and his face shone so bright in the eyes of others as to dazzle their eyes, wist not that his face shone. There are some persons that go by the name of high professors, and some will own themselves to be high professors: but eminently humble saints, that will shine brightest in heaven, are not at all apt to profess high. I do not believe there is an eminent saint in the world that is a high professor. Such will be much more likely to profess themselves to be least of all saints, and to think that every saint's attainments and experiences are higher than his.<sup>60</sup>

Such is the nature of grace, and of true spiritual light, that they naturally dispose the saints in the present state, to look upon their grace and goodness little, and their deformity great. And they that have the most grace and spiritual light, of any in this world, have most of this disposition. As will appear most clear and evident to anyone that soberly and thoroughly weighs the nature and reason of things, and considers the things following.

That grace and holiness is worthy to be called little, that is, little in comparison of what it ought to be. And so it seems to one that is truly gracious: for such a one has his eye upon the rule of his duty; a conformity to that is that he aims at; it is what his soul struggles and reaches after; and it is by that that he estimates and judges of what he does, and what he has. To a gracious soul, and especially to one eminently gracious, that holiness appears little, which is little of what it should be; little of what he sees infinite reason for, and obligation to. If his holiness appears to him to be at a vast distance from this, it naturally appears despicable in his eyes, and not worthy to be mentioned as any beauty or amiableness in him. For the like reason as a hungry man naturally accounts that which is set before him, but a little food, a small matter, not worth mentioning, that is nothing in comparison of his appetite. Or as the child of a great prince, that is jealous for the honor of his father, and beholds He respect which men show him, naturally looks on that honor and respect very little, and not

worthy to be regarded, which is nothing in comparison of that which the dignity of his father requires.

But that is the nature of true grace and spiritual light, that it opens to a person's view the infinite reason there is that he should be holy in a high degree. And the more grace he has, the more this is opened to view, the greater sense he has of the infinite excellency and glory of the divine Being, and of the infinite dignity of the person of Christ, and the boundless length and breadth, and depth and height, of the love of Christ to sinners. And as grace increases, the field opens more and more to a distant view, until the soul is swallowed up with the vastness of the object, and the person is astonished to think how much it becomes him to love this God, and this glorious Redeemer, that has so loved man, and how little he does love. And so the more he apprehends, the more the smallness of his grace and love appears strange and wonderful: and therefore is more ready to think that others are beyond him. For wondering at the littleness of his own grace, he can scarcely believe that so strange a thing happens to other saints: it is amazing to him, that one that is really a child of God, and that has actually received the saving benefits of that unspeakable love of Christ, should love no more: and he is apt to look upon it as a thing peculiar to himself, a strange and exempt instance; for he sees only the outside of other Christians, but he sees his own inside.

Here the reader may possibly object, that love to God is really increased in proportion as the knowledge of God is increased; and therefore how should an increase of knowledge in a saint make his love appear less, in comparison of what is known? To which I answer, that although grace and the love of God in the saints, be answerable to the degree of knowledge or sight of God; yet it is not in proportion to the object seen and known. The soul of a saint, by having something of God opened to sight, is convinced of much more than is seen. There is something that is seen, that is wonderful; and that sight brings with it a strong conviction of something vastly beyond, that is not immediately seen. So that the soul, at the same time, is astonished at its ignorance, and that it knows so little, as well as that it loves so little. And as the soul, in a spiritual view, is convinced of infinitely more in the object, yet beyond sight; so it is convinced of the capacity of the soul, of knowing vastly more, if the clouds and darkness were but removed. Which causes the soul, in the enjoyment of a spiritual

view, to complain greatly of spiritual ignorance, and want of love, and to long and reach after more knowledge and more love.

Grace and the love of God in the most eminent saints in this world, is truly very little in comparison of what it ought to be. Because the highest love that ever any attain to in this life, is poor, cold, exceedingly low, and not worthy to be named in comparison of what our obligations appear to be, from the joint consideration of these two things, viz.:

1. The reason God has given us to love him, in the manifestations he has made of his infinite glory, in his word, and in his works; and particularly in the gospel of his Son, and what he has done for sinful man by him. And,
2. The capacity there is in the soul of man, by those intellectual faculties which God has given it, of seeing and understanding these reasons, which God has given us to love him.

How small indeed is the love of the most eminent saint on earth, in comparison of what these things, jointly considered, do require! And this grace tends to convince men of this, and especially eminent grace; for grace is of the nature of light, and brings truth to view. And therefore he that has much grace, apprehends much more than others that great height to which his love ought to ascend; and he sees better than others, how little a way he has risen towards that height. And therefore estimating his love by the whole height of his duty, hence it appears astonishingly little and low in his eyes.

And the eminent saint, having such a conviction of the high degree in which he ought to love God, this shows him, not only the littleness of his grace, but the greatness of his remaining corruption. In order to judge how much corruption or sin we have remaining in us, we must take our measure from that height to which the rule of our duty extends: the whole of the distance we are at from that height, is sin: for failing of duty is sin; otherwise our duty is not our duty, and by how much the more we fall short of our duty, so much the more sin have we. Sin is no other than disagreeableness, in a moral agent, to the law or rule of his duty. And therefore the degree of sin is to be judged of by the rule: so much disagreeableness to the rule, so much sin, whether it be in defect or excess.



Therefore if men, in their love to God, do not come up half way to that height which duty requires, then they have more corruption in their hearts than grace; because there is more goodness wanting, than is there: and all that is wanting is sin: it is an abominable defect; and appears so to the saints; especially those that are eminent; it appears exceeding abominable to them, that Christ should be loved so little, and thanked so little for his dying love: it is in their eyes hateful ingratitude.

And then the increase of grace has a tendency another way, to cause the saints to think their deformity vastly more than their goodness: it not only tends to convince them that their corruption is much greater than their goodness, which is indeed the case; but it also tends to cause the deformity that there is in the least sin, or the least degree of corruption, to appear so great as vastly to outweigh all the beauty there is in their greatest holiness; for this also is indeed the case. For the least sin against an infinite God, has an infinite hatefulness or deformity in it, but the highest degree of holiness in a creature, has not an infinite loveliness in it: and therefore the loveliness of it is as nothings, in comparison of the deformity of the least sin. That every sin has infinite deformity and hatefulness in it, is most demonstrably evident; because what the evil, or iniquity, or hatefulness of sin consists in, is the violating of an obligation, or the being or doing contrary to what we should be or do, or are obliged to. And therefore by how much the greater the obligation is that is violated, so much the greater is the iniquity and hatefulness of the violation. But certainly our obligation to love and honor any being is in some proportion to his loveliness and honorableness, or to his worthiness to be loved and honored by us; which is the same thing. We are surely under greater obligation to love a more lovely being, than a less lovely; and if a Being be infinitely lovely or worthy to be loved by us, then our obligations to love him are infinitely great; and therefore, whatever is contrary to this love, has in it infinite iniquity, deformity, and unworthiness. But on the other hand, with respect to our holiness or love to God, there is not an infinite worthiness in that. The sin of the creature against God, is in deserving and hateful in proportion to the distance there is between God and the creature: the greatness of the object, and the meanness and inferiority of the subject, aggravates it. But it is the rever. with regard to the worthiness of the respect of the creature to God; it is worthless, and not worthy, in

proportion to the meanness of the subject. So much the greater the distance between God and the creature, so much the less is the creature's respect worthy of God's notice or regard. The great degree of superiority increases the obligation on the inferior to regard the superior; and so makes the want of regard more hateful. But the great degree of inferiority diminishes the worth of the regard of the interior; because the more he is inferior, the less he is worthy of notice; the less he is, the less is what he can offer worth; for he can offer no more than himself, in offering his best respect; and therefore as he is little, and little worth, so is his respect little worth. And the more a person has of true grace and spiritual light, the more will it appear thus to him; the more will he appear to himself infinitely deformed by reason of sin, and the less will the goodness that is in his grace, or good experience, appear in proportion to it. For indeed it is nothing to it; it is less than a drop to the ocean; for finite bears no proportion at all to that which is infinite. But the more a person has of spiritual light, the more do things appear to him, in this respect, as they are indeed. — Hence it most demonstrably appears, that true grace is of that nature, that the more a person has of it, with remaining corruption, the less does his goodness and holiness appear, in proportion to his deformity; and not only to his past deformity, but to his present deformity, in the sin that now appears in his heart, and the abominable defects of his highest and best affections, and brightest experiences.

The nature of many high and religious affections, and great discoveries (as they are called) in many persons that I have been acquainted with, is to hide and cover over the corruption of their hearts, and to make it seem to them as if all their sin was gone, and to leave them without complaints of any hateful evil left in them (though it may be they cry out much of their past unworthiness); a sure and certain evidence that their discoveries (as they call them) are darkness and not light. It is darkness that hides men's pollution and deformity; but light let into the heart discovers it, searches it out in its secret corners, and makes it plainly to appear; especially that penetrating, all searching light of God's holiness and glory. It is true, that saving discoveries may for the present hide corruption in one sense; they restrain the positive exercises of it, such as malice, envy, covetousness, lasciviousness, murmuring, etc., but they bring corruption to light, in that which is privative, viz., that there is no more love, no more humility, no

more thankfulness. Which defects appear most hateful in the eyes of those who have the most eminent exercises of grace; and are very burdensome, and cause the saints to cry out of their leanness, and odious pride and ingratitude. And whatever positive exercises of corruption at any time arise, and mingle themselves with eminent actings of grace, grace will exceedingly magnify the view of them, and render their appearance far more heinous and horrible.

The more eminent saints are, and the more they have of the light of heaven in their souls, the more do they appear to themselves, as the most eminent saints in this world do to the saints and angels in heaven. How can we rationally suppose the most eminent saints on earth appear to them, if beheld any otherwise than covered over with the righteousness of Christ, and their deformities swallowed up and hid in the coruscation of the beams of his abundant glory and love? How can we suppose our most ardent love and praises appear to them, that do behold the beauty and glory of God without a vail? How does our highest thankfulness for the dying love of Christ appear to them, who see Christ as he is, who know as they are known, and see the glory of the person of him that died, and the wonders of his dying love, without any cloud of darkness? And how do they look on the deepest reverence and humility, with which worms of the dust on earth approach that infinite Majesty which they behold? Do they appear great to them, or so much as worthy of the name of reverence and humility, in those that they see to be at such an infinite distance from that great and holy God, in whose glorious presence they are? The reason why the highest attainments of the saints on earth appear so mean to them, is because they dwell in the light of God's glory, and see God as he is. And it is in this respect with the saints on earth, as it is with the saints in heaven, in proportion as they are more eminent in grace.

I would not be understood, that the saints on earth have in all respects the worst opinion of themselves, when they have most of the exercises of grace. In many respects it is otherwise. With respect to the positive exercises of corruption, they may appear to themselves freest and best when grace is most in exercise, and worst when the actings of grace are lowest. And when they compare themselves with themselves at different times, they may know, when grace is in lively exercise, that it is better with them than it was before (though before, in the time of it, they did not

see so much badness as they see now) and when afterwards they sink again in the frame of their minds, they may know that they sink, and have a new argument of their great remaining corruption, and a rational conviction of a greater vileness than they saw before; and many have more of a sense of guilt, and a kind of legal sense of their sinfulness by far, than when in the lively exercise of grace. But yet it is true, and demonstrable from the forementioned considerations, that the children of God never have so much of a sensible and spiritual conviction of their deformity, and so great, and quick and abasing a sense of their present vileness and odiousness, as when they are highest in the exercise of true and pure grace; and never are they so much disposed to set themselves low among Christians as then. And thus he that is greatest in the kingdom, or most eminent in the church of Christ, is the same that humbles himself, as the least infant among them; agreeable to that great saying of Christ,  
~~18:4~~ Matthew 18:4.

A true saint may know that he has some true grace: and the more grace there is, the more easily is it known, as was observed and proved before. But yet it does not follow, that an eminent saint is easily sensible that he is an eminent saint, when compared with others. I will not deny that it is possible, that he that has much grace, and is an eminent saint, may know it. But he will not be apt to know it; it will not be a thing obvious to him: that he is better than others, and has higher experiences and attainments, is not a foremost thought; nor is it that which, from time to time readily offers itself; it is a thing that is not in his way, but lies far out of sight; he must take pains to convince himself of it; there will be need of a great command of reason, and a high degree of strictness and care in arguing, to convince himself. And if he be rationally convinced by a very strict consideration of his own experiences compared with the great appearances of low degrees of grace in some other saints, it will hardly seem real to him, that he has more grace than they; and he will be apt to lose the conviction that he has by pains obtained: nor will it seem at all natural to him to act upon that supposition. And this may be laid down as an infallible thing, “that the person who is apt to think that he, as compared with others, is a very eminent saint, much distinguished in Christian experience, in whom this is a first thoughts that rises of itself, and naturally offers itself; he is certainly mistaken; he is no eminent saint, but

under the great prevailings of a proud and self-righteous spirit.” And if this be habitual with the man, and is steadily the prevailing temper of his mind, he is no saint at all; he has not the least degree of any true Christian experience; so surely as the word of God is true.

And that sort of experiences that appears to be of that tendency, and is found from time to time to have that effect, to elevate the subject of them with a great conceit of those experiences, is certainly vain and delusive. Those supposed discoveries that naturally blow up the person with an admiration of the eminency of his discoveries, and fill him with conceit that now he has seen, and knows more than most other Christians, have nothing of the nature of true spiritual light in them. All true spiritual knowledge is of that nature, that the more a person has of it, the more is he sensible of his own ignorance; as is evident by <sup><1818></sup>1 Corinthians 8:2: “He that thinketh he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.” Agur, when he had a great discovery of God, and sense of the wonderful height of his glory, and of his marvelous works, and cries out of his greatness and incomprehensibleness; at the same time, had the deepest sense of his brutish ignorance, and looked upon himself the most ignorant of all the saints. <sup><1818></sup>Proverbs 30:2, 3, 4: “Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy. Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son’s name, if thou canst tell?”

For a man to be highly conceited of his spiritual and divine knowledge, is for him to be wise in his own eyes, if anything is. And therefore it comes under those prohibitions: <sup><1818></sup>Proverbs 3:7, “Be not wise in thine own eyes.” <sup><1818></sup>Romans 12:16, “Be not wise in your own conceits;” and brings men under that woe, <sup><1818></sup>Isaiah 5:21: “Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight.” Those that are thus wise in their own eyes, are some of the least likely to get good of any in the world. Experience shows the truth of that, <sup><1818></sup>Proverbs 26:12: “Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him.”

To this some may object, that the Psalmist, when we must suppose that he was in a holy frame, speaks of his knowledge as eminently great, and

far greater than that of other saints: ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 119:99, 100, “I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.”

To this I answer two things:

**(1.)** There is no restraint to be laid upon the Spirit of God, as to what he shall reveal to a prophet, for the benefit of his church, who is speaking or writing under immediate inspiration. The Spirit of God may reveal to such a one, and dictate to him, to declare to others secret things, that otherwise would be hard, yea impossible for him to find out. As he may reveal to him mysteries, that otherwise would be above the reach of his reason; or things in a distant place, that he cannot see; or future events, that it would be impossible for him to know and declare, if they were not extraordinarily revealed to him; so the Spirit of God might reveal to David this distinguishing benefit he had received by conversing much with God’s testimonies; and use him as his instrument to record it for the benefit of others, to excite them to the like duty, and to use the same means to gain knowledge. Nothing can be gathered concerning the natural tendency of the ordinary gracious influences of the Spirit of God, from that that David declares of his distinguishing knowledge under the extraordinary influences of God’s Spirit, immediately dictating to him the divine mind by inspiration, and using David as his instrument to write what he pleased for the benefit of his church; any more than we can reasonably argue, that it is the natural tendency of grace to incline men to curse others, and wish the most dreadful misery to them that can be thought of, because David, under inspiration, often curses others, and prays that such misery may come upon them.

**(2.)** It is not certain that the knowledge David here speaks of, is spiritual knowledge, wherein holiness does fundamentally consist. But it may be that greater revelation which God made to him of the Messiah, and the things of his future kingdom, and the far more clear and extensive knowledge that he had of the mysteries and doctrines of the gospel, than others; as a reward for his keeping God’s testimonies. In this, it is apparent by the book of Psalms, that David far exceeded all that had gone before him.

*Secondly*, Another thing that is an infallible sign of spiritual pride, is persons being apt to think highly of their humility. False experiences are commonly attended with a counterfeit humility. And it is the very nature of a counterfeit humility, to be highly conceited of itself. False religious affections have generally that tendency, especially when raised to a great height to make persons think that their humility is great, and accordingly to take much notice of their great attainments in this respect, and admire them. But eminently gracious affections (I scruple not to say it) are evermore of a contrary tendency, and have universally a contrary effect in those that have them. They indeed make them very sensible what reason there is that they should be deeply humbled, and cause them earnestly to thirst and long after it; but they make their present humility, or that which they have already attained to, to appear small; and their remaining pride great, and exceedingly abominable.

The reason why a proud person should be apt to think his humility great, and why a very humble person should think his humility small, may be easily seen, if it be considered, that it is natural for persons, in judging of the degree of their own humiliation, to take their measure from that which they esteem their proper height, or the dignity wherein they properly stand. That may be great humiliation in one, that is no humiliation at all in another; because the degree of honorableness, or considerableness wherein each does properly stand, is very different. For some great man, to stoop to loose the latchet of the shoes of another great man, his equal, or to wash his feet, would be taken notice of as an act of abasement in him; and he, being sensible of his own dignity, would look upon it so himself. But if a poor slave is seen stooping to unloose the shoes of a great prince, nobody will take any notice of this, as any act of humiliation in him, or token of any great degree of humility: nor would the slave himself, unless he be horribly proud and ridiculously conceited of himself: and if after he had done it, he should, in his talk and behavior, show that he thought his abasement great in it, and had his mind much upon it, as an evidence of his being very humble; would not every body cry out upon him, “Whom do you think yourself to be, that you should think this that you have done such a deep humiliation?” This would make it plain to a demonstration, that this slave was swollen with a high degree of pride and vanity of mind, as much as if he declared in plain terms, “I think myself to be some great

one.” And the matter is no less plain and certain, when worthless, vile, and loathsome worms of the dust, are apt to put such a construction on their acts of abasement before God; and to think it a token of great humility in them that obey, under their affections, can find themselves so willing to acknowledge themselves to be so mean and unworthy, and to behave themselves as those that are so inferior. The very reason why such outward acts, and such inward exercises, look like great abasement in such a one, is because he has a high conceit of himself. Whereas if he thought of himself more justly, these things would appear nothing to him, and his humility in them worthy of no regard; but would rather be astonished at his pride, that one so infinitely despicable and vile is brought no lower before God. — When he says in his heart, “This is a great act of humiliation; it is certainly a sign of great humility in me, that I should feel thus and do so;” his meaning is, “This is great humility for me, for such a one as I, that am so considerable and worthy.” He considers how low he is now brought, and compares this with the height of dignity on which he in his heart thinks he properly stands, and the distance appears very great, and he calls it all mere humility, and as such admires it. Whereas, in him that is truly humble, and really sees his own vileness, and loathsomeness before God, the distance appears the other way. When he is brought lowest of all, it does not appear to him, that he is brought below his proper station, but that he is not come to it; he appears to himself yet vastly above it, he longs to get lower, that he may come to it, but appears at a great distance from it. And this distance he calls pride. And therefore his pride appears great to him, and not his humility. For although he is brought much lower than he used to be, yet it does not appear to him worthy of the name of humiliation, for him that is so infinitely mean and detestable, to come down to a place, which, though it be lower than what he used to assume, is yet vastly higher than what is proper for him. As men would hardly count it worthy of the name of humility, in a contemptible slave, that formerly affected to be a prince, to have his spirit so far brought down, as to take the place of a nobleman; when this is still so far above his proper station.

All men in the world, in judging of the degree of their own and others’ humility, as appearing in any act of theirs, consider two things, viz., the real degree of dignity they stand in; and the degree of abasement, and the



relation it bears to that real dignity. Thus the complying with the same low place, or low act, may be an evidence of great humility in one, that evidences but little or no humility in another. But truly humble Christians have so mean an opinion of their own real dignity, that all their self-abasement, when considered with relation to that, and compared to that, appears very small to them. It does not seem to them to be any great humility, or any abasement to be made much of, for such poor, vile, abject creatures as they, to lie at the foot of God.

The degree of humility is to be judged of by the degree of abasement, and the degree of the cause for abasement: but he that is truly and eminently humble, never thinks his humility great, considering the cause. The cause why he should be abased appears so great, and the abasement of the frame of his heart so greatly short of it, that he takes much more notice of his pride than his humility.

Everyone that has been conversant with souls under convictions of sin, knows that those who are greatly convinced of sin, are not apt to think themselves greatly convinced. And the reason is this: men judge of the degree of their own convictions of sin by two things jointly considered, viz., the degree of sense which they have of guilt and pollution, and the degree of cause they have for such a sense, in the degree of their real sinfulness. It is really no argument of any great conviction of sin, for some men to think themselves to be very sinful, beyond most others in the world; because they are so indeed, very plainly and notoriously. And therefore a far less conviction of sin may incline such a one to think so than another; he must be very blind indeed not to be sensible of it. But he that is truly under great convictions of sin, naturally thinks this to be his case. It appears to him, that the cause he has to be sensible of guilt and pollution, is greater than others have; and therefore he ascribes his sensibleness of this to the greatness of his sin, and not to the greatness of his sensibility. It is natural for one under great convictions, to think himself one of the greatest of sinners in reality, and also that it is so very plainly and evidently; for the greater his convictions are, the more plain and evident it seems to be to him. And therefore it necessarily seems to him so plain and so easy to him to see it, that it may be seen without much conviction. That man is under great convictions, whose conviction is great in proportion to his sin. But no man that is truly under great

convictions, thinks his conviction great in proportion to his sin. For if he does, it is a certain sign that he inwardly thinks his sins small. And if that be the case, that is a certain evidence that his conviction is small. And this, by the way, is the main reason that persons, when under a work of humiliation, are not sensible of it in the time of it.

And as it is with conviction of sin, just so it is, by parity of reason, with respect to persons' conviction or sensibleness of their own meanness and vileness, their own blindness, their own impotence, and all that low sense that a Christian has of himself, in the exercise of evangelical humiliation. So that in a high degree of this, the saints are never disposed to think their sensibleness of their own meanness, filthiness, impotence, etc., to be great; because it never appears great to them considering the cause.

An eminent saint is not apt to think himself eminent in any thing; all his graces and experiences are ready to appear to him to be comparatively small; but especially his humility. There is nothing that appertains to Christian experience, and true piety, that is so much out of his sight as his humility. He is a thousand times more quick-sighted to discern his pride than his humility: that he easily discerns, and is apt to take much notice of, but hardly discerns his humility. On the contrary, the deluded hypocrite, that is under the power of spiritual pride, is so blind to nothing as his pride; and so quick-sighted to nothing, as the shows of humility that are in him.

The humble Christian is more apt to find fault with his own pride than with other men's. He is apt to put the best construction on others' words and behavior, and to think that none are so proud as himself. But the proud hypocrite is quick to discern the mote in his brother's eye, in this respect; while he sees nothing of the beam in his own. He is very often much in crying out of others' pride, finding fault with others' apparel, and way of living; and is affected ten times as much with his neighbor's ring or ribband, as with all the filthiness of his own heart.

From the disposition there is in hypocrites to think highly of their humility, it comes to pass that counterfeit humility is forward to put itself forth to view. Those that have it, are apt to be much in speaking of their humiliations, and to set them forth in high terms, and to make a great outward show of humility, in affected looks, gestures, or manner of

speech, or meanness of apparel, or some affected singularity. So it was of old with the false prophets, <sup><330></sup>Zechariah 13:4; so it was with the hypocritical Jews, <sup><250></sup>Isaiah 57:5, and so Christ tells us it was with the Pharisees, <sup><400></sup>Matthew 6:16. But it is contrariwise with true humility; they that have it, are not apt to display their eloquence in setting it forth, or to speak of the degree of their abasement in strong terms. <sup>61</sup> It does not affect to show itself in any singular outward meanness of apparel, or way of living; agreeable to what is implied in <sup><400></sup>Matthew 6:17, “But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head and wash thy face.” <sup><500></sup>Colossians 2:23. Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship and humility, and neglecting of the body.” Nor is true humility a noisy thing; it is not loud and boisterous. The Scripture represents it as of a contrary nature. Ahab, when he had a visible humility, a resemblance of true humility, went softly, <sup><100></sup>1 Kings 21:27. A penitent, in the exercise of true humiliation, is represented as still and silent, <sup><200></sup>Lamentations 3:28: “He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him.” And silence is mentioned as what attends humility, <sup><300></sup>Proverbs 30:32: “If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth.”

Thus I have particularly and largely shown the nature of that true humility that attends holy affections, as it appears in its tendency to cause persons to think meanly of their attainments in religion, as compared with the attainments of others, and particularly of their attainments in humility: and have shown the contrary tendency of spiritual pride, to dispose persons to think their attainments in these respects to be great. I have insisted the longer on this, because I look upon it as a matter of great importance, as it affords a certain distinction between true and counterfeit humility; and also as this disposition of hypocrites to look on themselves better than others, is what God has declared to be very hateful to him, “a smoke in his nose, and a fire that burneth all the day,” <sup><200></sup>Isaiah 65:5. It is mentioned as an instance of the pride of the inhabitants of that holy city (as it was called) Jerusalem, that they esteemed themselves far better than the people of Sodom, and so looked upon them worthy to be overlooked and disregarded by them: <sup><300></sup>Ezekiel 16:56, “For thy sister Sodom was not mentioned by thy mouth in the day of thy pride.”

Let not the reader lightly pass over these things in application to himself. If you once have taken it in, that it is a bad sign for a person to be apt to think himself a better saint than others, there will arise a blinding prejudice in your own favor; and there will probably be need of a great strictness of self-examination, in order to determine whether it be so with you. If on the proposal of the question, you answer, "No, it seems to me, none are so bad as I," do not let the matter pass off so; but examine again, whether or no you do not think yourself better than others on this very account, because you imagine you think so meanly of yourself. Have not you a high opinion of this humility? And if you answer again, "No; I have not a high opinion of my humility; it seems to one I am as proud as the devil;" yet examine again, whether self-conceit do not rise up under this cover; whether on this very account, that you think yourself as proud as the devil, you do not think yourself to be very humble.

From this opposition that there is between the nature of a true, and of a counterfeit humility, as to the esteem that the subjects of them have of them selves, arises a manifold contrariety of temper and behavior.

A truly humble person, having such a mean opinion of his righteousness and holiness, is poor in spirit. For a person to be poor in spirit, is to be in his own sense and apprehension poor, as to what is in him, and to be of an answerable disposition. Therefore a truly humble person, especially one eminently humble, naturally behaves himself in many respects as a poor man. "The poor useth entreaties, but the rich answereth roughly." A poor man is not disposed to quick and high resentment when he is among the rich: he is apt to yield to others, for he knows others are above him; he is not stiff and self-willed; he is patient with hard fare; he expects no other than to be despised, and takes it patiently; he does not take it heinously that he is overlooked and but little regarded; he is prepared to be in a low place; he readily honors his superiors; he takes reproofs quietly; he readily honors others as above him; he easily yields to be taught, and does not claim much to his understanding and judgment; he is not over nice or humorsome, and has his spirit subdued to hard things, he is not assuming, nor apt to take much upon him, but it is natural for him to be subject to others. Thus it is with the humble Christian. Humility is (as the great Mastricht expresses it) a kind of holy pusillanimity.

A man that is very poor is a beggar; so is he that is poor in spirit. There is a great difference between those affections that are gracious, and those that are false: under the former, the person continues still a poor beggar at God's gates, exceeding empty and needy; but the latter make men appear to themselves rich, and increased with goods, and not very necessitous; they have a great stock in their own imagination for their subsistence.<sup>62</sup>

A poor man is modest in his speech and behavior; so, and much more, and more certainly and universally, is one that is poor in spirit; he is humble and modest in his behavior amongst men. It is in vain for any to pretend that they are humble, and as little children before God, when they are haughty, assuming, and impudent in their behavior amongst men. The apostle informs us, that the design of the gospel is to cut off all glorying, not only before God, but also before men, <sup><B00></sup>Romans 4:1, 2. Some pretend to great humiliation, that are very haughty, audacious, and assuming in their external appearance and behavior: but they ought to consider those Scriptures, <sup><B00></sup>Psalms 131:1, "Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty; neither do I exercise myself in great matters or in things too high for me." <sup><B00></sup>Proverbs 6:16, 17, "These six things doth the Lord hate; yea seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look, etc." — Chap. 21:4, "A high look, and a proud heart are sin." <sup><B00></sup>Psalms 18:27, "Thou wilt bring down high looks." And <sup><B00></sup>Psalms 101:5, "Him that hath a high look, and a proud heart, I will not suffer." <sup><B00></sup>1 Corinthians 13:4. "Charity vaunteth not itself, doth not behave itself unseemly." There is a certain amiable modesty and fear that belongs to a Christian behavior among men, arising from humility, that the Scripture often speaks of, <sup><B00></sup>1 Peter 3:15, "Be ready to give an answer to every man that asketh you-with meekness and fear." <sup><B00></sup>Romans 13:7, "Fear to whom fear." <sup><B00></sup>2 Corinthians 7:15, "Whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling you received him." <sup><B00></sup>Ephesians 6:5, "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling." <sup><B00></sup>1 Peter 2:18, "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear." <sup><B00></sup>1 Peter 3:2, "While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear." <sup><B00></sup>1 Timothy 2:9, "That women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety." In this respect a Christian is like a little child; a little child is modest before men, and his heart is apt to be possessed with fear and awe amongst them.

The same spirit will dispose a Christian to honor all men: <sup><0127></sup>1 Peter 2:17, “Honor all men.” A humble Christian is not only disposed to honor the saints in his behavior; but others also, in all those ways that do not imply a visible approbation of their sins. Thus Abraham, the great pattern of believers, honored the children of Heth: <sup><0237></sup>Genesis 23:7, “Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land.” This was a remarkable instance of a humble behavior towards them that were out of Christ, and that Abraham knew to be accursed: and therefore would by no means suffer his servant to take a wife to his son, from among them; and Esau’s wives, being of these children of Heth, were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah. So Paul honored Festus: <sup><0425></sup>Acts 26:25, “I am not mad, most noble Festus.” Not only will Christian humility dispose persons to honor those wicked men that are out of the visible church, but also false brethren and persecutors. As Jacob, when he was in an excellent frame, having just been wrestling all night with God, and received the blessing, honored Esau, his false and persecuting brother: <sup><0337></sup>Genesis 33:3, “Jacob bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother Esau.” So he called him Lord; and commanded all his family to honor him in like manner.

Thus I have endeavored to describe the heart and behavior of one that is governed by a truly gracious humility, as exactly agreeable to the Scriptures as I am able.

Now, it is out of such a heart as this, that all truly holy affections do flow. Christian affections are like Mary’s precious ointment that she poured on Christ’s head, that filled the whole house with a sweet odor. That was poured out of an alabaster box; so gracious affections flow out to Christ out of a pure heart. That was poured out of a broken box; until the box was broken, the ointment could not flow, nor diffuse its odor; so gracious affections flow out of a broken heart. Gracious affections are also like those of Mary Magdalene (Luke 7 at the latter end), who also pours precious ointment on Christ, out of an alabaster broken box, anointing therewith the feet of Jesus, when she had washed them with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head. All gracious affections that are a sweet odor to Christ, and that fill the soul of a Christian with a heavenly sweetness and fragrancy, are broken hearted affections. A truly Christian love, either to God or men, is a humble broken hearted love. The desires of

the saints, however earnest, are humble desires. Their hope is a humble hope; and their joy, even when it is unspeakable, and full of glory, is a humble broken hearted joy, and leaves the Christian more poor in spirit; and more like a little child, and more disposed to a universal lowliness of behavior.

**VII.** Another thing, wherein gracious affections are distinguished from others, is, that they are attended with a change of nature.

All Gracious affections do arise from a spiritual understanding, in which the soul has the excellency and glory of divine things discovered to it, as was shown before. But all spiritual discoveries are transforming; and not only make an alteration of the present exercise, sensation, and frame of the soul, but such power and efficacy have they, that they make an alteration in the very nature of the soul: ~~2~~ 2 Corinthians 3:18, “But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” Such power as this is properly divine power, and is peculiar to the Spirit of the Lord: other power may make an alteration in men’s present frames and feelings: but it is the power of a Creator only that can change the nature, or give a new nature. And no discoveries or illuminations but those that are divine and supernatural, will have this supernatural effect. But this effect all those discoveries have, that are truly divine. The soul is deeply affected by these discoveries, and so affected as to be transformed.

Thus it is with those affections that the soul is the subject of in its conversion. The Scripture representations of conversion do strongly imply and signify a change of nature: such as “being born again; becoming new creatures; rising from the dead; being renewed in the spirit of the mind; dying to sin, and living to righteousness; putting off the old man, and putting on the new man; a being engrafted into a new stock; a having a divine seed implanted in the heart; a being made partakers of the divine nature,” etc.

Therefore if there be no great and remarkable abiding change in persons that think they have experienced a work of conversion, vain are all their imaginations and pretenses, however they have been affected. <sup>63</sup>

Conversion is a great and universal change of the man, turning him from sin to God. A man may be restrained from sin before he is converted; but

when he is converted, he is not only restrained from sin, his very heart and nature is turned from it unto holiness: so that thenceforward he becomes a holy person, and an enemy to sin. If, therefore, after a person's high affections at his supposed first conversion, it comes to that in a little time, that there is no very sensible, or remarkable alteration in him, as to those bad qualities, and evil habits, which before were visible in him, and he is ordinarily under the prevalence of the same kind of dispositions that he used to be, and the same thing seems to belong to his character; he appears as selfish, carnal, as stupid, and perverse, as unchristian and unsavory as ever; it is greater evidence against him, than the brightest story of experiences that ever was told, is for him. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision, neither high profession, nor low profession, neither a fair story, nor a broken one, avails any thing; but a new creature.

If there be a very great alteration visible in a person for a while; if it be not abiding, but he afterwards returns, in a stated manner, to be much as he used to be; it appears to be no change of nature; for nature is an abiding thing. A swine that is of a filthy nature may be washed, but the swinish nature remains; and a dove that is of a cleanly nature may be defiled, but its cleanly nature remains.<sup>64</sup>

Indeed allowances must be made for the natural temper; conversion does not entirely root out the natural temper; those sins which a man by his natural constitution was most inclined to before his conversions he may be most apt to fall into still. But yet conversion will make a great alteration even with respect to these sins. Though grace, while imperfect, does not root out an evil natural temper, yet it is of great power and efficacy with respect to it, to correct it. The change that is wrought in conversion, is a universal change; grace changes a man with respect to whatever is sinful in him; the old man is put off, and the new man put on, he is sanctified throughout; and the man becomes a new creature, old things are passed away, and all things are become new; all sin is mortified, constitution sins, as well as others. If a man before his conversion; was by his natural constitution especially inclined to lasciviousness, or drunkenness, or maliciousness; converting grace will make a great alteration in him, with respect to these evil dispositions; so that however he may be still most in danger of these sins, yet they shall no longer have dominion over him; nor



will they any more be properly his character. Yea, true repentance does in some respects, especially turn a man against his own iniquity, that wherein he has been most guilty, and has chiefly dishonored God. He that forsakes other sins, but saves his leading sin, the iniquity he is chiefly inclined to, is like Saul, when sent against God's enemies the Amalekites, with a strict charge to save none of them alive, but utterly to destroy them, small and great; who utterly destroyed inferior people, but saved the king, the chief of them all, alive.

Some foolishly make it an argument in favor of their discoveries and affections, that when they are gone, they are left wholly without any life or sense, or anything beyond what they had before. They think it an evidence that what they experienced was wholly of God, and not of themselves, because (say they) when God is departed, all is gone; they can see and feel nothing, and are no better than they used to be.

It is very true, that all grace and goodness in the hearts of the saints is entirely from God; and they are universally and immediately dependent on him for it. But yet these persons are mistaken, as to the manner of God's communicating himself and his Holy Spirit, in imparting saving grace to the soul. He gives his Spirit to be united to the faculties of the soul, and to dwell there after the manner of a principle of nature; so that the soul, in being endued with grace, is endued with a new nature: but nature is an abiding thing. All the exercises of grace are entirely from Christ: but those exercises are not from Christ, as something that is alive, moves and stirs, something that is without life, and remains without life; but as having life communicated to it; so as, through Christ's power, to have inherent in itself a vital nature. In the soul where Christ savingly is, there he lives. He does not only live without it, so as violently to actuate it, but he lives in it, so that that also is alive. Grace in the soul is as much from Christ, as the light in a glass, held out in the sunbeams, is from the sun. But this represents the manner of the communication of grace to the soul, but in part; because the glass remains as it was, the nature of it not being at all changed, it is as much without any lightness in its nature as ever. But the soul of a saint receives light from the Sun of righteousness, in such a manner, that its nature is changed, and it becomes properly a luminous thing; not only does the sun shine in the saints, but they also become little suns, partaking of the nature of the fountain of their light. In this respect,

the manner of their derivation of light, is like that of the lamps in the tabernacle, rather than that of a reflecting glass; which, though they were lit up by fire from heaven, yet thereby became themselves burning shining things. The saints do not only drink of the water of life, that flows from the original fountain; out this water becomes a fountain of water in them, springing up there, and flowing out of them, ~~chap~~ John 4:14, and chap. ~~chap~~ 7:38, 39. Grace is compared to a seed implanted, that not only is in the ground, but has hold of it, has root there, and grows there, and is an abiding principle of life and nature there.

As it is with spiritual discoveries and affections given at first conversion, so it is in all illuminations and affections of that kind, that persons are the subjects of afterwards; they are all transforming. There is a like divine power and energy in them, as in the first discoveries; and they still reach the bottom of the heart, and affect and alter the very nature of the soul, in proportion to the degree in which they are given. And a transformation of nature is continued and carried on by them, to the end of life, until it is brought to perfection in glory. Hence the progress of the work of grace in the hearts of the saints, is represented in Scripture, as a continued conversion and renovation of nature. So the apostle exhorts those that were at Rome, “beloved of God, called to be saints,” and that were subjects of God’s redeeming mercies, “to be transformed by the renewing of their mind:” ~~chap~~ Romans 12:1, 2, “I beseech you therefore, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice; and be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind;” compared with chap. ~~chap~~ 1:7. So the apostle, writing to the “saints and faithful in Christ Jesus,” that were at Ephesus (~~chap~~ Ephesians 1:1), and those who were once dead in trespasses and sins, but were now quickened and raised up, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ, and created in Christ Jesus unto good works, that were once far off, but were now made nigh by the blood of Christ, and that were no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and that were built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit; I say, the apostle writing to these, tells them, “that he ceased not to pray for them, that God would give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Christ; the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, that they might know, or experience, what was the

exceeding greatness of God's power towards them that believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places," <sup><4016></sup>Ephesians 1:16, to the end. In this the apostle has respect to the glorious power and work of God in converting and renewing the soul; as is most plain by the sequel. So the apostle exhorts the same persons "to put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of their minds; and to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," <sup><4022></sup>Ephesians 4:22, 23, 24.

There is a sort of high affections that some have from time to time, that leave them without any manner of appearance of an abiding effect. They go off suddenly; so that from the very height of their emotion, and seeming rapture, they pass at once to be quite dead, and void of all sense and activity. It surely is not wont to be thus with high gracious affections; <sup>65</sup> they leave a sweet savor and a relish of divine things on the heart, and a stronger bent of soul towards God and holiness. As Moses' face not only shone while he was in the mount, extraordinarily conversing with God, but it continued to shine after he came down from the mount. When men have been conversing with Christ in an extraordinary manner, there is a sensible effect of it remaining upon them; there is something remarkable in their disposition and frame, which if we take knowledge of, and trace to its cause, we shall find it is because they have been with Jesus, <sup><4013></sup>Acts 4:13.

**VIII.** Truly gracious affections differ from those affections that are false and delusive, in that they tend to, and are attended with the lamb-like, dove-like spirit and temper of Jesus Christ; or in other words, they naturally beget and promote such a spirit of love, meekness, quietness, forgiveness and mercy, as appears in Christ.

The evidence of this in the Scripture is very abundant. If we judge of the Nature of Christianity, and the proper spirit of the gospel, by the word of God, this spirit is what may, by way of eminency, be called the Christian spirit; and may be looked upon as the true, and distinguishing disposition of the hearts of Christians as Christians. When some of the disciples of Christ said something, through inconsideration and infirmity, that was not agreeable to such a spirit, Christ told them, that they knew not what

manner of spirit they were of, <sup><1015></sup>Luke 9:55, implying that this spirit that I am speaking of, is the proper spirit of his religion and kingdom. All that are truly godly, and real disciples of Christ, have this spirit in them; and not only so, but they are of this spirit; it is the spirit by which they are so possessed and governed, that it is their true and proper character. This is evident by what the wise man says, <sup><1017></sup>Proverbs 17:27 (having respect plainly to such a spirit as this): “A man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.” And by the particular description Christ gives of the qualities and temper of such as are truly blessed, that shall obtain mercy, and are God’s children and heirs: <sup><1015></sup>Matthew 5:5, 7, 9, “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.” And that this spirit is the special character of the elect of God, is manifested by <sup><1012></sup>Colossians 3:12, 13: “Put on therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another.” And the apostle, speaking of that temper and disposition, which he speaks of as the most excellent and essential thing in Christianity, and that without which none are true Christians, and the most glorious profession and gifts are nothing (calling this spirit by the name of charity), he describes it thus, <sup><1014></sup>1 Corinthians 13:4, 5: “Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.” And the same apostle, Galatians 5, designedly declaring the distinguishing marks and fruits of true Christian grace, chiefly insists on the things that appertain to such a temper and spirit as I am speaking of, ver. <sup><1012></sup>22, 23: “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” And so does the Apostle James, in describing true grace, or that wisdom that is from above, with that declared design, that others who are of a contrary spirit may not deceive themselves, and lie against the truth, in professing to be Christians, when they are not, <sup><1014></sup>James 3:14-17: “If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not; and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits.”

Every thing that appertains to holiness of heart, does indeed belong to the nature of true Christianity; and the character of Christians; but a spirit of holiness as appearing in some particular graces, may more especially be called the Christian spirit or temper. There are some amiable qualities and virtues, that do more especially agree with the nature of the gospel constitution, and Christian profession; because there is a special agreeableness in them, with those divine attributes which God has more remarkably manifested and glorified in the work of redemption by Jesus Christ, that is the grand subject of the Christian revelation; and also a special agreeableness with those virtues that were so wonderfully exercised by Jesus Christ towards us in that affair, and the blessed example he hath therein set us; and likewise because they are peculiarly agreeable to the special drift and design of the work of redemption, and the benefits we thereby receive, and the relation that it brings us into, to God and one another. And these virtues are such as humility, meekness, love, forgiveness, and mercy. These things therefore especially belong to the character of Christians, as such.

These things are spoken of as what are especially the character of Jesus Christ himself, the great head of the Christian church. They are so spoken of in the prophecies of the Old Testament; as in that cited <sup>412B</sup>Matthew 21:5: “Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.” So Christ himself speaks of them, <sup>412B</sup>Matthew 11:29: “Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.” The same appears by the name by which Christ is so often called in Scripture, viz., the Lamb. And as these things are especially the character of Christ, so they are also especially the character of Christians. Christians are Christ-like; none deserve the name of Christians, that are not so in their prevailing character. “The new man is renewed, after the image of him that created him, ” <sup>412B</sup>Colossians 3:10. All true Christians behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image, by his Spirit, <sup>412B</sup>2 Corinthians 3:18. The elect are all predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God, that he might be the first born among many brethren, <sup>412B</sup>Romans 8:29. As we have borne the image of the first man, that is earthly, so we must also bear the image of the heavenly; for as is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly, <sup>412B</sup>1

Corinthians 15:47, 48, 49. — Christ is full of grace; and Christians all receive of his fullness, and grace for grace; i.e., there is grace in Christians answering to grace in Christ, such an answerableness as there is between the wax and the seal; there is character for character: such kind of graces, such a spirit and temper, the same things that belong to Christ's character, belong to theirs. That disposition, wherein Christ's character does in a special manner consist, therein does his image in a special manner consist. Christians that shine by reflecting the light of the Sun of righteousness, do shine with the same sort of brightness, the same mild, sweet, and pleasant beams. These lamps of the spiritual temple, that are enkindled by fire from heaven, burn with the same sort of flame. The branch is of the same nature with the stock and root, has the same sap, and bears the same sort of fruit. The members have the same kind of life with the head. It would be strange if Christians should not be of the same temper and spirit that Christ is of; when they are his flesh and his bone, yea, are one spirit, <sup><4167></sup>1 Corinthians 6:17; and live so, that it is not they that live, but Christ that lives in them. A Christian spirit is Christ's mark that he sets upon the souls of his people, his seal in their foreheads, bearing his image and superscription. — Christians are the followers of Christ; and they are so, as they are obedient to that call of Christ, <sup><4123></sup>Matthew 11:28, 29, "Come unto me-and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly of heart." They follow him as the Lamb: <sup><640></sup>Revelation 14:4, "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." True Christians are as it were clothed with the meek, quiet, and loving temper of Christ; for as many as are in Christ, have put on Christ. And in this respect the church is clothed with the sun, not only by being clothed with his imputed righteousness, but also by being adorned with his graces, <sup><634></sup>Romans 13:14. Christ, the great Shepherd, is himself a Lamb, and believers are also lambs; all the flock are lambs: <sup><6215></sup>John 21:15, "Feed my lambs." <sup><6208></sup>Luke 10:3, "I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves." "The redemption of the church by Christ from the power of the devil, was typified of old, by David's delivering the lamb out of the mouth of the lion and the bear.

That such manner of virtue as has been spoken of, is the very nature of the Christian spirit, or the spirit that worketh in Christ, and in his members, and in the distinguishing nature of it, is evident by this, that the dove is the very symbol or emblem, chosen of God, to represent it. Those things are

fittest emblems of other things, which do best represent that which is most distinguishing in their nature. The Spirit that descended on Christ, when he was anointed of the Father, descended on him like a dove. The dove is a noted emblem of meekness, harmlessness, peace and love. But the same Spirit that descended on the head of the church, descends to the members. “God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts,” <sup><400></sup>Galatians 4:6. And “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his,” <sup><400></sup>Romans 8:9. There is but one Spirit to the whole mystical body, head and members, <sup><400></sup>1 Corinthians 6:17, <sup><400></sup>Ephesians 4:4. Christ breathes his own Spirit on his disciples, <sup><400></sup>John 20:22. As Christ was anointed with the Holy Ghost, descending on him like a dove, so Christians also “have an anointing from the Holy One,” <sup><400></sup>1 John 2:20, 27. And they are anointed with the same oil; it is the same “precious ointment on the head, that goes down to the skirts of the garments.” And on both, it is a spirit of peace and love. <sup><400></sup>Psalms 133:1, 2, “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments.” The oil on Aaron’s garments had the same sweet and inimitable odor with that on his head; the smell of the same sweet spices, Christian affections, and a Christian behavior, is but the flowing out of the savor of Christ’s sweet ointments. Because the church has a dove-like temper and disposition, therefore it is said of her that she has doves’ eyes, <sup><400></sup>Cant. 1:15: “Behold, thou art fair, my love, behold, thou art fair, thou hast doves’ eyes.” And chap. <sup><400></sup>4:1, “Behold, thou art fair, my love, behold, thou art fair, thou hast doves’ eyes within thy locks.” The same that is said of Christ, chap. <sup><400></sup>6:12: “His eyes are as the eyes of doves.” And the church is frequently compared to a dove in Scripture: <sup><400></sup>Cant. 2:14, “O, my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock.” Chap. <sup><400></sup>5:2, “Open to me, my love, my dove.” And chap. <sup><400></sup>6:9, “My dove, my undefiled is but one.” <sup><400></sup>Psalms 68:13, “Ye shall be as the wings of a dove, covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.” And <sup><400></sup>74:19, “O deliver not the soul of the turtle dove unto the multitude of the wicked.” The dove that Noah sent out of the ark, that could find no rest for the sole of her foot, until she returned, was a type of a true saint.

Meekness is so much the character of the saints, that the meek and the godly, are used as synonymous terms in Scripture: so <sup><4970></sup>Psalm 37:10, 11, the wicked and the meek are set in opposition one to another, as wicked and godly: “Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be; but the meek shall inherit the earth.” So <sup><4970></sup>Psalm 147:6, “The Lord lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.”

It is doubtless very much on this account, that Christ represents all his disciples, all the heirs of heaven, as little children: <sup><4994></sup>Matthew 19:14, “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” <sup><4994></sup>Matthew 10:42, “Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.” <sup><4994></sup>Matthew 18:6, “Whoso shall offend one of these little ones, etc.” Ver. 10, “Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones.” Ver. 14, “It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.” <sup><4994></sup>John 13:33, “Little children, yet a little while I am with you.” Little children are innocent and harmless; they do not do a great deal of mischief in the world; men need not be afraid of them; they are no dangerous sort of persons; their anger does not last long, they do not lay up injuries in high resentment, entertaining deep and rooted malice. So Christians, in malice, are children, <sup><4994></sup>1 Corinthians 14:20. Little children are not guileful and deceitful, but plain and simple; they are not versed in the arts of fiction and deceit; and are strangers to artful disguises. They are yieldable and flexible, and not willful and obstinate; do not trust to their own understanding, but rely on the instructions of parents, and others of superior understanding. Here is therefore a fit and lively emblem of the followers of the Lamb. Persons being thus like little children, is not only a thing highly commendable, and what Christians approve and aim at, and which some extraordinary proficiency do attain to: but it is their universal character, and absolutely necessary in order to entering into the kingdom of heaven: <sup><4994></sup>Matthew 18:3, “Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” <sup><4994></sup>Mark 10:15, “Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.”



But here some may be ready to say, Is there no such thing as Christian fortitude, and boldness for Christ, being good soldiers in the Christian warfare, and coming out boldly against the enemies of Christ and his people?

To which I answer, There doubtless is such a thing. The whole Christian life is compared to a warfare, and fitly so. And the most eminent Christians are the best soldiers, endued with the greatest degrees of Christian fortitude. And it is the duty of God's people to be steadfast and vigorous in their opposition to the designs and ways of such as are endeavoring to overthrow the kingdom of Christ, and the interest of religion. But yet many persons seem to be quite mistaken concerning the nature of Christian fortitude. It is an exceeding diverse thing from a brutal fierceness, or the boldness of the beasts of prey. True Christian fortitude consists in strength of mind, through grace, exerted in two things; in ruling and suppressing the evil and unruly passions and affections of the mind; and in steadfastly and freely exerting, and following good affections and dispositions, without being hindered by sinful fear, or the opposition of enemies. But the passions that are restrained and kept under, in the exercise of this Christian strength and fortitude, are those very passions that are vigorously and violently exerted in a false boldness for Christ. And those affections that are vigorously exerted in true fortitude, are those Christian, holy affections that are directly contrary to them. Though Christian fortitude appears, in withstanding and counteracting the enemies that are without us; yet it much more appears, in resisting and suppressing the enemies that are within us; because they are our worst and strongest enemies, and have greatest advantage against us. The strength of the good soldier of Jesus Christ appears in nothing more, than in steadfastly maintaining the holy calm, meekness, sweetness, and benevolence of his mind, amidst all the storms, injuries, strange behavior, and surprising acts and events of this evil and unreasonable world. The Scripture seems to intimate that true fortitude consists chiefly in this: ~~2162~~ Proverbs 16:32, "He that is slow to anger, is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city."

The directest and surest way in the world, to make a right judgment what a holy fortitude is, in fighting with God's enemies, is to look to the Captain of all God's hosts, and our great leader and example, and see wherein his

fortitude and valor appeared, in his chief conflict, and in the time of the greatest battle that ever was, or ever will be fought with these enemies, when he fought with them alone, and of the people there was none with him, and exercised his fortitude in the highest degree that ever he did, and got that glorious victory that will be celebrated in the praises and triumphs of all the hosts of heaven, throughout all eternity; even to Jesus Christ in the time of his last sufferings, when his enemies in earth and hell made their most violent attack upon him, compassing him round on every side, like renting and roaring lions. Doubtless here we shall see the fortitude of a holy warrior and champion in the cause of God, in its highest perfection and greatest luster, and an example fit for the soldiers to follow that fight under this Captain. But how did he show his holy boldness and valor at that time? Not in the exercise of any fiery passions; not in fierce and violent speeches, and vehemently declaiming against and crying out of the intolerable wickedness of opposers, giving them their own in plain terms: but in not opening his mouth when afflicted and oppressed, in going as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, not opening his mouth; praying that the Father would forgive his cruel enemies because they knew not what they did; not shedding others' blood, but with all conquering patience and love, shedding his own. Indeed one of his disciples, that made a forward pretense to boldness for Christ, and confidently declared he would sooner die with Christ than deny him, began to lay about him with a sword: but Christ meekly rebukes him, and heals the wound he gives. And never was the patience, meekness, love, and forgiveness of Christ in so glorious a manifestation, as at that time. Never did he appear so much a lamb, and never did he show so much of the dove-like spirit, as at that time. If therefore we see any of the followers of Christ, in the midst of the most violent, unreasonable, and wicked opposition of God's and his own enemies, maintaining under all this temptation, the humility, quietness, and gentleness of a lamb, and the harmlessness, and love and sweetness of a dove, we may well judge that here is a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

When persons are fierce and violent, and exert their sharp and bitter passions, it shows weakness instead of strength and fortitude. 1 Corinthians 3 at the beginning, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. For ye

are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"

There is a pretended boldness for Christ that arises from no better principle than pride. A man may be forward to expose himself to the dislike of the world, and even to provoke their displeasure out of pride. For it is the nature of spiritual pride to cause men to seek distinction and singularity; and so oftentimes to set themselves at war with those that they call carnal, that they may be more highly exalted among their party. True boldness for Christ is universal, and overcomes all, and carries men above the displeasure of friends and foes; so that they will forsake all rather than Christ; and will rather offend all parties, and be thought meanly of by all, than offend Christ. And that duty which tries whether a man is willing to be despised by them that are of his own party, and thought the least worthy to be regarded by them, is a much more proper trial of his boldness for Christ, than his being forward to expose himself to the reproach of opposers. The apostle sought not glory, not only of Heathens and Jews, but of Christians; as he declares, ~~1~~ 1 Thessalonians 2:6. <sup>66</sup> He is bold for Christ, that has Christian fortitude enough, to confess his fault openly, when he has committed one that requires it, and as it were to come down upon his knees before opposers. Such things as these are of vastly greater evidence of holy boldness, than resolutely and fiercely confronting opposers.

As some are much mistaken concerning the nature of true boldness for Christ, so they are concerning Christian zeal. It is indeed a flame, but a sweet one; or rather it is the heat and fervor of a sweet flame. For the flame of which it is the heat, is no other than that of divine love, or Christian charity; which is the sweetest and most benevolent thing that is, or can be, in the heart of man or angel. Zeal is the fervor of this flame, as it ardently and vigorously goes out towards the good that is its object, in desires of it, and pursuit after it and so consequentially, in opposition to the evil that is contrary to it, and impedes it. There is indeed oppositions and vigorous opposition, that is a part of it, or rather is an attendant of it; but it is against things and not persons. Bitterness against the persons of men is no part of it, but is very contrary to it; insomuch that so much the warmer true zeal is, and the higher it is raised, so much the farther are persons from such bitterness, and so much fuller of love, both to the evil

and to the good. As appears from what has been just now observed, that it is no other, in its very nature and essence, than the fervor of a spirit of Christian love. And as to what opposition there is in it to things, it is firstly and chiefly against the evil things in the person himself, who has this zeal: against the enemies of God and holiness, that are in his own heart (as these are most in view, and what he has most to do with); and but secondarily against the sins of others. And therefore there is nothing in a true Christian zeal, that is contrary to that spirit of meekness, gentleness, and love, that spirit of a little child, a lamb and dove, that has been spoken of; but it is entirely agreeable to it, and tends to promote it.

But to say something particularly concerning this Christian spirit I have been speaking of, as exercised in these three things, forgiveness, love, and mercy; I would observe that the Scripture is very clear and express concerning the absolute necessity of each of these, as belonging to the temper and character of every Christian.

It is so as to a forgiving spirit, or a disposition to overlook and forgive injuries. Christ gives it to us both as a negative and positive evidence; and is express in teaching us, that if we are of such a spirit, it is a sign that we are in a state of forgiveness and favor ourselves: and that if we are not of such a spirit, we are not forgiven of God; and seems to take special care that we should take good notice of it, and always bear it on our minds:

☞<sup>4162</sup> Matthew 6:12, 14, 15, “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. For if ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” Christ expresses the same again at another time, ☞<sup>41125</sup> Mark 11:25, 26, and again in ☞<sup>41622</sup> Matthew 18:22, to the end, in the parable of the servant that owed his Lord ten thousand talents, that would not forgive his fellow servant a hundred pence; and therefore was delivered to the tormentors. In the application of the parable Christ says, ver. 35, “So likewise shall my heavenly Father do, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses.”

And that all true saints are of a loving, benevolent, and beneficent temper, the Scripture is very plain and abundant. Without it the apostle tells us, though we should speak with the tongues of men and angels, we are as a sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal; and that though we have the gift of

prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, yet without this spirit we are nothing. And there is no one virtue or disposition of the mind, that is so often, and so expressly insisted on, in the marks that are laid down in the New Testament, whereby to know true Christians. It is often given as a sign that is peculiarly distinguishing, by which all may know Christ's disciples, and by which they may know themselves; and is often laid down, both as a negative and positive evidence. Christ calls the law of love, by way of eminency, his commandment: <sup>ⲁⲓⲃⲏ</sup>John 13:34, "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." And chap. <sup>ⲁⲓⲃⲏ</sup>15:12, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you." And ver. 17, "These things I command you, that ye love one another." And says, chap. <sup>ⲁⲓⲃⲏ</sup>13:35, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." And chap. <sup>ⲁⲓⲃⲏ</sup>14:21 (still with a special reference to this which he calls his commandment), "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." The beloved disciple who had so much of this sweet temper himself, abundantly insists on it, in his epistles. There is none of the apostles so much in laying down express signs of grace, for professors to try themselves by, as he; and in his signs, he insists scarcely on anything else, but a spirit of Christian love, and an agreeable practice: <sup>ⲁⲓⲃⲏ</sup>1 John 2:9, 10, "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him." Chap. <sup>ⲁⲓⲃⲏ</sup>3:14, "We know that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren: he that loveth not his brother abideth in death." Ver. 18, 19, "My little children, let us not love in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him." Ver. 23, 24, "This is his commandment, that we should love one another. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him; and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." Chap. <sup>ⲁⲓⲃⲏ</sup>4:7, 8, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God: for God is love." Ver. 12, 13, "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, because he hath given us of his Spirit." Ver. 16, "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in

God, and God in him.” Ver. 20, “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?”

And the Scripture is as plain as it is possible it should be, that none are true saints, but those whose true character it is, that they are of a disposition to pity and relieve their fellow creatures, that are poor, indigent, and afflicted: <sup><1872></sup>Psalm 37:21, “The righteous showeth mercy, and giveth.” Ver. 26, “He is ever merciful, and lendeth.” <sup><1875></sup>Psalm 112:5, “A good man showeth favor, and lendeth.” Ver. 9, “He hath dispersed abroad, and given to the poor.” <sup><1878></sup>Proverbs 14:31, “He that honoreth God, hath mercy on the poor.” <sup><1879></sup>Proverbs 21:26, “The righteous giveth, and spareth not.” <sup><1876></sup>Jeremiah 22:16, “He judged the cause of the poor and needy, then it was well with him: Was not this to know me? saith the Lord.” <sup><1877></sup>James 1:27, “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction,” etc. <sup><1880></sup>Hosea 6:6, “For I have desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God, more than burnt offerings.” <sup><1881></sup>Matthew 5:7, “Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.” <sup><1888></sup>2 Corinthians 8:8, “I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.” <sup><1883></sup>James 2:13-16, “For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy. What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food; and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit?” <sup><1887></sup>1 John 3:17, “Whoso hath this world’s good and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” Christ in that description he gives us of the day of judgment, Matthew 25 (which is the most particular that we have in the Bible), represents that judgment will be passed at that day, according as men have been found to have been of a merciful spirit and practice or otherwise. Christ’s design in giving such a description of the process of that day, is plainly to possess all his followers with that apprehension, that unless this was their spirit and practice, there was no hope of their being accepted and owned by him at that day. Therefore this is an apprehension that we ought to be possessed with. We find in

Scripture, that a righteous man, and a merciful man are synonymous expressions, <sup>2571</sup>Isaiah 57:1, “The righteous perisheth and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.”

Thus we see how full, clear, and abundant, the evidence from Scripture is that those who are truly gracious, are under the government of that lamb-like, dove-like Spirit of Jesus Christ, and that this is essentially and eminently the nature of the saving grace of the gospel, and the proper spirit of true Christianity. We may therefore undoubtedly determine, that all truly Christian affections are attended with such a spirit, and that this is the natural tendency of the fear and hope, the sorrow and the joy, the confidence and the zeal of true Christians.

None will understand me, that true Christians have no remains of a contrary Spirit, and can never, in any instances, be guilty of a behavior disagreeable to such a spirit. But this I affirm, and shall affirm, until I deny the Bible to be anything worth, that everything in Christians that belongs to true Christianity, is of this tendency, and works this way; and that there is no true Christian upon earth, but is so under the prevailing power of such a spirit, that he is properly denominated from it, and it is truly and justly his character, and that therefore ministers, and others, have no warrant from Christ to encourage persons that are of a contrary character and behavior, to think they are converted, because they tell a fair story of illuminations and discoveries. In so doing, they would set up their own wisdom against Christ's, and judge without, and against that rule by which Christ has declared all men should know his disciples. Some persons place religion so much in certain transient illuminations and impressions (especially if they are on such a particular method and order) and so little in the spirit and temper persons are of, that they greatly deform religion, and form notions of Christianity quite different from what it is, as delineated in the Scriptures. The Scripture knows of no such true Christians, as are of a sordid, selfish, cross and contentious spirit. Nothing can be invented that is a greater absurdity, than a morose, hard, close, high-spirited, spiteful, true Christian. We must learn the way of bringing men to rules, and not rules to men, and so strain and stretch the rules of God's word, to take in ourselves, and some of our neighbors, until we make them wholly of none effect.

It is true, that allowances must be made for men's natural temper, with regard to these things, as well as others; but not such allowances, as to allow men, that once were wolves and serpents, to be now converted, without any remarkable change in the spirit of their mind. The change made by true conversion is wont to be most remarkable and sensible, with respect to that which before was the wickedness the person was most notoriously guilty of. Grace has as great a tendency to restrain and mortify such sins, as are contrary to the spirit that has been spoken of, as it is to mortify drunkenness or lasciviousness. Yea, the Scripture represents the change wrought by gospel grace, as especially appearing in an alteration of the former sort: <sup><23106></sup>Isaiah 11:6-9, "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." And to the same purpose is <sup><23625></sup>Isaiah 65:25. Accordingly we find, that in the primitive times of the Christian church, converts were remarkably changed in this respect: <sup><50813></sup>Titus 3:3, etc., "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior towards man appeared-he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." And <sup><50816></sup>Colossians 3:7, 8, "In the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communications out of your mouth."

**IX.** Gracious affections soften the heart, and are attended and followed with a Christian tenderness of spirit.

False affections, however persons may seem to be melted by them while they are new, yet have a tendency in the end to harden the heart. A disposition to some kind of passions may be established; such as imply self-seeking, self-exaltation, and opposition to others. But false affections, with the delusion that attends them, finally tend to stupify the mind, and shut it up against those affections wherein tenderness of heart consists:



and the effect of them at last is, that persons in the settled frame of their minds, become less affected with their present and past sins, and less conscientious with respect to future sins, less moved with the warnings and cautions of God's word, or God's chastisements in his providence, more careless of the frame of their hearts, and the manner and tendency of their behavior, less quick-sighted to discern what is sinful, less afraid of the appearance of evil, than they were while they were under legal awakenings and fears of hell. Now they have been the subjects of such and such impressions and affections, and have a high opinion of themselves, and look on their state to be safe; they can be much more easy than before, in living in the neglect of duties that are troublesome and inconvenient; and are much more slow and partial in complying with difficult commands; are in no measure so alarmed at the appearance of their own defects and transgressions; are emboldened to favor themselves more, with respect to the labor, and painful care and exactness in their walk, and more easily yield to temptations, and the solicitations of their lusts; and have far less care of their behavior, when they come into the holy presence of God, in the time of public or private worship. Formerly it may be, under legal convictions, they took much pains in religion, and denied themselves in many things: but now they think themselves out of danger of hell, they very much put off the burden of the cross, and save themselves the trouble of difficult duties, and allow themselves more in the enjoyment of their ease and their lusts.

Such persons as these, instead of embracing Christ as their Savior from sin, trust in him as the Savior of their sins; instead of flying to him as their refuge from their spiritual enemies they make use of him as the defense of their spiritual enemies, from God, and to strengthen them against him. They make Christ the minister of sin, and great officer and vicegerent of the devil, to strengthen his interest, and make him above all things in the world strong against Jehovah; so that they may sin against him with good courage, and without any fear, being effectually secured from restraints, by his most solemn warnings and most awful threatenings. They trust in Christ to preserve to them the quiet enjoyment of their sins, and to be their shield to defend them from God's displeasure; while they come close to him, even to his bosom, the place of his children, to fight against him, with their mortal weapons, hid under their skirts.<sup>67</sup> However, some of

these, at the same time, make a great profession of love to God, and assurance of his favor, and great joy in tasting the sweetness of his love.

After this manner they trusted in Christ, that the Apostle Jude speaks of, who crept in among the saints unknown; but were really ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, ◀100▶ Jude 4. These are they that trust in their being righteous; and because God has promised that the righteous shall surely live, or certainly be saved, are therefore emboldened to commit iniquity, whom God threatens in ◀101▶ Ezekiel 33:13: “When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity; all his righteousness shall not be remembered, but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.”

Gracious affections are of a quite contrary tendency; they turn a heart of stone more and more into a heart of flesh. A holy love and hope are principles that are vastly more efficacious upon the heart, to make it tender, and to fill it with a dread of sin, or whatever might displease and offend God, and to engage it to watchfulness, and care, and strictness, than a slavish fear of hell. Gracious affections, as was observed before, flow out of a contrite heart, or (as the word signifies) a bruised heart, bruised and broken with godly sorrow; which makes the heart tender, as bruised flesh is tender, and easily hurt. Godly sorrow has much greater influence to make the heart tender, than mere legal sorrow from selfish principles.

The tenderness of the heart of a true Christian, is elegantly signified by our Savior, in his comparing such a one to a little child. The flesh of a little child is very tender; so is the heart of one that is new born. This is represented in what we are told of Naaman’s cure of his leprosy, by his washing in Jordan; which was undoubtedly a type of the renewing of the soul, by washing in the laver of regeneration. We are told, ◀102▶ 2 Kings 5:14, “That he went down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child.” Not only is the flesh of a little child tender, but his mind is tender. A little child has his heart easily moved, wrought upon and bowed: so is a Christian in spiritual things. A little child is apt to be affected with sympathy, to weep with them that weep, and cannot well bear to see others in distress: so it is with a Christian, ◀103▶ John 11:25,

<sup><612></sup>Romans 12:15, <sup><612></sup>1 Corinthians 12:26. A little child is easily won by kindness: so is a Christian. A little child is easily affected with grief at temporal evils, and has his heart melted, and falls a weeping: thus tender is the heart of a Christian, with regard to the evil of sin. A little child is easily affrighted at the appearance of outward evils, or anything that threatens its hurt: so is a Christian apt to be alarmed at the appearance of moral evil, and anything that threatens the hurt of the soul. A little child, when it meets enemies, or fierce beasts, is not apt to trust its own strength, but flies to its parents for refuge: so a saint is not self-confident in engaging spiritual enemies, but flies to Christ. A little child is apt to be suspicious of evil in places of danger, afraid in the dark, afraid when left alone, or far from home: so is a saint apt to be sensible of his spiritual dangers, jealous of himself, full of fear when he cannot see his way plain before him, afraid to be left alone, and to be at a distance from God: <sup><1384></sup>Proverbs 28:14, "Happy is the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief." A little child is apt to be afraid of superiors, and to dread their anger, and tremble at their frowns and threatenings: so is a true saint with respect to God: <sup><4801></sup>Psalms 119:120, "My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments." <sup><2361></sup>Isaiah 66:2, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and trembleth at my word." ver. 5, "Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word." <sup><1390></sup>Ezra 9:4, "Then were assembled unto me everyone that trembled at the words of the God of Israel." <sup><1308></sup>Chap. 10:3; "According to the counsel of my Lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God." A little child approaches superiors with awe: so do the saints approach God with holy awe and reverence: <sup><1312></sup>Job 13:2, "Shall not his excellency make you afraid? And his dread fall upon you?" Holy fear is so much the nature of true godliness, that it is called in Scripture by no other name more frequently, than the fear of God.

Hence gracious affections do not tend to make men bold, forward, noisy, and boisterous; but rather to speak trembling: <sup><1311></sup>Hosea 13:1, "When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died;" and to clothe with a kind of holy fear in all their behavior towards God and man; agreeably to <sup><4801></sup>Psalms 2:11, <sup><685></sup>1 Peter 3:15, <sup><4075></sup>2 Corinthians 7:15, <sup><4805></sup>Ephesians 6:5, <sup><4802></sup>1 Peter 3:2, <sup><612></sup>Romans 11:20.

But here some may object and say, is there no such thing as a holy boldness in prayer, and the duties of divine worship? I answer, there is doubtless such a thing; and it is chiefly to be found in eminent saints, persons of great degrees of faith and love. But this holy boldness is not in the least opposite to reverence; though it be to disunion and servility. It abolishes or lessens that disposition which arises from moral distance or alienation; and also distance of relation, as that of a slave; but not at all, that which becomes the natural distance, whereby we are infinitely inferior. No boldness in poor sinful worms of the dust, that have a right sight of God and themselves, will prompt them to approach to God with less fear and reverence, than spotless and glorious angels in heaven, who cover their faces before his throne, <sup><2001</sup>Isaiah 6, at the beginning. Rebecca (who in her marriage with Isaac, in almost all its circumstances, was manifestly a great type of the church, the spouse of Christ) when she meets Isaac, lights off from her camel, and takes a vail and covers herself; although she was brought to him as his bride, to be with him in the nearest relation, and most intimate union, that mankind are ever united one to another. <sup>68</sup> Elijah, that great prophet, who had so much holy familiarity with God, at a time of special nearness to God, even when he conversed with him in the mount, wrapped his face in his mantle. Which was not because he was terrified with any servile fear, by the terrible wind, and earthquake, and fire; but after these were all over, and God spake to him as a friend, in a still small voice: <sup><1192</sup>1 Kings 19:12, 13, “And after the fire, a still small voice; and it was so, when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle.” And Moses, with whom God spake face to face, as a man speaks with his friend, and was distinguished from all the prophets, in the familiarity with God that he was admitted to; at a time when he was brought nearest of all, when God showed him his glory in that same mount where he afterwards spake to Elijah: “He made haste, and bowed his head towards the earth, and worshipped,” <sup><1348</sup>Exodus 34:8. There is in some persons a most unsuitable and unsufferable boldness, in their addresses to the great Jehovah, in an affectation of a holy boldness, and ostentation of eminent nearness and familiarity; the very thoughts of which would make them shrink into nothing, with horror and confusion, if they saw the distance that is between God and them. They are like the Pharisee, that boldly came up near, in a confidence of his own eminency in holiness. Whereas, if they saw their vileness, they would be more like the publican,

that “stood afar off, and durst not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven; but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.” It becomes such sinful creatures as we, to approach a holy God (although with faith, and without terror, yet) with contrition, and penitent shame and confusion of face. It is foretold that this should be the disposition of the church, in the time of her highest privileges on earth in her latter day of glory, when God should remarkably comfort her, by revealing his covenant mercy to her, <sup>2010</sup>Ezekiel 16:60, to the end: “I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant. Then thou shalt remember thy ways and be ashamed. — And I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; that thou mayest remember and be confounded and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.” The woman that we read of in the 7th chapter of Luke, that was an eminent saint, and had much of that true love which casts out fear, by Christ’s own testimony, ver. 47, she approached Christ in an amiable and acceptable manner, when she came with that humble modesty, reverence and shame, when she stood at his feet, weeping behind him, as not being fit to appear before his face, and washed his feet with her tears.

One reason why gracious affections are attended with this tenderness of spirit which has been spoken of, is, that true grace tends to promote convictions of conscience. Persons are wont to have convictions of conscience before they have any grace: and if afterwards they are truly converted, and have true repentance, and joy, and peace in believing; this has a tendency to put an end to errors, but has no tendency to put an end to convictions of sin, but to increase them. It does not stupify man’s conscience; but makes it more sensible, more easily and thoroughly discerning the sinfulness of that which is sinful, and receiving a greater conviction of the heinous and dreadful nature of sin, susceptible of a quicker and deeper sense of it, and more convinced of his own sinfulness and wickedness of his heart; and consequently it has a tendency to make him more jealous of his heart. Grace tends to give the soul a further and better conviction of the same things concerning sin, that it was convinced of, under a legal work of the Spirit of God; viz., its great contrariety to the will, and law, and honor of God, the greatness of God’s hatred of it, and displeasure against it, and the dreadful punishment it exposes to and

deserves. And not only so, but it convinces the soul of something further concerning sin, that it saw nothing of, while only under legal convictions; and that is the infinitely hateful nature of sin, and its dreadfulness upon that account. And this makes the heart tender with respect to sin; like David's heart, that smote him when he had cut off Saul's skirt. The heart of a true penitent is like a burnt child that dreads the fire. Whereas, on the contrary, he that has had a counterfeit repentance, and false comforts and joys, is like iron that has been suddenly heated and quenched; it becomes much harder than before. A false conversion puts an end to convictions of conscience; and so either takes away, or much diminishes that conscientiousness, which was manifested under a work of the law.

All gracious affections have a tendency to promote this Christian tenderness of heart, that has been spoken of; not only a godly sorrow, but also a gracious joy: <sup><4921></sup>Psalm 2:11, "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling." As also a gracious hope: <sup><4938></sup>Psalm 33:18, "Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him; upon them that hope in his mercy." And <sup><4971></sup>Psalm 147:11, "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy." Yea, the most confident and assured hope, that is truly gracious, has this tendency. The higher a holy hope is raised, the more there is of this Christian tenderness. The banishing of a servile fear, by a holy assurance, is attended with a proportionable increase of a reverential fear. The diminishing of the fear of the fruits of God's displeasure in future punishment, is attended with a proportionable increase of fear of his displeasure itself; the diminishing of the fear of hell, with an increase of the fear of sin. The vanishing of jealousies of the person's state, is attended with a proportionable increase of jealousies of his heart, in a distrust of its strength, wisdom, stability, faithfulness, etc. The less apt he is to be afraid of natural evil, having his heart fixed, trusting in God, and so not afraid of evil tidings; the more apt he is to be alarmed, with the appearance of moral evil, or the evil of sin. As he has more holy boldness, so he has less of self-confidence, and a forward assuming boldness, and more modesty. As he is more sure than others of deliverance from hell, so he has more of a sense of the desert of it. He is less apt than others to be shaken in faith; but more apt than others to be moved with solemn warnings, and with God's frowns, and with the calamities of others. He has the firmest comfort, but the softest heart:

richer than others, but the poorest of all in spirit: the tallest and strongest saint, but the least and tenderest child among them.

**X.** Another thing wherein those affections that are truly gracious and holy, differ from those that are false, is beautiful symmetry and proportion.

Not that the symmetry of the virtues, and gracious affections of the saints, in this life is perfect: it oftentimes is in many things defective, through the imperfection of grace, for want of proper instructions, through errors in judgment, or some particular unhappiness of natural temper, or defects in education, and many other disadvantages that might be mentioned. But yet there is, in no wise, that monstrous disproportion in gracious affections, and the various parts of true religion in the saints, that is very commonly to be observed, in the false religion, and counterfeit graces, of hypocrites.

In the truly holy affections of the saints is found that proportion, which is the natural consequence of the universality of their sanctification. They have the whole image of Christ upon them: they have put off the old man, and have put on the new man entire in all its parts and members. It hath pleased the Father that in Christ all fullness should dwell: there is in him every grace; he is full of grace and truth: and they that are Christ's, do, "of his fullness receive grace for grace" (~~ROM~~ John 1:14, 16); i.e., there is every grace in them which is in Christ; grace for grace; that is, grace answerable to grace: there is no grace in Christ, but there is its image in believers to answer it: the image is a true image; and there is something of the same beautiful proportion in the image, which is in the original; there is feature for feature, and member for member. There is symmetry and beauty in God's workmanship. The natural body, which God hath made, consists of many members; and all are in a beautiful proportion: so it is in the new man, consisting of various graces and affections. The body of one that was born a perfect child, may fail of exact proportion through distemper, and the weakness and wounds of some of its members; yet the disproportion is in no measure like that of those that are born monsters.

It is with hypocrites, as it was with Ephraim of old, at a time when God greatly complains of their hypocrisy, ~~ROM~~ Hosea 7:8: "Ephraim is a cake not turned," half roasted and half raw: there is commonly no manner of uniformity in their affections.

There is in many of them great partiality with regard to the several kinds of religious affections; great affections in some things, and no manner of proportion in others. A holy hope and holy fear go together in the saints, as has been observed from <sup><48B></sup>Psalm 33:18, and <sup><4E71></sup>147:11. But in some of these is the most confident hope, while they are void of reverence, self-jealousy and caution, to a great degree cast off fear. In the saints, joy and holy fear go together, though the joy be never so great: as it was with the disciples, in that joyful morning of Christ's resurrection, <sup><48B></sup>Matthew 28:8: "And they departed quickly from the sepulcher, with fear and great joy." <sup>69</sup> But many of these rejoice without trembling: their joy is of that sort, that it is truly opposite to godly fear.

But particularly one great difference between saints and hypocrites is this, that the joy and comfort of the former is attended with godly sorrow and mourning for sin. They have not only sorrow to prepare them for their first comfort, but after they are comforted, and their joy established. As it is foretold of the church of God, that they should mourn and loathe themselves for their sins, after they were returned from the captivity, and were settled in the land of Canaan, the land of rest, and the land that flows with milk and honey, <sup><310></sup>Ezekiel 20:42, 43: "And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to your fathers. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled, and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed." As also in <sup><416></sup>Ezekiel 16:61, 62, 63. A true saint is like a little child in this respect; he never had any godly sorrow before he was born again; but since has it often in exercise: as a little child, before it is born, and while it remains in darkness, never cries; but as soon as it sees the light, it begins to cry; and thenceforward is often crying. Although Christ hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, so that we are freed from the sorrow of punishment, and may now sweetly feed upon the comforts Christ hath purchased for us; yet that hinders not but that our feeding on these comforts should be attended with the sorrow of repentance. As of old, the children of Israel were commanded, evermore to feed upon the paschal lamb, with bitter herbs. True saints are spoken of in Scripture, not only as those that have mourned for sin, but as those that



do mourn, whose manner it is still to mourn: <sup>4184</sup>Matthew 5:4, “Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.”

Not only is there often in hypocrites an essential deficiency as to the various kinds of religious affections, but also a strange partiality and disproportion, in the same affections, with regard to different objects.

Thus, as to the affection of love, some make high pretenses, and a great show of love to God and Christ, and it may be, have been greatly affected with what they have heard or thought concerning them: but they have not a spirit of love and benevolence towards men, but are disposed to contention, envy, revenge, and evil speaking; and will, it may be, suffer an old grudge to rest in their bosoms towards a neighbor, for seven years together, if not twice seven years; living in real ill will and bitterness of spirit towards him: and it may be in their dealings with their neighbors, are not very strict and conscientious in observing the rule of “doing to others as they would that they should do to them.” And, on the other hand, there are others that appear as if they had a great deal of benevolence to men, are very good natured and generous in their way, but have no love to God.

And as to love to men, there are some that have flowing affections to some; but their love is far from being of so extensive and universal a nature, as a truly Christian love is. They are full of dear affections to some, and full of bitterness towards others. They are knit to their own party, them that approve of them, love them and admire them; but are fierce against those that oppose and dislike them. <sup>4185</sup>Matthew 5:45, 46, “Be like your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise upon the evil, and on the good. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?” Some show a great affection to their neighbors, and pretend to be ravished with the company of the children of God abroad; and at the same time are uncomfortable and churlish towards their wives and other near relations at home, and are very negligent of relative duties. And as to the great love to sinners and opposers of religion, and the great concern for their souls, that there is an appearance of in some, even to extreme distress and agony, singling out a particular person, from among a multitude, for its object, there being at the same time no general compassion to sinners, that are in equally miserable circumstances, but what is in a monstrous disproportion; this seems not to

be of the nature of gracious affection. Not that I suppose it to be at all strange, that pity to the perishing souls of sinners should be to a degree of agony; if other things are answerable: or that a truly gracious compassion to souls should be exercised much more to some persons than others that are equally miserable, especially on some particular occasions: there may many things happen to fix the mind, and affect the heart, with respect to a particular person, at such a juncture; and without doubt some saints have been in great distress for the souls of particular persons, so as to be as it were in travail for them; but when persons appear, at particular times, in racking agonies for the soul of some single person, far beyond what has been usually heard or read of in eminent saints, but appear to be persons that have a spirit of meek and fervent love, charity, and compassion to mankind in general, in a far less degree than they: I say, such agonies are greatly to be suspected, for reasons already given; viz., that the Spirit of God is wont to give graces and gracious affections in a beautiful symmetry and proportion.

And as there is a monstrous disproportion in the love of some, in its exercises towards different persons, so there is in their seeming exercises of love towards the same persons. — Some men show a love to others as to their outward man, they are liberal of their worldly substance, and often give to the poor; but have no love to, or concern for the souls of men. Others pretend a great love to men's souls, that are not compassionate and charitable towards their bodies. The making a great show of love, pity and distress for souls, costs them nothing; but in order to show mercy to men's bodies, they must part with money out of their pockets. But a true Christian love to our brethren extends both to their souls and bodies; and herein is like the love and compassion of Jesus Christ. He showed mercy to men's souls, by laboring for them, in preaching the gospel to them; and showed mercy to their bodies in going about doing good, healing all manner of sickness and diseases among the people. We have a remarkable instance of Christ's having compassion at once both to men's souls and bodies, and showing compassion by feeding both, in ~~Mark~~ Mark 6:34, etc.: "And Jesus when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion towards them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things." Here was his compassion to their souls. And in the sequel we have an account of his compassion to their bodies,

because they had been a long while having nothing to eat; he fed five thousand of them with five loaves and two fishes. And if the compassion of professing Christians towards others does not work in the same ways, it is a sign that it is no true Christian compassion.

And furthermore, it is a sign that affections are not of the right sort, if persons seem to be much affected with the bad qualities of their fellow Christians as the coldness and lifelessness of other saints, but are in no proportion affected with their own defects and corruptions. A true Christian may be affected with the coldness and unsavoriness of other saints, and may mourn much over it: but at the same time, he is not so apt to be affected with the badness of anybody's heart, as his own; this is most in his view; this he is most quick-sighted to discern; this he sees most of the aggravations of, and is most ready to lament. And a less degree of virtue will bring him to pity himself, and be concerned at his own calamities, than rightly to be affected with others' calamities. And if men have not attained to the less, we may determine they never attained to the greater.

And here by the way, I would observe, that it may be laid down as a general rule, that if persons pretend that they come to high attainments in religion, but have never yet arrived to the less attainments, it is a sign of a vain pretense. As if persons pretend, that they have got beyond mere morality, to live a spiritual and divine life; but really have not come to be so much as moral persons: or pretend to be greatly affected with the wickedness of their hearts, and are not affected with the palpable violations of God's commands in their practice, which is a less attainment: or if they pretend to be brought to be even willing to be damned for the glory of God, but have no forwardness to suffer a little in their estates and names, and worldly convenience, for the sake of their duty: or pretend that they are not afraid to venture their souls upon Christ, and commit their all to God, trusting to his bare word, and the faithfulness of his promises, for their eternal welfare; but at the same time, have not confidence enough in God, to dare to trust him with a little of their estates, bestowed to pious and charitable uses; I say, when it is thus with persons, their pretenses are manifestly vain. He that is in a journey, and imagines he has got far beyond such a place in his road, and never yet came to it, must be

mistaken; and he is not yet arrived to the top of the hill, that never yet got half way thither. But this by the way.

The same that has been observed of the affection of love, is also to be observed of other religious affections. Those that are true, extend in some proportion to the various things that are their due and proper objects; but when they are false, they are commonly strangely disproportionate. So it is with religious desires and longings: these in the saints, are to those things that are spiritual and excellent in general, and that in some proportion to their excellency, importance or necessity, or their near concern in them; but in false longing it is often far otherwise. They will strangely run, with an impatient vehemence, after something of less importance, when other things of greater importance are neglected. — Thus for instance, some persons, from time to time, are attended with a vehement inclination, and unaccountably violent pressure, to declare to others what they experience, and to exhort others; when there is, at the same time, no inclination, in any measure equal to it, to other things, that true Christianity has as great, yea, a greater tendency to; as the pouring out the soul before God in secret, earnest prayer and praise to him, and more conformity to him, and living more to his glory, etc. We read in Scripture of “groanings that cannot be uttered, and soul breakings for the longing it hath, and longings, thirstings, and pantings,” much more frequently to these latter things, than the former.

And so as to hatred and zeal; when these are from right principles, they are against sin in general, in some proportion to the degree of sinfulness: ~~Exod~~ Psalm 119:104, “I hate every false way.” So ver. 128. But a false hatred and zeal against sin, is against some particular sin only. Thus some seem to be very zealous against profaneness, and pride in apparel, who themselves are notorious for covetousness, closeness, and it may be backbiting, envy towards superiors, turbulency of spirit towards rulers, and rooted ill will to them that have injured them. False zeal is against the sins of others, while men have no zeal against their own sins. But he that has true zeal, exercises it chiefly against his own sins; though he shows also a proper zeal against prevailing and dangerous iniquity in others. And some pretend to have a great abhorrence of their own sins of heart, and cry out much of their inward corruption; and yet make light of sins in practice,

and seem to commit them without much restraint or remorse; though these imply sin both in heart and life.

As there is a much greater disproportion in the exercises of false affections than of true, as to different objects, so there is also, as to different times. For although true Christians are not always alike; yea, there is very great difference, at different times, and the best have reason to be greatly ashamed of their unsteadiness; yet there is in no wise that instability and inconstancy in the hearts of those who are true virgins, “that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth,” which is in false-hearted professors. The righteous man is truly said to be one whose heart is fixed, trusting in God, ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 112:7, and to have his heart established with grace, ~~Hebrews~~ Hebrews 13:9, and to hold on his way, ~~Job~~ Job 17:9: “The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger.” It is spoken of as a note of the hypocrisy of the Jewish church, that they were as a swift dromedary, traversing her ways.

If therefore persons are religious only by fits and starts; if they now and then seem to be raised up to the clouds in their affections, and then suddenly fall down again, lose all, and become quite careless and carnal, and this is their manner of carrying on religion; if they appear greatly moved, and mightily engaged in religion, only in extraordinary seasons, in the time of a remarkable outpouring of the Spirit, or other uncommon dispensation of providence, or upon the real or supposed receipt of some great mercy, when they have received some extraordinary temporal mercy, or suppose that they are newly converted, or have lately had what they call a great discovery; but quickly return to such a frame, that their hearts are chiefly upon other things, and the prevailing bent of their hearts and stream of their affections, is ordinarily towards the things of this world; when they are like the children of Israel in the wilderness, who had their affections highly raised by what God had done for them at the Red Sea, and sang his praise, and soon fell a lusting after the fleshpots of Egypt; but then again, when they came to Mount Sinai, and saw the great manifestations God made of himself there, seemed to be greatly engaged again, and mightily forward to enter into covenant with God, saying, “All that the Lord hath spoken will we do, and be obedient,” but then quickly made them a golden calf; I say, when it is thus with persons, it is a sign of the unsoundness of their affections. <sup>70</sup> They are like the waters in the time

of a shower of rain, which, during the shower, and a little after, run like a brook, and flow abundantly; but are presently quite dry; and when another shower comes, then they will flow again. Whereas a true saint is like a stream from a living spring; which, though it may be greatly increased by a shower of rain, and diminished in time of drought, yet constantly runs:


¶ John 4:14, “The water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up, ” etc., or like a tree planted by such a stream, that has a constant supply at the root, and is always green, even in time of the greatest drought: ¶ Jeremiah 17:7, 8, “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.” Many hypocrites are like comets that appear for a while with a mighty blaze; but are very unsteady and irregular in their motion (and are therefore called wandering stars, ¶ Jude 13), and their blaze soon disappears, and they appear but once in a great while. But the true saints are like the fixed stars, which, though they rise and set, and are often clouded, yet are steadfast in their orb, and may truly be said to shine with a constant light.

Hypocritical affections are like a violent motion; like that of the air that is moved with winds ( ¶ Jude 12), but gracious affections are more a natural motion; like the stream of a river, which, though it has many turns hither and thither, and may meet with obstacles, and runs more freely and swiftly in some places than others; yet in the general, with a steady and constant course, tends the same way, until it gets to the ocean.

And as there is a strange unevenness and disproportion in false affections, at different times; so there often is in different places. Some are greatly affected from time to time, when in company; but have nothing that bears any manner of proportion to it in secret, in close meditations secret prayer, and conversing with God, when alone, and separated from all the world. <sup>71</sup> A true Christian doubtless delights in religious fellowship, and Christian conversation, and finds much to affect his heart in it; but he also delights at times to retire from all mankind to converse with God in solitary places. And this also has its peculiar advantages for fixing his heart, and engaging its affections. True religion disposes persons to be much alone in solitary places, for holy meditation and prayer. So it

wrought in Isaac, <sup><026></sup>Genesis 24:63. And which is much more, so it wrought in Jesus Christ. How often do we read of his retiring into mountains and solitary places, for holy converse with his Father! It is difficult to conceal great affections, but yet gracious affections are of a much more silent and secret nature, than those that are counterfeit. So it is with the gracious sorrow of the saints. So it is with their sorrow for their own sins. Thus the future gracious mourning of true penitents, at the beginning of the latter day glory, is represented as being so secret, as to be hidden from the companions of their bosom, <sup><320></sup>Zechariah 12:12, 13, 14: “And the land shall mourn, every family apart, the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart: the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart: the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart: the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart: all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.” So it is with their sorrow for the sins of others. The saints’ pains and travailing for the souls of sinners are chiefly in secret places: <sup><337></sup>Jeremiah 13:17, “If ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride, and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord’s flock is carried away captive.” So it is with gracious joys: they are hidden manna, in this respect, as well as others, <sup><607></sup>Revelation 2:17.

The Psalmist seems to speak of his sweetest comforts, as those that were to be had in secret: <sup><558></sup>Psalm 63:5, 6, “My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.” Christ calls forth his spouse, away from the world, into retired places, that he may give her his sweetest love: <sup><271></sup>Cant. 7:11, 12, “Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages: Here I will give thee my loves.” The most eminent divine favors that the saints obtained, that we read of in Scripture, were in their retirement. The principal manifestations that God made of himself, and his covenant mercy to Abraham, were when he was alone, apart from his numerous family; as anyone will judge that carefully reads his history. Isaac received that special gift of God to him, Rebekah, who was so great a comfort to him, and by whom he obtained the promised seed, walking alone meditating in the field. Jacob was retired for secret prayer, when Christ came to him, and he wrestled with him, and obtained the blessing. God

revealed himself to Moses in the bush, when he was in a solitary place in the desert, in Mount Horeb, Exodus 3 at the beginning. And afterwards, when God showed him his glory, and he was admitted to the highest degree of communion with God that ever he enjoyed; he was alone, in the same mountain, and continued there forty days and forty nights, and then came down with his face shining. God came to those great prophets, Elijah and Elisha, and conversed freely with them, chiefly in their retirement. Elijah conversed alone with God at Mount Sinai, as Moses did. And when Jesus Christ had his greatest prelibation of his future glory, when he was transfigured; it was not when he was with the multitude, or with the twelve disciples, but retired into a solitary place in a mountain, with only three select disciples, charging then, that they should tell no man until he was risen from the dead. When the angel Gabriel came to the blessed virgin, and when the Holy Ghost came upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her, she seems to have been alone, and to be in this matter hid from the world; her nearest and dearest earthly friend Joseph, that had betrothed her (though a just man), knew nothing of the matter. And she that first partook of the joy of Christ's resurrection, was alone with Christ at the sepulcher,  John 20. And when the beloved disciple was favored with those wonderful visions of Christ and his future dispensations towards the church and the world, he was alone in the isle of Patmos. Not but that we have also instances of great privileges that the saints have received when with others; or that there is not much in Christian conversation, and social and public worship, tending greatly to refresh and rejoice the hearts of the saints. But this is all that I aim at by what has been said, to show that it is the nature of true grace, that however it loves Christian society in its place, yet it in a peculiar manner delights in retirement, and secret converse with God. So that if persons appear greatly engaged in social religion, and but little in the religion of the closet, and are often highly affected when with others, and but little moved when they have none but God and Christ to converse with, it looks very darkly upon their religion.

**XI.** Another great and very distinguishing difference between gracious affections and others is, that gracious affections, the higher they are raised, the more is a spiritual appetite and longing of soul after spiritual



attainments increased. On the contrary, false affections rest satisfied in themselves.<sup>72</sup>

The more a true saint loves God with a gracious love, the more he desires to love him, and the more uneasy is he at his want of love to him; the more he hates sin, the more he desires to hate it, and laments that he has so much remaining love to it; the more he mourns for sin, the more he longs to mourn for sin; the more his heart is broke, the more he desires it should be broke the more he thirsts and longs after God and holiness, the more he longs to long, and breathe out his very soul in longings after God: the kindling and raising of gracious affections is like kindling a flame; the higher it is raised, the more ardent it is; and the more it burns, the more vehemently does it tend and seek to burn. So that the spiritual appetite after holiness, and an increase of holy affections is much more lively and keen in those that are eminent in holiness, than others, and more when grace and holy affections are in their most lively exercise, than at other times. It is as much the nature of one that is spiritually new born, to thirst after growth in holiness, as it is the nature of a new born babe to thirst after the mother's breast; who has the sharpest appetite, when best in health. ¶1 Peter 2:2, 3, "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." The most that the saints have in this world, is but a taste, a prelibation of that future glory which is their proper fullness; it is only an earnest of their future inheritance in their hearts, ¶2 Corinthians 1:22, and 5:5, and ¶Ephesians 1:14. The most eminent saints in this state are but children, compared with their future, which is their proper state of maturity and perfection; as the apostle observes, ¶1 Corinthians 13:10, 11. The greatest eminency that the saints arrive to in this world, has no tendency to satiety, or to abate their desires after more; but, on the contrary, makes them more eager to press forwards; as is evident by the apostle's words, ¶Philippians 3:13, 14, 15: "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press towards the mark. — Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded."

The reasons of it are, that the more persons have of holy affections, the more they have of that spiritual taste which I have spoken of elsewhere; whereby they perceive the excellency, and relish the divine sweetness of

holiness. And the more grace they have, while in this state of imperfection, the more they see their imperfection and emptiness, and distance from what ought to be: and so the more do they see their need of grace; as I showed at large before, when speaking of the nature of evangelical humiliation. And besides, grace, as long as it is imperfect, is of a growing nature, and in a growing state. And we see it to be so with all living things, that while they are in a state of imperfection, and in their growing state, their nature seeks after growth; and so much the more, as they are more healthy and prosperous. Therefore the cry of every true grace, is like that cry of true faith, <sup>4102</sup>Mark 9:24: “Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.” And the greater spiritual discoveries and affections the true Christian has, the more does he become an earnest beggar for grace, and spiritual food, that he may grow; and the more earnestly does he pursue after it, in the use of proper means and endeavors; for true and gracious longings after holiness are no idle ineffectual desires.

But here some may object and say, How is this consistent with what all allow, that spiritual enjoyments are of a soul satisfying nature?

I answer, its being so, will appear to be not at all inconsistent with what has been said, if it be considered in what manner spiritual enjoyments are said to be of a soul satisfying nature. Certainly they are not so in that sense, that they are of so cloying a nature, that he who has anything of them, though but in a very imperfect degree, desires no more. But spiritual enjoyments are of a soul satisfying nature in the following respects.

**1.** They in their kind and nature, are fully adapted to the nature, capacity, and need of the soul of man. So that those who find them, desire no other kind of enjoyments; they sit down fully contented with that kind of happiness which they have, desiring no change, nor inclining to wander about any more, saying, “Who will show us any good?” The soul is never cloyed, never weary; but perpetually giving up itself, with all its powers, to this happiness. But not that those who have something of this happiness, desire no more of the same.

**2.** They are satisfying also in this respect, that they answer the expectation of the appetite. When the appetite is high to any thing, the expectation is consequently so. Appetite to a particular object, implies expectation in its nature. This expectation is not satisfied by worldly

enjoyments; the man expected to have a great accession of happiness, but he is disappointed. But it is not so with spiritual enjoyments; they fully answer and satisfy the expectation.

**3.** The gratification and pleasure of spiritual enjoyments is permanent. It is not so with worldly enjoyments. They in a sense satisfy particular appetites: but the appetite, in being satisfied, is glutted, and then the pleasure is over: and as soon as that is over, the general appetite of human nature after happiness returns; but is empty, and without anything to satisfy it. So that the glutting of a particular appetite, does but take away from, and leave empty, the general thirst of nature.

**4.** Spiritual good is satisfying, as there is enough in it to satisfy the soul, as to degree, if obstacles were but removed, and the enjoying faculty duly applied. There is room enough here for the soul to extend itself; here is an infinite ocean of it. If men be not satisfied here, in degree of happiness, the cause is with themselves; it is because they do not open their mouths wide enough.

But these things do not argue that a soul has no appetite excited after more of the same, that has tasted a little; or that his appetite will not increase, the more he tastes, until he comes to fullness of enjoyment: as bodies that are attracted to the globe of the earth, tend to it more strongly, the nearer they come to the attracting body, and are not at rest out of the center. Spiritual good is of a satisfying nature; and for that very reason, the soul that tastes, and knows its nature, will thirst after it, and a fullness of it, that it may be satisfied. And the more he experiences, and the more he knows this excellent, unparalleled, exquisite, and satisfying sweetness, the more earnestly will he hunger and thirst for more, until he comes to perfection. And therefore this is the nature of spiritual affections, that the greater they be, the greater the appetite and longing is, after grace and holiness.

But with those joys, and other religious affections, that are false and counterfeit, it is otherwise. If before, there was a great desire, of some sort, after grace; as these affections rise, that desire ceases, or is abated. It may be before, while the man was under legal convictions, and much afraid of hell, he earnestly longed that he might obtain spiritual light in his understanding, and faith in Christ, and love to God: but now, when these

false affections are risen, that deceive him, and make him confident that he is converted, and his state good, there are no more earnest longings after light and grace; for his end is answered; he is confident that his sins are forgiven him, and that he shall go to heaven; and so he is satisfied. And especially when false affections are raised very high, they put an end to longings after grace and holiness. The man now is far from appearing to himself a poor empty creature; on the contrary, he is rich, and increased with goods, and hardly conceives of anything more excellent than what he has already attained to.

Hence there is an end to many persons' earnestness in seeking, after they have once obtained that which they call their conversion; or at least, after they have had those high affections, that make them fully confident of it. Before while they looked upon themselves as in a state of nature, they were engaged in seeking after God and Christ, and cried earnestly for grace, and strove in the use of means: but now they act as though they thought their work was done; they live upon their first work, or some high experiences that are past; and there is an end to their crying, and striving after God and grace. Whereas the holy principles that actuate a true saint, have a far more powerful influence to stir him up to earnestness in seeking God and holiness, than servile fear. Hence seeking God is spoken of as one of the distinguishing characters of the saints, and those that seek God is one of the names by which the godly are called in Scripture: ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 24:6, "This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob!" ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 69:6, "Let not those that seek thee, be confounded for my sake." Ver. 32, "The humble shall see this and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God." And ~~Psalm~~ 70:4, "Let all these that seek thee, rejoice, and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation, say continually, The Lord be magnified." And the Scriptures everywhere represent the seeking, striving, and labor of a Christian, as being chiefly after his conversion, and his conversion as being but the beginning of his work. And almost all that is said in the New Testament, of men's watching, giving earnest heed to themselves, running the race that is set before them, striving, and agonizing, wrestling not with flesh and blood, but principalities and powers, fighting, putting on the whole armor of God, and standing, having done all to stand, pressing forward, reaching forth, continuing instant in prayer, crying to God day and night; I say, almost all that is said in the

New Testament of these things, is spoken of, and directed to the saints. Where these things are applied to sinners' seeking conversion once, they are spoken of the saints' prosecution of the great business of their high calling ten times. But many in these days have got into a strange antiscriptural way, of having all their striving and wrestling over before they are converted; and so having an easy time of it afterwards, to sit down and enjoy their sloth and indolence; as those that now have a supply of their wants, and are become rich and full. But when the Lord "fills the hungry with good things, these rich are like to be sent away empty, "

☞ Luke 1:53.

But doubtless there are some hypocrites, that have only false affections, who will think they are able to stand this trial; and will readily say, that they desire not to rest satisfied with past attainments, but to be pressing forward, they do desire more, they long after God and Christ, and desire more holiness, and do seek it. But the truth is, their desires are not properly the desires of appetite after holiness, for its own sake, or for the moral excellency and holy sweetness that is in it; but only for by-ends. They long after clearer discoveries, that they may be better satisfied about the state of their souls; or because in great discoveries self is gratified, in being made so much of by God, and so exalted above others; they long to taste the love of God (as they call it) more than to have more love to God. Or, it may be, they have a kind of forced, fancied, or made longings; because they think they must long for more grace, otherwise it will be a dark sign upon them. But such things as these are far different from the natural, and as it were necessary appetite and thirsting of the new man, after God and holiness. There is an inward burning desire that a saint has after holiness, as natural to the new creature, as vital heat is to the body. There is a holy breathing and panting after the Spirit of God, to increase holiness, as natural to a holy nature, as breathing is to a living body. And holiness or sanctification is more directly the object of it, than any manifestation of God's love and favor. This is the meat and drink that is the object of the spiritual appetite: ☞ John 4:34, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." Where we read in Scripture of the desires, longings, and thirstings of the saints, righteousness and God's laws are much more frequently mentioned as the object of them, than anything else. The saints desire the sincere milk of the

word, not so much to testify God's love to them, as that they may grow thereby in holiness. I have shown before, that holiness is that good which is the immediate object of a spiritual taste. But undoubtedly the same sweetness that is the chief object of a spiritual taste, is also the chief object of a spiritual appetite. Grace is the godly man's treasure: <sup>2306</sup>Isaiah 32:6, "The fear of the Lord is his treasure." Godliness is the gain that he is covetous and greedy of. <sup>5061</sup>1 Timothy 6:6. Hypocrites long for discoveries more for the present comfort of the discovery, and the high manifestation of God's love in it, than for any sanctifying influence of it. But neither a longing after great discoveries, or after great tastes of the love of God, nor longing to be in heaven nor longing to die, are in any measure so distinguishing marks of true saints, as longing after a more holy heart, and living a more holy life.

But I am come now to the last distinguishing mark of holy affections that I shall mention.

**XII.** Gracious and holy affections have their exercise and fruit in Christian practice. — I mean, they have that influence and power upon him who is the subject of them, that they cause that a practice, which is universally conformed to, and directed by Christian rules, should be the practice and business of his life.

This implies three things:

1. That his behavior or practice in the world be universally conformed to, and directed by Christian rules.
2. That he makes a business of such a holy practice above all things; that it be a business which he as chiefly engaged in, and devoted to, and pursues with highest earnestness and diligence: so that he may be said to make this practice of religion eminently his work and business. And
3. That he persists in it to the end of life: so that it may be said, not only to be his business at certain seasons, the business of Sabbath days, or certain extraordinary times, or the business of a month, or a year, or of seven years, or his business under certain circumstances; but the business of his life; it being that business which he perseveres in through all changes, and under all trials, as long as he lives.

The necessity of each of these, in all true Christians, is most clearly and fully taught in the word of God.

**1.** It is necessary that men should be universally obedient: <sup><ARB></sup>1 John 3:3 etc., “Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. — And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. He that doeth righteousness, is righteous even as he is righteous: he that committeth sin is of the devil.” Chap. <sup><ARB></sup>5:18, “We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not, but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.” <sup><BSA></sup>John 15:14, “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

If one member only be corrupt, and we do not cut it off, it will carry the whole body to hell, <sup><BSA></sup>Matthew 5:29, 30. Saul was commanded to slay all God’s enemies, the Amalekites; and he slew all but Agag, and the saving him alive proved his ruin. Caleb and Joshua entered into God’s promised rest, because they wholly followed the Lord, <sup><BIB></sup>Numbers 14:24, and <sup><BIB></sup>32:11, 12, <sup><BIB></sup>Deuteronomy 1:36. <sup><BIB></sup>Joshua 14:6, 8, 9, 14. Naaman’s hypocrisy appeared in that, however ever he seemed to be greatly affected with gratitude to God for healing his leprosy, and engaged to serve him, yet in one thing he desired to be excused. And Herod, though he feared John, and observed him, and heard him gladly, and did many things; yet was condemned, in that in one thing he would not hearken to him, even in parting with his beloved Herodias. So that it is necessary that men should part with their dearest iniquities, which are as their right hand and right eyes, sins that most easily beset them, and which they are most exposed to by their natural inclinations, evil customs, or particular circumstances, as well as others. As Joseph would not make known himself to his brethren, who had sold him, until Benjamin the beloved child of the family, that was most hardly parted with, was delivered up; no more will Christ reveal his love to us, until we part with our dearest lusts, and until we are brought to comply with the most difficult duties, and those that we have the greatest aversion to.

And it is of importance that it should be observed that in order to man’s being truly said to be universally obedient, his obedience must not only

consist in negatives, or in universally avoiding wicked practices, consisting in sins of commission, but he must also be universal in the positives of religion. Sins of omission are as much breaches of God's commands as sins of commission. Christ, in Matthew 25 represents those on the left hand as being condemned and cursed to everlasting fire for sins of omission. "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat," etc. A man, therefore, cannot be said to be universally obedient, and of a Christian conversation, only because he is no thief, nor oppressor, nor fraudulent person, nor drunkard, nor tavern haunter, nor whore-master, nor rioter, nor night walker, nor unclean, nor profane in his language, nor slanderer, nor liar, nor furious, nor malicious, nor reviler. He is falsely said to be of a conversation that becomes the gospel, who goes thus far and no farther; but in order to this, it is necessary that he should also be of a serious, religious, devout, humble, meek, forgiving, peaceful, respectful, condescending, benevolent, merciful, charitable and beneficent walk and conversation. Without such things as these, he does not obey the laws of Christ, and laws that he and his apostles did abundantly insist on, as of the greatest importance and necessity.

**2.** In order to men's being true Christians, it is necessary that they prosecute the business of religion, and the service of God with great earnestness and diligence, as the work which they devote themselves to, and make the main business of their lives. All Christ's peculiar people not only do good works, but are zealous of good works, ~~Titus~~ Titus 2:14. No man can do the service of two masters at once. They that are God's true servants do give up themselves to his service, and make it as it were their whole work, therein employing their whole hearts, and the chief of their strength: ~~Philippians~~ Philippians 3:13, "This one thing I do." Christians in their effectual calling, are not called to idleness, but to labor in God's vineyard, and spend their day in doing a great and laborious service. All true Christians comply with this call (as is implied in its being an effectual call), and do the work of Christians; which is everywhere in the New Testament compared to those exercises wherein men are wont to exert their strength with the greatest earnestness, as running, wrestling, fighting. All true Christians are good and faithful soldiers of Jesus Christ, and "fight the good fight of faith;" for none but those who do so, do "ever lay hold on eternal life." Those who "fight as those that beat the air," never win



the crown of victory. "They that run in a race, run all, but one wins the prize," and they that are slack and negligent in their course, do not "so run as that they may obtain." The kingdom of heaven is not to be taken but by violence. Without earnestness there is no getting along, in that narrow way that leads to life; and so no arriving at that state of glorious life and happiness which it leads to. Without earnest labor there is no ascending the steep and high hill of Zion, and so no arriving at the heavenly city on the top of it. Without a constant laboriousness there is no stemming the swift stream in which we swim, so as ever to come to that fountain of water of life that is at the head of it. There is need that we should "watch and pray always, in order to our escaping those dreadful things that are coming on the ungodly, and our being counted worthy to stand before the Son of man." There is need of our "putting on the whole armor of God, and doing all, to stand," in order to our avoiding a total overthrow, and being utterly destroyed by "the fiery darts of the devil." There is need that we should "forget the things that are behind, and be reaching forth to the things that are before, and pressing towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus our Lord," in order to our obtaining that prize. Slothfulness in the service of God in his professed servants, is as damning as open rebellion; for the slothful servant is a wicked servant, and shall be cast into outer darkness, among God's open enemies,

Ⓜ25 Matthew 25:26, 30. They that are slothful are not "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Ⓜ6 Hebrews 6:11, 12, "And we desire that everyone of you do show the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end; that ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises." And all they who follow that cloud of witnesses that are gone before to heaven, "do lay aside every weight, and the sin that easily besets them, and do run with patience the race that is set before them," Ⓜ12 Hebrews 12:1. That true faith, by which persons rely on the righteousness of Christ, and the work that he hath done for them, and do truly feed and live upon him, is evermore accompanied with such a spirit of earnestness in the Christian work and course. Which was typified of old, by the manner of the children of Israel's feeding on the paschal lamb; who were directed to eat it, as those that were in haste, with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand, Ⓜ12 Exodus 12:11.

**3.** Every true Christian perseveres in this way of universal obedience, and diligent and earnest service of God, through all the various kinds of trials that he meets with, to the end of life. That all true saints, all those that do obtain eternal life, do thus persevere in the practice of religion, and the service of God, is a doctrine so abundantly taught in the Scripture, that particularly to rehearse all the texts which imply it would be endless; I shall content myself with referring to some in the margin.<sup>73</sup>

But that perseverance in obedience, which is chiefly insisted on in the Scripture, as a special note of the truth of grace, is the continuance of professors in the practice of their duty, and being steadfast in a holy walk, through the various trials that they meet with.

By trials here, I mean those things that occur, and that a professor meets with in his course, that do especially render his continuance in his duty and faithfulness to God, difficult to nature. These things are from time to time called in Scripture by the name of trials, or temptations (which are words of the same signification). These are of various kinds: there are many things that render persons' continuance in the way of their duty difficult, by their tendency to cherish and foment, or to stir up and provoke their lusts and corruptions. Many things make it hard to continue in the way of their duty, by their being of an adhering nature, and having a tendency to entice persons to sin, or by their tendency to take off restraints, and embolden them in iniquity. Other things are trials of the soundness and steadfastness of professors, by their tendency to make their duty appear terrible to them, and so to affright and drive them from it; such as the sufferings which their duty will expose them to; pain, ill will, contempt, and reproach, or loss of outward possessions and comforts. If persons, after they have made a profession of religion, live any considerable time in this world, which is so full of changes, and so full of evil, it cannot be otherwise than that they should meet with many trials of their sincerity and steadfastness. And besides, it is God's manner, in his providence, to bring trials on his professing friends and servants designedly, that he may manifest them, and may exhibit sufficient matter of conviction of the state which they are in, to their own consciences, and oftentimes to the world; as appears by innumerable Scriptures.

True saints may be guilty of some kinds and degrees of backsliding, and may be foiled by particular temptations, and may fall into sin, yea great sins; but they never can fall away so as to grow weary of religion, and the service of God, and habitually to dislike it and neglect it, either on its own account, or on account of the difficulties that attend it; as is evident by ~~<ROM>~~ Galatians 6:9, ~~<ROM>~~ Romans 2:7, ~~<ROM>~~ Hebrews 10:36, ~~<ROM>~~ Isaiah 43:22, ~~<ROM>~~ Malachi 1:13. They can never backslide, so as to continue no longer in a way of universal obedience; or so, that it shall cease to be their manner to observe all the rules of Christianity, and do all duties required, even in the most difficult circumstances. This is abundantly manifest by the things that have been observed already. Nor can they ever fall away so as habitually to be more engaged in other things than in the business of religion; or so that it should become their way and manner to serve something else more than God; or so as stately to cease to serve God, with such earnestness and diligence, as still to be habitually devoted and given up to the business of religion; unless those words of Christ can fall to the ground, “Ye cannot serve two masters,” and those of the apostle, “He that will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God;” and unless a saint can change his God, and yet be a true saint. Nor can a true saint ever fall away so, that it shall come to this, that ordinarily there shall be no remarkable difference in his walk and behavior since his conversion, from what was before. They that are truly converted are new men, new creatures; new not only within, but without; they are sanctified throughout, in spirit, soul and body; old things are passed away, all things are become new; they have new hearts, and new eyes, new ears, new tongues, new hands, new feet; i.e., a new conversation and practice; and they walk in newness of life, and continue to do so to the end of life. And they that fall away, and cease visibly to do so, it is a sign they never were risen with Christ. And especially when men’s opinion of their being converted, and so in a safe estate, is the very cause of their coming to this, it is a most evident sign of their hypocrisy. And that, whether their falling away be into their former sins, or into some new kind of wickedness, having the corruption of nature only turned into a new channel, instead of its being mortified. As when persons that think themselves converted, though they do not return to former profaneness and lewdness; yet from the high opinion they have of their experiences, graces, and privileges, gradually settle more and more in a self-righteous and spiritually proud

temper of mind, and in such a manner of behavior as naturally arises therefrom. When it is thus with men, however far they may seem to be from their former evil practices, this alone is enough to condemn them, and may render their last state far worse than the first. For this seems to be the very case of the Jews of that generation that Christ speaks of, <sup>408</sup> Matthew 12:43, 44, 45, who being awakened by John the Baptist's preaching, and brought to a reformation of their former licentious courses, whereby the unclean Spirit was as it were turned out, and the house swept and garnished; yet, being empty of God and of grace, became full of themselves, and were exalted in an exceeding high opinion of their own righteousness and eminent holiness, and became habituated to an answerably self-exalting behavior; so changing the sins of publicans and harlots, for those of the Pharisees; and in issue, had seven devils, worse than the first.

Thus I have explained what exercise and fruit I mean, when I say, that gracious affections have their exercise and fruit in Christian practice.

The reason why gracious affections have such a tendency and effect appears from many things that have already been observed, in the preceding parts of this discourse.

The reason of it appears from this, that gracious affections do arise from those operations and influences which are spiritual, and that the inward principle from whence they flow, is something divine, a communication of God, a participation of the divine nature, Christ living in the heart, the Holy Spirit dwelling there, in union with the faculties of the soul, as an internal vital principle, exerting his own proper nature, in the exercise of those faculties. This is sufficient to show us why true grace should have such activity, power, and efficacy. No wonder that which is divine, is powerful and effectual; for it has omnipotence on its side. If God dwells in the heart, and be vitally united to it, he will show that he is a God, by the efficacy of his operation. Christ is not in the heart of a saint, as in a sepulcher, or as a dead savior, that does nothing; but as in his temple, and as one that is alive from the dead. For in the heart where Christ savingly is, there he lives, and exerts himself after the power of that endless life that he received at his resurrection. Thus every saint that is a subject of the benefit of Christ's sufferings, is made to know and experience the power

of his resurrection. The Spirit of Christ, which is the immediate spring of grace in the heart, is all life, all power, all act: ~~ROM~~ 1 Corinthians 2:4, “In demonstration of the Spirit, and of power.” ~~ROM~~ 1 Thessalonians 1:5, “Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost.” ~~ROM~~ 1 Corinthians 4:20, “The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.” Hence saving affections, though oftentimes they do not make so great a noise and show as others, yet have in them a secret solidity, life, and strength, whereby they take hold of, and carry away the heart, leading it into a kind of captivity, ~~ROM~~ 2 Corinthians 10:5, gaining a full and steadfast determination of the will for God and holiness. ~~ROM~~ Psalm 110:3, “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.” And thus it is that holy affections have a governing power in the course of a man’s life. A statue may look very much like a real man, and a beautiful man; yea, it may have, in its appearance to the eye, the resemblance of a very lively, strong, and active man; but yet an inward principle of life and strength is wanting; and therefore it does nothing, it brings nothing to pass, there is no action or operation to answer the show. False discoveries and affections do not go deep enough to reach and govern the spring of men’s actions and practice. The seed in stony ground had not deepness of earth, and the root did not go deep enough to bring forth fruit. But gracious affections go to the very bottom of the heart and take hold of the very inmost springs of life and activity.

Herein chiefly appears the power of true godliness, viz., in its being effectual practice. And the efficacy of godliness in this respect, is what the apostle has respect to, when he speaks of the power of godliness, ~~ROM~~ 2 Timothy 3:5, as is very plain; for he there is particularly declaring, how some professors of religion would notoriously fail in the practice of it, and then in the 5th verse observes, that in being thus of an unholy practice, they deny the power of godliness, though they have the form of it. Indeed the power of godliness is exerted in the first place within the soul, in the sensible, lively exercise of gracious affections there. Yet the principal evidence of this power of godliness, is in those exercises of holy affections that are practical, and in their being practical; in conquering the will, and conquering the lusts and corruptions of men, and carrying men on in the way of holiness, through all temptations, difficulty, and opposition.

Again, the reason why gracious affections have their exercise and effect in Christian practice, appears from this (which has also been before observed), that “the first objective around of gracious affections, is the transcendently excellent and amiable nature of divine things, as they are in themselves, and not any conceived relation they bear to self, or self-interest.” This shows why holy affection will cause men to be holy in their practice universally. What makes men partial in religion is, that they seek themselves, and not God, in their religion; and close with religion, not for its own excellent nature, but only to serve a turn. He that closes with religion only to serve a turn, will close with no more of it than he imagines serves that turn; but he that closes with religion for its own excellent and lovely nature, closes with all that has that nature: he that embraces religion for its own sake, embraces the whole of religion. This also shows why gracious affections will cause men to practice religion perseveringly, and at all times. Religion may alter greatly in process of time, as to its consistence with men’s private interest, in many respects; and therefore he that complies with it only for selfish views, is liable, in chance of times, to forsake it; but the excellent nature of religion, as it is in itself, is invariable; it is always the same, at all times, and through all changes; it never alters in any respect.

The reason why gracious affections issue in holy practice, also further appears from the kind of excellency of divine things, that it has been observed is the foundation of all holy affections, viz., “their moral excellency, or the beauty of their holiness.” No wonder that a love to holiness, for holiness’ sake, inclines persons to practice holiness, and to practice everything that is holy. Seeing holiness is the main thing that excites, draws, and governs all gracious affections, no wonder that all such affections tend to holiness. That which men love, they desire to have and to be united to, and possessed of. That beauty which men delight in, they desire to be adorned with. Those acts which men delight in, they necessarily incline to do.

And what has been observed of that divine teaching and leading of the Spirit of God, which there is in gracious affections, shows the reason of this tendency of such affections to a universally holy practice. For, as has been observed, the Spirit of God in this his divine teaching and leading gives the soul a natural relish of the sweetness of that which is holy, and

of everything that is holy, so far as it comes in view and excites a disrelish and disgust of everything that is unholy.

The same also appears from what has been observed of the nature of that spiritual knowledge, which is the foundation of all holy affection, as consisting in a sense and view of that excellence in divine things, which is supreme and transcendent. For hereby these things appear above all others, worthy to be chosen and adhered to. By the sight of the transcendent glory of Christ, true Christians see him worthy to be followed; and so are powerfully drawn after him; they see him worthy that they should forsake all for him: by the sight of that superlative amiableness, they are thoroughly disposed to be subject to him, and engaged to labor with earnestness and activity in his service, and made willing to go through all difficulties for his sake. And it is the discovery of this divine excellency of Christ, that makes them constant to him: for it makes a deep impression upon their minds, that they cannot forget him; and they will follow him whithersoever he goes, and it is in vain for any to endeavor to draw them away from him.

The reason of this practical tendency and issue of gracious affections, further appears from what has been observed of such affections being “attended as with a thorough conviction of the judgment of the reality and certainty of divine things.” No wonder that they who were never thoroughly convinced that there is any reality in the things of religion, will never be at the labor and trouble of such an earnest, universal, and persevering practice of religion, through all difficulties, self-denials, and sufferings in a dependence on that, which they are not convinced of. But on the other hand, they who are thoroughly convinced of the certain truth of those things, must needs be governed by them in their practice; for the things revealed in the word of God are so great, and so infinitely more important than all other things, that it is inconsistent with the human nature, that a man should fully believe the truth of them, and not be influenced by them above all things in his practice.

Again, the reason of this expression and effect of holy affections in the practice, appears in what has been observed of “a change of nature, accompanying such affections.” Without a change of nature, men’s practice will not be thoroughly changed. Until the tree be made good, the

fruit will not be good. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. The swine may be washed and appear clean for a little while, but yet, without a change of nature, he will still wallow in the mire. Nature is a more powerful principle of action, than anything that opposes it: though it may be violently restrained for a while, it will finally overcome that which restrains it: it is like the stream of a river, it may be stopped a while with a dam, but if nothing be done to dry the fountain, it will not be stopped always; it will have a course, either in its old channel, or a new one. Nature is a thing more constant and permanent, than any of those things that are the foundation of carnal men's reformation and righteousness. When a natural man denies his lust, and lives a strict, religious life, and seems humble, painful, and earnest in religion, it is not natural; it is all a force against nature; as when a stone is violently thrown upwards; but that force will be gradually spent; yet nature will remain in its full strength, and so prevails again, and the stone returns downwards. As long as corrupt nature is not mortified, but the principle left whole in a man, it is a vain thing to expect that it should not govern. But if the old nature be indeed mortified, and a new and heavenly nature infused, then may it well be expected, that men will walk in newness of life, and continue to do so to the end of their days.

The reason of this practical exercise and effect of holy affections, may also be partly seen, from what has been said of that spirit of humility which attends them. Humility is that wherein a spirit of obedience does much consist. A proud spirit is a rebellious spirit, but a humble spirit is a yieldable, subject, obediential spirit. We see among men, that the servant who is of a haughty spirit is not apt in everything to be submissive and obedient to the will of his master; but it is otherwise with that servant who is of a lowly spirit.

And that lamb-like, dove-like spirit, that has been spoken of, which accompanies all gracious affections, fulfills (as the apostle observes, ~~ROM~~ Romans 13:8, 9, 10 and ~~GA~~ Galatians 5:14) all the duties of the second table of the law; wherein Christian practice does very much consist, and wherein the external practice of Christianity chiefly consists.

And the reason why gracious affections are attended with that strict, universal and constant obedience which has been spoken of, further



appears, from what has been observed of that tenderness of spirit, which accompanies the affections of true saints, causing in them so quick and lively a sense of pain through the presence of moral evil, and such a dread of the appearance of evil.

And one great reason why the Christian practice which flows from gracious affections, is universal, and constant, and persevering, appears from That has been observed of those affections themselves, from whence this practice flows, being universal and constant, in all kinds of holy exercises, and towards all objects, and in all circumstances and at all seasons in a beautiful symmetry and proportion.

And much of the reason why holy affections are expressed and manifested in such an earnestness, activity, and engagedness and perseverance in holy practice, as has been spoken of, appears from what has been observed, of the spiritual appetite and longing after further attainments in religion, which evermore attends true affection, and does not decay, but increases as those affections increase.

Thus we see how the tendency of holy affections to such a Christian practice as has been explained, appears from each of those characteristics of holy affection that have been before spoken of.

And this point may be further illustrated and confirmed, if it be considered, that the holy Scriptures do abundantly place sincerity and soundness in religion, in making a full choice of God as our only Lord and portion, forsaking all for him, and in a full determination of the will for God and Christ, on counting the cost; in our heart's closing and complying with the religion of Jesus Christ, with all that belongs to it, embracing it with all its difficulties, as it were hating our dearest earthly enjoyments, and even our own lives, for Christ, giving up ourselves, with all that we have, wholly and forever, unto Christ, without keeping back any thing, or making any reserve; or, in one word, in the great duty of self-denial for Christ; or in denying, i.e., as it were, disowning and renouncing ourselves for him, making ourselves nothing that he may be all. See the texts to this purpose referred to in the margin.<sup>74</sup> Now surely having a heart to forsake all for Christ, tends to actually forsaking all for hire, so far as there is occasion, and we have the trial. A having a heart to deny ourselves for Christ, tends to a denying ourselves indeed, when Christ and self-interest

stand in competition. A giving up of ourselves, with all that we have, in our hearts, without making any reserve there, tends to our behaving ourselves universally as his, as subject to his will, and devoted to his ends. Our heart's entirely closing with the religion of Jesus, with all that belongs to it, and as attended with all its difficulties, upon a deliberate counting the cost, tends to a universal closing with the same in act and deed, and actually going through all the difficulties that we meet with in the way of religion, and so holding out with patience and perseverance.

The tendency of grace in the heart to holy practice, is very direct, and the connection most natural, close, and necessary. True grace is not an unactive thing; there is nothing in heaven or earth of a more active nature, for it is life itself, and the most active kind of life, even spiritual and divine life. It is no barren thing; there is nothing in the universe that in its nature has a greater tendency to fruit. Godliness in the heart has as direct a relation to practice, as a fountain has to a stream, or as the luminous nature of the sun has to beams sent forth, or as life has to breathing, or the beating of the pulse, or any other vital act; or as a habit or principle of action has to action; for it is the very nature and notion of grace, that it is a principle of holy action or practice. Regeneration which is that work of God in which grace is infused, has a direct relation to practice; for it is the very end of it, with a view to which the whole work is wrought; all is calculated and framed, in this mighty and manifold change wrought in the soul, so as directly to tend to this end. <sup><4020></sup>Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Yea, it is the very end of the redemption of Christ: <sup><3024></sup>Titus 2:14, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." <sup><4004></sup>Ephesians 1:4, "According as he hath chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and with out blame before him in love." Chap. 2:10, "Created unto good works, which God hath foreordained that we should walk in them." Holy practice is as much the end of all that God does about his saints, as fruit is the end of all the husbandman does about the growth of his field or vineyard; as the matter is often represented in Scripture, <sup><4080></sup>Matthew 3:10, chapter <sup><4038></sup>13:8, 23, 30, 38, chapter <sup><4019></sup>21:19, 33, 34, <sup><4036></sup>Luke 13:6, <sup><4031></sup>John 15:1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, <sup><4039></sup>1 Corinthians 3:9, <sup><3007></sup>Hebrews 6:7, 8, <sup><2081></sup>Isaiah 5:1-8, <sup><2081></sup>Cant. 8:11, 12, <sup><2070></sup>Isaiah 27:2, 3. <sup>75</sup> And therefore

everything in a true Christian is calculated to reach this end. This fruit of holy practice is what every grace, and every discovery, and every individual thing which belongs to Christian experience, has a direct tendency to.

The constant and indissoluble connection that there is between a Christian principle and profession in the true saints, and the fruit of holy practice in their lives, was typified of old in the frame of the golden candlestick in the temple. It is beyond doubt that that golden candlestick, with its seven branches and seven lamps, was a type of the church of Christ. The Holy Ghost himself has been pleased to put that matter out of doubt, by representing his church by such a golden candlestick, with seven lamps, in the fourth chapter of Zechariah, and representing the seven churches of Asia by seven golden candlesticks, in the first chapter of the Revelation. That golden candlestick in the temple was everywhere, throughout its whole frame, made with knops and flowers: <sup><1023></sup>Exodus 25:31, to the end, and chapter <sup><2383></sup>37:17-24. The word translated knop, in the original, signifies apple or pomegranate. There was a knop and a flower, a knop and a flower: wherever there was a flower, there was an apple or pomegranate with it: the flower and the fruit were constantly connected, without fail. The flower contained the principle of the fruit, and a beautiful promising appearance of it; and it never was a deceitful appearance; the principle or show of fruit, had evermore real fruit attending it, or succeeding it. So it is in the church of Christ: there is the principle of fruit in grace in the heart; and there is an amiable profession, signified by the open flowers of the candlestick; and there is answerable fruit, in holy practice, constantly attending this principle and profession. Every branch of the golden candlestick, thus composed of golden apples and flowers, was crowned with a burning, shining lamp on the top of it. For it is by this means that the saints shine as lights in the world, by making a fair and good profession of religion, and having their profession evermore joined with answerable fruit in practice: agreeable to that of our Savior, <sup><405></sup>Matthew 5:15, 16, “Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” A fair and beautiful profession, and golden fruits accompanying one another, are the amiable ornaments of the

true church of Christ. Therefore we find that apples and flowers were not only the ornaments of the candlesticks in the temple, but of the temple itself, which is a type of the church; which the apostle tells us “is the temple of the living God.” See <sup><1078></sup>1 Kings 6:18: “And the cedar of the house within was carved with knops, and open flowers.” The ornaments and crown of the pillars, at the entrance of the temple, were of the same sort: they were lilies and pomegranates, or flowers and fruits mixed together, <sup><1078></sup>1 Kings 7:18, 19. So it is with all those that are “as pillars in the temple of God, who shall go no more out,” or never be ejected as intruders; as it is with all true saints: <sup><1082></sup>Revelation 3:12, “Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out.”

Much the same thing seems to be signified by the ornaments on the skirt of the ephod, the garment of Aaron, the high priest; which were golden bells and pomegranates. — That these skirts of Aaron’s garment represent the church, or the saints (that are as it were the garment of Christ), is manifest; for they are evidently so spoken of, <sup><1080></sup>Psalms 133:1, 2: “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments.” That ephod of Aaron signified the same with the seamless coat of Christ our great High Priest. As Christ’s coat had no seam, but was woven from the top throughout, so it was with the ephod, <sup><1082></sup>Exodus 29:22. As God took care in his providence, that Christ’s coat should not be rent; so God took special care that the ephod should not be rent, <sup><1082></sup>Exodus 28:32, and chap. <sup><1083></sup>39:23. The golden bells on this ephod, by their precious matter and pleasant sound, do well represent the good profession that the saints make; and the pomegranates, the fruit they bring forth. And as in the hem of the ephod, bells and pomegranates were constantly connected, as is once and again observed, there was a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, <sup><1083></sup>Exodus 28:34, and chap. <sup><1083></sup>39:26, so it is in the true saints; their good profession and their good fruit, do constantly accompany one another: the fruit they bring forth in life, evermore answers the pleasant sound of their profession.

Again, the very same thing is represented by Christ, in his description of his spouse, Cant. 7:2: “Thy belly is like a heap of wheat, set about with

lilies.” Here again are beautiful flowers, and good fruit, accompanying one another. The lilies were fair and beautiful flowers, and the wheat was good fruit.

As this fruit of Christian practice is evermore found in true saints, according as they have opportunity and trial, so it is found in them only; none but true Christians do live such an obedient life, so universally devoted to their duty, and given up to the business of a Christian, as has been explained. All unsanctified men are workers of iniquity: they are of their father the devil, and the lusts of their father they will do. There is no hypocrite that will go through with the business of religion, and both begin and finish the tour: they will not endure the trials God is wont to bring on the professors of religion, but will turn aside to their crooked ways: they will not be thoroughly faithful to Christ in their practice, and follow him whithersoever he goes. Whatever lengths they may go in religion in some instances, and though they may appear exceeding strict, and mightily engaged in the service of God for a season; yet they are servants to sin; the chains of their old taskmasters are not broken: their lusts have yet a reigning power in their hearts; and therefore to these masters they will bow down again. <sup>76</sup> ~~2700~~

~~2700~~ Daniel 12:10, “Many shall be purified and made white, and tried: but the wicked will do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand.” ~~2700~~ Isaiah 26:10, “Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly.” ~~2700~~ Isaiah 35:8, “And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it.

~~2700~~ Hosea 14:9, “The ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.” ~~2700~~ Job 27:8, 9, 10, “What is the hope of the hypocrite? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?” An unsanctified man may hide his sin, and may in many things, and for a season refrain from sin; but he will not be brought finally to renounce his sin, and give it a bill of divorce; sin is too dear to him, for him to be willing for that: “Wickedness is sweet in his mouth; and therefore he hides it under his tongue he spares it, and forsakes it not; but keeps it still within his mouth, ” ~~2700~~ Job 20:12, 13. Herein chiefly consists the straitness of the gate, and the narrowness of the way that leads to life; upon the account of which, carnal men will not go in thereat, viz., that it is

a way of utterly denying and finally renouncing all ungodliness, and so a way of self-denial or self-renunciation.

Many natural men, under the means that are used with them, and God's strivings with them to bring them to forsake their sins, do by their sins as Pharaoh did by his pride and covetousness, which he gratified by keeping the children of Israel in bondage, when God strove with him, to bring him to let the people go. When God's hand pressed Pharaoh sore, and he was exercised with fears of God's future wrath, he entertains some thoughts of letting the people go, and promised he would do it; but from time to time he broke his promises, when he saw there was respite. When God filled Egypt with thunder and lightning, and the fire ran along the ground, then Pharaoh is brought to confess his sin with seeming humility, and to have a great resolution to let the people go. <sup><1127></sup>Exodus 9:27, 28, "And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked: entreat the Lord (for it is enough) that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer." So sinners are sometimes, by thunders and lightnings and great terrors of the law, brought to a seeming work of humiliation, and to appearance to part with their sins; but are no more thoroughly brought to a disposition to dismiss them, than Pharaoh was to let the people go. Pharaoh, in the struggle that was between his conscience and his lusts, was for contriving that God might be served, and he enjoy his lusts that were gratified by the slavery of the people. Moses insisted that Israel's God should be served and sacrificed to: Pharaoh was willing to consent to that; but would have it done without his parting with the people: "Go sacrifice to your God in the land," says he, <sup><1128></sup>Exodus 8:25. So, many sinners are for contriving to serve God, and enjoy their lusts too. Moses objected against complying with Pharaoh's proposal, that serving God, and yet continuing in Egypt under their taskmasters, did not agree together, and were inconsistent one with another (there is no serving God, and continuing slaves to such enemies of God at the same time). After this Pharaoh consented to let the people go, provided they would not go far away: he was not willing to part with them finally, and therefore would have them within reach. So do many hypocrites with respect to their sins. — Afterwards Pharaoh consented to let the men go, if they would leave the women and children, <sup><1129></sup>Exodus

10:8, 9, 10. And then after that, when God's hand was yet harder upon him, he consented that they should go, even women and children, as well as men, provided they would leave their cattle behind! But he was not willing to let them go, and all that they had, ~~Exodus~~ Exodus 10:24. So it oftentimes is with sinners; they are willing to part with some of their sins, but not all; they are brought to part with the more gross acts of sin, but not to part with their lusts, in lesser indulgencies of them. Whereas we must part with all our sins, little and great; and all that belongs to them, men, women, children, and cattle; they must be let go, with "their young, and with their old, with their sons, and with their daughters, with their flocks, and with their herds, there must not be a hoof left behind;" as Moses told Pharaoh, with respect to the children of Israel. At last, when it came to extremity, Pharaoh consented to let the people all go, and all that they had; but he was not steadfastly of that mind, he soon repented and pursued after them again, and the reason was, that those lusts of pride and covetousness that were gratified by Pharaoh's dominion over the people, and the gains of their service, were never really mortified in him, but only violently restrained. And thus, being guilty of backsliding, after his seeming compliance with God's commands, he was destroyed without remedy. Thus there may be a forced parting with ways of disobedience to the commands of God, that may seem to be universal, as to what appears for a little season; but because it is a mere force, without the mortification of the inward principle of sin, they will not persevere in it; but will return as the dog to his vomit; and so bring on themselves dreadful and remediless destruction. There were many false disciples in Christ's time, that followed him for a while; but none of them followed him to the end; but some on one occasion, and some on another, went back and walked no more with him.<sup>77</sup>

From what has been said, it is manifest, that Christian practice, or a holy life, is a great and distinguishing sign of true and saving grace. But I may go farther, and assert, that it is the chief of all the signs of grace, both as an evidence of the sincerity of professors unto others, and also to their own consciences.

But then it is necessary that this be rightly taken, and that it be well understood and observed, in what sense and manner Christian practice is the greatest sign of grace. Therefore to set this matter in a clear light, I will

endeavor particularly and distinctly to prove, that Christian practice is the principal sign by which Christians are to judge, both of their own and others' sincerity of godliness; withal observing some things that are needful to be particularly noted, in order to a right understanding of this matter.


**1.** I shall consider Christian practice and holy life, as a manifestation and sign of the sincerity of a professing Christian, to the eye of his neighbors and brethren.

And that this is the chief sign of grace in this respect, is very evident from the word of God. Christ, who knew best how to give us rules to judge of others, has repeated it and inculcated it, that we should know them by their fruits: <sup><4076></sup>Matthew 7:16, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." And then, after arguing the point, and giving clear reasons why it must needs be, that men's fruits must be the chief evidence of what sort they are, in the following verses, he closes by repeating the assertion, verse 20, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Again, chap. <sup><4083></sup>12:33, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt." As much as to say, it is a very absurd thing, for any to suppose that the tree is good and yet the fruit bad, that the tree is of one sort, and the fruit of another; for the proper evidence of the nature of the tree is its fruit. Nothing else can be intended by that last clause in the verse, "For the tree is known by its fruit, " than that the tree is chiefly known by its fruit, that this is the main and most proper diagnostic by which one tree is distinguished from another. So <sup><4084></sup>Luke 6:44, "Every tree is known by his own fruit." Christ nowhere says, Ye shall know the tree by its leaves or flowers, or ye shall know men by their talk, or ye shall know them by the good story they tell of their experiences, or ye shall know them by the manner and air of their speaking, and emphasis and pathos of expression, or by their speaking feelingly, or by making a very great show by abundance of talk, or by many tears and affectionate expressions, or by the affections ye feel in your hearts towards them; but by their fruits shall ye know them; the tree is known by its fruit; every tree is known by its own fruit. And as this is the evidence that Christ has directed us mainly to look at in others, in judging of them, so it is the evidence that Christ has mainly directed us to give to others, whereby they may judge of us: <sup><4085></sup>Matthew 5:16, "Let your



light so shine before men, that others seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Here Christ directs us to manifest our godliness to others. Godliness is as it were a light that shines in the soul. Christ directs that this light not only shine within, but that it should shine out before men, that they may see it. But which way shall this be? It is by our good works. Christ doth not say, that others hearing your good works, your good story, or your pathological expressions; but “that others, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Doubtless, when Christ gives us a rule how to make our light shine, that others may have evidence of it, his rule is the best that is to be found. And the apostles do mention Christian practice as the principal ground of their esteem of persons as true Christians. As the Apostle Paul, in the 6th chapter of Hebrews. There the apostle, in the beginning of the chapter, speaks of them that have great common illuminations, that have “been enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, that afterwards fall away, and are like barren ground, that is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned;” and then immediately adds in the 9th verse (expressing his charity for the Christian Hebrews, as having that saving grace, which is better than all these common illuminations), “but beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.” And then, in the next verse, he tells them what was the reason he had such good thoughts of them: he does not say, that it was because they had given him a good account of a work of God upon their souls, and talked very experimentally; but it was their work and labor of love; “for God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed towards his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.” And the same apostle speaks of a faithful serving of God in practice, as the proper proof to others of men’s loving Christ above all, and preferring his honor to their private interest: <sup>102</sup>Philippians 2:21: 22, “For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s; but ye know the proof of him, that as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.” So the Apostle John expresses the same, as the ground of his good opinion of Gaius, 3 John 3-6, “For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee.” But how did the brethren testify of the truth that was in Gaius? And how did the apostle

judge of the truth that was in him? It was not because they testified that he had given them a good account of the steps of his experiences, and talked like one that felt what he said, and had the very language of a Christian, but they testified that he walked in the truth; as it follows, “even as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth. Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren and to strangers; which have borne witness of thy charity before the church.” Thus the apostle explains what the brethren had borne witness of when they came and testified of his walking in the truth. And the apostle seems in this same place, to give it as a rule to Gaius how he should judge of others; in verse 10, he mentions one Diotrephes, that did not carry himself well, and led away others after him; and then in the 11th verse, he directs Gaius to beware of such, and not to follow them; and gives him a rule whereby he may know them, exactly agreeable to that rule Christ had given before, “by their fruits ye shall know them;” says the apostle, “beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good, is of God; but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.” And I would further observe, that the Apostle James, expressly comparing that way of showing others our faith and Christianity by our practice or works, with other ways of showing our faith without works, or not by works, does plainly and abundantly prefer the former: ~~SUBS~~ James 2:18, “Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.” A manifestation of our faith without works, or in a way diverse from works, is a manifestation of it in words, whereby a man professes faith. As the apostle says, verse 14, “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith?” Therefore here are two ways of manifesting to our neighbor what is in our hearts; one by what we say, and the other by what we do. But the apostle abundantly prefers the latter as the best evidence. Now certainly all accounts we give of ourselves in words, our saying that we have faith, and that we are converted, and telling the manner how we came to have faith, and the steps by which it was wrought, and the discoveries and experiences that accompany it, are still but manifesting our faith by what we say; it is but showing our faith by our words; which the apostle speaks of as falling vastly short of manifesting of it by what we do, and showing our faith by our works.

And as the Scripture plainly teaches, that practice is the best evidence of the sincerity of professing Christians; so reason teaches the same thing. Reason shows, that men's deeds are better and more faithful interpreters of their minds, than their words. The common sense of all mankind, through all ages and nations, teaches them to judge of men's hearts chiefly by their practice, in other matters; as, whether a man be a loyal subject, a true lover, a dutiful child, or a faithful servant. If a man profess a great deal of love and friendship to another, reason teaches all men, that such a profession is not so great an evidence of his being a real and hearty friend, as his appearing a friend in deeds; being faithful and constant to his friend in prosperity and adversity, ready to lay out himself, and deny himself, and suffer in his personal interest, to do him a kindness. A wise man will trust to such evidences of the sincerity of friendship, further than a thousand earnest professions and solemn declarations, and most affectionate expressions of friendship in words. And there is equal reason why practice should also be looked upon as the best evidence of friendship towards Christ. Reason says the same that Christ said, in  John 14:21, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." Thus if we see a man, who in the course of his life seems to follow and imitate Christ and greatly to exert and deny himself for the honor of Christ, and to promote his kingdom and interest in the world; reason teaches, that this is an evidence of love to Christ, more to be depended on, than if a man only says he has love to Christ, and tells of the inward experiences he has had of love to him, what strong love he felt, and how his heart was drawn out in love at such and such a time, when it may be there appears but little imitation of Christ in his behavior and he seems backward to do any great matter for him, or to put himself out of his way for the promoting of his kingdom, but seems to be apt to excuse himself whenever he is called to deny himself for Christ. So if a man, in declaring his experiences, tells how he found his heart weaned from the world, and saw the vanity of it, so that all looked as nothing to him, at such and such times, and professes that he gives up all to God, and calls heaven and earth to witness to it; but yet in his practice is violent in pursuing the world, and what he gets he keeps close, is exceeding loth to part with much of it to charitable and pious uses, it comes from him almost like his heart's blood. But there is another professing Christian, that says not a great deal, yet in his behavior appears ready at all times to forsake the world,

whenever it stands in the way of his duty, and is free to part with it at any time to promote religion and the good of his fellow creatures. Reason teaches, that the latter gives far the most credible manifestation of a heart weaned from the world. And if a man appears to walk humbly before God and men, and to be of a conversation that savors of a broken heart, appearing patient and resigned to God under affliction, and meek in his behavior amongst men; this is a better evidence of humiliation, than if a person only tells how great a sense he had of his own unworthiness, how he was brought to lie in the dust, and was quite emptied of himself, and saw himself nothing and all over-filthy and abominable etc. etc., but yet acts as if he looked upon himself one of the first and best of saints, and by just right the head of all the Christians in the town, and is assuming, self-willed, and impatient of the least contradiction or opposition; we may be assured in such a case, that a man's practice comes from a lower place in his heart than his profession. So (to mention no more instances) if a professor of Christianity manifests in his behavior a pitiful tender spirit towards others in calamity, ready to bear their burdens with them, willing to spend his substance for them, and to suffer many inconveniences in his worldly interest to promote the good of others' souls and bodies; is not this a more credible manifestation of a spirit of love to men, than only a man's telling what love he felt to others at certain times, how he pitied their souls, how his soul was in travail for them, and how he felt hearty love and pity to his enemies; when in his behavior he seems to be of a very selfish spirit, close and niggardly, all for himself, and none for his neighbors and perhaps envious and contentious? Persons in a pang of affection may think they have a willingness of heart for great things, to do much and to suffer much, and so may profess it very earnestly and confidently, when really their hearts are far from it. Thus many in their affectionate pangs, have thought themselves willing to be damned eternally for the glory of God. Passing affections easily produce words; and words are cheap; and godliness is more easily feigned in words than in actions. Christian practice is a costly, laborious thing. The self-denial that is required of Christians, and the narrowness of the way that leads to life, does not consist in words, but in practice. Hypocrites may much more easily be brought to talk like saints, than to act like saints.

Thus it is plain, that Christian practice is the best sign or manifestation of the true godliness of a professing Christian, to the eye of his neighbors.

But then the following things should be well observed, that this matter may be rightly understood.

*First*, it must be observed, that when the Scripture speaks of Christian practice, as the best evidence to others, of sincerity and truth of grace, a profession of Christianity is not excluded, but supposed. The rules mentioned, were rules given to the followers of Christ, to guide them in their thoughts of professing Christians, and those that offered themselves as some of their society, whereby they might judge of the truth of their pretenses, and the sincerity of the profession they made; and not for the trial of Heathens, or those that made no pretense to Christianity, and that Christians had nothing to do with. This is as plain as is possible in that great rule which Christ gives in the 7th of Matthew, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” He there gives a rule how to judge of those that professed to be Christians, yea, that made a very high profession, false prophets, “who came in sheep’s clothing,” as ver. 15. So it is also with that of the Apostle James, chap ~~5~~ 2:18, “Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.” It is evident, that both these sorts of persons, offering to give these diverse evidences of their faith, are professors of faith: this is implied in their offering each of them to give evidences of the faith they professed. And it is evident by the preceding verses, that the apostle is speaking of professors of faith in Jesus Christ. So it is very plain, that the Apostle John, in those passages that have been observed in his third epistle, is speaking of professing Christians. Though in these rules, the Christian practice of professors be spoken of as the greatest and most distinguishing sign of their sincerity in their profession, much more evidential than their profession itself; yet a profession of Christianity is plainly presupposed: it is not the main thing in the evidence, nor anything distinguishing in it; yet it is a thing requisite and necessary in it. As the having an animal body, is not anything distinguishing of a man, from other creatures, and is not the main thing in the evidence of human nature, yet it is a thing requisite and necessary in the evidence. So that if any man should say plainly that he was not a Christian, and did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God, or a person sent of God; these rules of Christ and his apostles do not at all oblige us to

look upon him as a sincere Christian, let his visible practice and virtues be what they will. And not only do these rules take no place with respect to a man that explicitly denies Christianity, and is a professed Deist, Jew, Heathen, or open Infidel; but also with respect to a man that only forbears to make a profession of Christianity; because these rules were given us to judge of professing Christians only: fruits must be joined with open flowers; bells and pomegranates go together.

But here will naturally arise this inquiry, viz., when may a man be said to profess Christianity, or what profession may properly be called a profession of Christianity?

I answer, in two things.

**1.** In order to a man's being properly said to make a profession of Christianity, there must undoubtedly be a profession of all that is necessary to his being a Christian, or of so much as belongs to the essence of Christianity. Whatsoever is essential in Christianity itself, the profession of that is essential in the profession of Christianity. The profession must be of the thing professed. For a man to profess Christianity, is for him to declare that he has it. And therefore so much as belongs to a thing, so as to be necessary in order to its being truly denominated that thing; so much is essential to the declaration of that thing, in order to its being truly denominated a declaration of that thing if we take only a part of Christianity, and leave out a part that is essential to it, what we take is not Christianity; because something that is of the essence of it is wanting. So if we profess only a part, and leave out a part that is essential, that which we profess is not Christianity. Thus, in order to a profession of Christianity, we must profess that we believe that Jesus is the Messiah for this reason, because such a belief is essential to Christianity. And so we must profess, either expressly or implicitly, that Jesus satisfied for our sins, and other essential doctrines of the gospel, because a belief of these things also is essential to Christianity. But there are other things as essential to religion, as an orthodox belief; which it is therefore as necessary that we should profess, in order to our being truly said to profess Christianity. Thus it is essential to Christianity that we repent of our sins, that we be convinced of our own sinfulness, and that we are sensible we have justly exposed ourselves to God's wrath, and that

our hearts do renounce all sin, and that we do with our whole hearts embrace Christ as our only Savior; and that we love him above all, and are willing for his sake to forsake all, and that we do give up ourselves to be entirely and forever his, etc. Such things as these do as much belong to the essence of Christianity, as the belief of any of the doctrines of the gospel: and therefore the profession of them does as much belong to a Christian profession. Not that in order to a being professing Christians, it is necessary that there should be an explicit profession of every individual thing that belongs to Christian grace or virtue: but certainly, there must be a profession, either express or implicit, of what is of the essence of religion. And as to those things that Christians should express in their profession, we ought to be guided by the precepts of God's word or by Scripture examples of public professions of religion, God's people have made from time to time. Thus they ought to profess their repentance of sin: as of old, when persons were initiated as professors, they came confessing their sins, manifesting their humiliation for sin, <sup><400></sup>Matthew 3:6. And the baptism they were baptized with, was called the baptism of repentance, <sup><400></sup>Mark 1:4. And John, when he had baptized them, exhorted them to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, <sup><400></sup>Matthew 3:8, i.e., agreeable to that repentance which they had professed; encouraging them that if they did so, they should escape the wrath to come, and be gathered as wheat into God's garner, <sup><400></sup>Matthew 3:7, 8, 9, 10, 12. So the Apostle Peter says to the Jews, <sup><400></sup>Acts 2:38, "Repent, and be baptized;" which shows, that repentance is a qualification that must be visible in order to baptism; and therefore ought to be publicly professed. So when the Jews that returned from captivity, entered publicly into covenant, it was with confession or public confession of repentance of their sins, <sup><400></sup>Nehemiah 9:2. This profession of repentance should include or imply a profession of conviction, that God would be just in our damnation: see <sup><400></sup>Nehemiah 9:33, together with ver. 35, and the beginning of the next chapter. They should profess their faith in Jesus Christ, and that they embrace Christ, and rely upon him as their Savior, with their whole hearts, and that they do joyfully entertain the gospel of Christ. Thus Philip, in order to baptizing the eunuch, required that he should profess that he believed with all his heart: and they that were received as visible Christians, at that great outpouring of the Spirit, which began at the day of Pentecost, appeared gladly to receive the gospel: <sup><400></sup>Acts 2:41, "Then they that gladly received

the word, were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” They should profess that they rely on Christ’s righteousness only, and strength; and that they are devoted to him, as their only Lord and Savior, and that they rejoice in him as their only righteousness and portion. It is foretold, that all nations shall be brought publicly to make this profession, <sup><238D></sup>Isaiah 45:29, to the end: “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come, and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.” They should profess to give up themselves entirely to Christ, and to God through him; as the children of Israel, when they publicly recognized their covenant with God:

<sup><6347></sup>Deuteronomy 26:17, “Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice.” They ought to profess a willingness of heart to embrace religion with all its difficulties, and to walk in a way of obedience to God universally and perseveringly, <sup><2298></sup>Exodus 19:8, and <sup><218></sup>24:3, 7, <sup><6336></sup>Deuteronomy 26:16, 17, 18, <sup><2278></sup>2 Kings 23:3, <sup><4123></sup>Nehemiah 10:28, 29, <sup><4357></sup>Psalms 119:57, 106. They ought to profess, that all their hearts and souls are in these engagements to be the Lord’s and forever to serve him, <sup><4452></sup>2 Chronicles 15:12, 13, 14. God’s people swearing to God, and swearing by his name, or to his name, as it might be rendered (by which seems to be signified their solemnly giving up themselves to him in covenant, and vowing to receive him as their God, and to be entirely his, to obey and serve him), is spoken of as a duty to be performed by all God’s visible Israel, <sup><6333></sup>Deuteronomy 6:13, and <sup><6310></sup>10:20, <sup><6311></sup>Psalms 63:11, <sup><2398></sup>Isaiah 19:18, chap. <sup><2423></sup>14:23, 24, compared with <sup><6341></sup>Romans 14:11, and <sup><2191></sup>Philippians 2:10, 11, <sup><2801></sup>Isaiah 48:1, 2, and <sup><2655></sup>65:15, 16, <sup><2002></sup>Jeremiah 4:2, and <sup><2407></sup>5:7, and <sup><2416></sup>12:16, <sup><2046></sup>Hosea 4:16, and <sup><2801></sup>10:4. Therefore, in order to persons being entitled to full esteem and charity, with their neighbors, as being sincere professors of Christianity; by those forementioned rules of Christ and his apostles, there must be a visibly holy life, with a profession, either expressing, or plainly implying such things as those which have been now mentioned. We are to know



them by their fruits, that is, we are by their fruits to know whether they be what they profess to be; not that we are to know by their fruits, that they have something in them, they do not so much as pretend to.

And moreover,

**2.** That profession of these things, which is properly called a Christian profession, and which must be joined with Christian practice, in order to persons being entitled to the benefit of those rules, must be made (as to what appears) understandingly: that is, they must be persons that appear to have been so far instructed in the principles of religion, as to be in an ordinary capacity to understand the proper import of what is expressed in their profession. For sounds are no significations or declarations of any thing, any further than men understand the meaning of their own sounds.

But in order to persons making a proper profession of Christianity, such as the Scripture directs to and such as the followers of Christ should require, in order to the acceptance of the professors with full charity, as of their society; it is not necessary they should give an account of the particular steps and method by which the Holy Spirit, sensibly to them, wrought and brought about those great essential things of Christianity in their hearts. There is no footstep in the Scripture of any such way of the apostles, or primitive ministers and Christians requiring any such relation, in order to their receiving and treating others as their Christian brethren, to all intents and purposes, or of their first examining them, concerning the particular method and order of their experiences. They required of them a profession of the things wrought; but no account of the manner of working was required of them. Nor is there the least shadow in the Scripture of any such custom in the church of God from Adam to the death of the Apostle John.

I am far from saying, that it is not requisite that persons should give any sort of account of their experiences to their brethren. For persons to profess those things wherein the essence of Christianity lies, is the same thing as to profess that they experience those things. Thus for persons solemnly to profess, that, in a full conviction of their own utter sinfulness, misery, and impotence, and totally undone state as in themselves, and their just desert of God's utter rejection and eternal wrath, and the utter insufficiency of their own righteousness, or anything in them, to satisfy

divine justice, or recommend them to God's favor; they do entirely depend on the Lord Jesus Christ, and his satisfaction and righteousness; that they do with all their hearts believe the truth of the gospel of Christ: and that in a full conviction of his sufficiency and perfect excellency as a Savior, as exhibited in the gospel, they do with their whole souls cleave to him, and acquiesce in him, as the refuge and rest of their souls, and fountain of their comfort; that they repent of their sins, and utterly renounce all sin, and give up themselves wholly to Christ, willingly subjecting themselves to him as their King; that they give him their hearts and their whole man; and are willing and resolved to have God for their whole and everlasting portion; and in a dependence on his promises of a future eternal enjoyment of him in heaven, to renounce all the enjoyments of this vain world, selling all for this great treasure and future inheritance, and to comply with every command of God, even the most difficult and self-denying, and devote their whole lives to God's service; and that in forgiveness of those that have injured them, and a general benevolence to mankind, their hearts are united to the people of Jesus Christ as their people, to cleave to them and love them as their brethren, and worship and serve God, and follow Christ in union and fellowship with them, being willing and resolved to perform all those duties that belong to them, as members of the same family of God and mystical body of Christ: I say, for persons solemnly to profess such things as these, as in the presence of God, is the same thing as to profess that they are conscious to, or do experience such things in their hearts.

Nor is it what I suppose, that persons giving an account of their experience of particular exercises of grace, with the times and circumstances, gives no advantage to others in forming a judgment of their state; or that persons may not fitly be inquired of concerning these in some cases, especially cases of great importance, where all possible satisfaction concerning persons' piety is especially to be desired and sought after, as in the case of ordination or approbation of a minister. It may give advantage in forming a judgment, in several respects; and among others, in this, that hereby we may be better satisfied, that the professor speaks honestly and understandingly, in what he professes; and that he does not make the profession in mere formality.

In order to a profession of Christianity being accepted to any purpose, there ought to be good reason, from the circumstances of the profession, to

think, that the professor does not make such a profession out of a mere customary compliance with a prescribed form, using words without any distinct meaning, or in a very lax and ambiguous manner, as confessions of faith are often subscribed; but that the professor understandingly and honestly signifies what he is conscious of in his own heart; otherwise his profession can be of no significance, and no more to be regarded than the sound of things without life. But indeed (whatever advantage an account of particular exercises may give in judging of this) it must be owned, that the professor having been previously thoroughly instructed by his teachers, and given good proof of his sufficient knowledge, together with a practice agreeable to his profession, is the best evidence of this.

Nor do I suppose, but that, if a person that is inquired of about particular passages, times, and circumstances of his Christian experiences among other things, seems to be able to give a distinct account of the manner of his first conversion, in such a method as has been frequently observable in true conversion, so that things seem sensibly and distinctly to follow one another, in the order of time, according to the order of nature; it is an illustrating circumstance, that among other things adds luster to the evidence he gives his brethren of the truth of his experiences.

But the thing that I speak of as unscriptural, is the insisting on a particular account of the distinct method and steps, wherein the Spirit of God did sensibly proceed, in first bringing the soul into a state of salvation, as a thing requisite in order to receiving a professor into full charity as a real Christian; or so, as for the want of such relation, to disregard other things in the evidence persons give to their neighbors of their Christianity, that are vastly more important and essential.

*Secondly*, That we may rightly understand how Christian practice is the greatest evidence that others can have of the sincerity of a professing Christian, it is needful that what was said before, showing what Christian practice is, should be borne in mind; and that it should be considered how far this may be visible to others. Merely that a professor of Christianity is what is commonly called an honest man, and a moral man (i.e., we have no special transgression or iniquity to charge him with, that might bring a blot on his character), is no great evidence of the sincerity of his profession. This is not making his light shine before men. This is not that work and

labor of love showed towards Christ's name, which gave the apostle such persuasion of the sincerity of the professing Hebrews, ~~ROM~~ Hebrews 6:9, 10. It may be so, that we may see nothing in a man, but that he may be a good man; there may appear nothing in his life and conversation inconsistent with his being godly, and yet neither may there be any great positive evidence that he is so. But there may be great positive appearance of holiness in men's visible behavior. Their life may appear to be a life of the service of God: they may appear to follow the example of Jesus Christ, and come up in a great measure to those excellent rules in the 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters of Matthew, and 12th of Romans, and many other parts of the New Testament: there may be a great appearance of their being universal in their obedience to Christ's commands and the rules of the gospel. They may appear to be universal in the performance of the duties of the first table, manifesting the fear and love of God; and also universal in fulfilling rules of love to men, love to saints, and love to enemies: rules of meekness and forgiveness rules of mercy and charity, and looking not only at our own things but also at the things of others; rules of doing good to men's souls and bodies, to particular persons and to the public; rules of temperance and mortification, and of a humble conversation; rules of bridling the tongue, and improving it to glorify God and bless men, showing that in their tongues is the law of kindness. They may appear to walk as Christians, in all places, and at all seasons, in the house of God, and in their families, and among their neighbors, on Sabbath days and every day, in business and in conversation, towards friends and enemies, towards superiors, inferiors, and equals. Persons in their visible walk may appear to be very earnestly engaged in the service of God and mankind, much to labor and lay out themselves in this work of a Christian, and to be very constant and steadfast in it, under all circumstances and temptations. There may be great manifestations of a spirit to deny themselves, and suffer for God and Christ, and the interest of religion, and the benefit of their brethren. There may be great appearances in a man's walk, of a disposition to forsake any thing, rather than to forsake Christ, and to make everything give place to his honor. There may be great manifestations in a man's behavior of such religion as this, being his element, and of his placing the delight and happiness of his life in it; and his conversation may be such, that he may carry with him a sweet odor of Christian graces and heavenly dispositions, wherever he goes. And when it is thus in the

professors of Christianity, here is an evidence to others of their sincerity in their profession, to which all other manifestations are not worthy to be compared.

There is doubtless a great variety in the degrees of evidence that professors do exhibit of their sincerity, in their life and practice; as there is a variety in the fairness and clearness of accounts persons give of the manner and method of their experiences: but undoubtedly such a manifestation as has been described of a Christian spirit in practice, is vastly beyond the fairest and brightest story of particular steps and passages of experience that ever was told. And in general, a manifestation of the sincerity of a Christian profession in practice, is far better than a relation of experiences. But yet,

*Thirdly*, It must be noted, agreeable to what was formerly observed, that no external manifestations and outward appearances whatsoever, that are visible to the world, are infallible evidences of grace. These manifestations that have been mentioned, are the best that mankind can have; and they are such as do oblige Christians entirely to embrace professors as saints, and love them and rejoice in them as the children of God, and are sufficient to give them as great satisfaction concerning them, as ever is needful to guide them in their conduct, or for any purpose that needs to be answered in this world. But nothing that appears to them in their neighbor, can be sufficient to beget an absolute certainty concerning the state of his soul: for they see not his heart, nor can they see all his external behavior; for much of it is in secret, and hid from the eye of the world; and it is impossible certainly to determine how far a man may go in many external appearances and imitations of grace, from other principles. Though undoubtedly, if others could see so much of what belongs to men's practice, as their own consciences may see of it, it might be an infallible evidence of their state, as will appear from what follows.

Having thus considered Christian practice as the best evidence of the sincerity of professors to others, I now proceed,

**2.** To observe, that the Scripture also speaks of Christian practice as a distinguishing and sure evidence of grace to persons' own consciences. This is very plain in ~~the~~ 1 John 2:3: "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." And the testimony of our

consciences, with respect to our good deeds, is spoken of as that which may give us assurance of our own godliness, <sup><4198></sup>1 John 3:18, 19: “My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.” And the Apostle Paul, in <sup><3001></sup>Hebrews 6, speaks of the work and labor of love, of the Christian Hebrews, as that which both gave him a persuasion that they had something above the highest common illuminations, and also as that evidence which tended to give them the highest assurance of hope concerning themselves, verse 9, etc.: “But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to his saints, and do minister. And we desire that everyone of you do show the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end.” So the apostle directs the Galatians to examine their behavior or practice, that they might have rejoicing in themselves in their own happy state, <sup><3004></sup>Galatians 6:4: “Let every man prove his own work, so shall he have rejoicing in himself, and not in another.” And the psalmist says, <sup><3301></sup>Psalms 119:6, “Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments;” i.e., then I shall be bold, and assured, and steadfast in my hope. And in that of our Savior, <sup><4179></sup>Matthew 7:19, 20: “Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” Though Christ gives this, firstly, as a rule by which we should judge of others, yet in the words that next follow he plainly shows, that he intends it also as a rule by which we would judge ourselves: “Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall Enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, etc. — And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock. — And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand.” I shall have occasion to mention other texts to show the same thing, hereafter.

But for the greater clearness in this matter, I would, first, show how Christian practice, doing good works, or keeping Christ's commandments, is to be taken, when the Scripture represents it as a sure sign to our own consciences, that we are real Christians. And secondly, will prove, that this is the chief of all evidences that men can have of their own sincere godliness.

*First*, I would show how Christian practice, or keeping Christ's commandments, is to be taken, when the Scripture represents it as a sure evidence to our own consciences, that we are sincere Christians.

And here I would observe, that we cannot reasonably suppose, that when the Scripture in this case speaks of good works, good fruit, and keeping Christ's commandments, it has respect merely to what is external, or the motion and action of the body without including anything else, having no respect to any aim or intention of the agent, or any act of his understanding or will. For consider men's actions so, and they are no more good works or acts of obedience, than the regular motions of a clock; nor are they considered as the actions of the man, nor any human actions at all. The actions of the body, taken thus, are neither acts of obedience nor disobedience, any more than the motions of the body in a convulsion. But the obedience and fruit that is spoken of, is the obedience and fruit of the man; and therefore not only the acts of the body, but the obedience of the soul, consisting in the acts and practice of the soul. Not that I suppose, that when the Scripture speaks, in this case, of gracious works, and fruit and practice, that in these expressions are included all inward piety and holiness of heart, both principle and exercise, both spirit and practice: because then, in these things being given as signs of a gracious principle in the heart, the same thing would be given as a sign of itself, and there would be no distinction between root and fruit. But only the gracious exercise, and holy act of the soul is meant, and given as the sign of the holy principle and good estate. Neither is every kind of inward exercise of grace meant; but the practical exercise, that exercise of the soul, and exertion of inward holiness, which there is in an obediential act; or that exertion of the mind, and act of grace which issues and terminates in what they call the imperate acts of the will; in which something is directed and commanded by the soul to be done, and brought to pass in practice.

Here, for a clearer understanding, I would observe, that there are two kinds of exercises of grace.

**1.** There are those that some call immanent acts, that is, those exercises of grace that remain within the soul, that begin and are terminated there, without any immediate relation to anything to be done outwardly, or to be brought to pass in practice. Such are the exercises of grace, which the saints often have in contemplation; when the exercise that is in the heart does not directly proceed to, or terminate in anything beyond the thoughts of the mind; however they may tend to practice (as all exercises of grace do) more remotely.

**2.** There is another kind of acts of grace, that are more strictly called practical, or effective exercises, because they immediately respect something to be done. They are the exertions of grace in the commanding acts of the will, directing the outward actions. As when a saint gives a cup of cold water to a disciple, in and from the exercise of the grace of charity; or voluntarily endures persecution in the way of his duty; immediately from the exercise of a supreme love to Christ. Here is the exertion of grace producing its effect in outward actions. These exercises of grace are practical and productive of good works, not only in this sense, that they are of a productive nature (for so are all exercises of true grace), but they are the producing acts. This is properly the exercise of grace in the act of the will; and this is properly the practice of the soul. And the soul is the immediate actor of no other practice but this; the motions of the body follow from the laws of union between the soul and body, which God, and not the soul, has fixed and does maintain. The act of the soul and the exercise of grace, that is exerted in the performance of a good work, is the good work itself, so far as the soul is concerned in it, or so far as it is the soul's good work. The determinations of the will are indeed our very actions, so far as they are properly ours, as Dr. Doddridge observes.<sup>78</sup> In this practice of the soul is included the aim and intention of the soul, which is the agent. For not only should we not look on the motions of a statue, doing justice or distributing alms by clockwork, as any acts of obedience to Christ in that statue; but neither would anybody call the voluntary actions of a man, externally and materially agreeable to a command of Christ, by the name of obedience to Christ, if he had



never heard of Christ, or any of his commands, or had no thought of his commands in what he did. If the acts of obedience and good fruit spoken of, be looked upon, not as mere motions of the body, but as acts of the soul; the whole exercise of the spirit of the mind in the action must be taken in, with the end acted for, and the respect the soul then has to God, etc., otherwise they are no acts of denial of ourselves, or obedience to God, or service done to him, but something else. Such effective exercises of grace as these that I have now described, many of the Martyrs have experienced in a high degree. And all true saints live a life of such acts of grace as these; as they all live a life of gracious works, of which these operative exertions of grace are the life and soul. And this is the obedience and fruit that God mainly looks at, as he looks at the soul more than the body; as much as the soul, in the constitution of the human nature, is the superior part. As God looks at the obedience and practice of the man, he looks at the practice of the soul; for the soul is the man in God's sight, "for the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for he looketh on the heart."

And thus it is that obedience, good works, good fruits, are to be taken, when given in Scripture as a sure evidence to our own consciences of a true principle of grace: even as including the obedience and practice of the soul, as preceding and governing the actions of the body. When practice is given in Scripture as the main evidence to others of our true Christianity, then is meant *that* in our practice which is visible to them, even our outward actions: but when practice is given as a sure evidence of our real Christianity to our own consciences, then is meant *that* in our practice which is visible to our own consciences; which is not only the motion of our bodies, but the exertion of the soul, which directs and commands that motion; which is more directly and immediately under the view of our own consciences, than the act of the body. And that this is the intent of the Scripture, not only does the nature and reason of the thing show, but it is plain by the Scripture itself. Thus it is evident that when Christ, at the conclusion of his sermon on the mount, speaks of doing or practicing those sayings of his, as the grand sign of professors being true disciples, without which he likens them to a man that built his house upon the sand, and with which, to a man that built his house upon a rock; he has a respect, not only to the outward behavior, but to the inward exercise of the mind in

that behavior: as is evident by observing what those preceding sayings of his are that he refers to, when he speaks of our doing or practicing them; and we shall find they are such as these: “Blessed are the poor in spirit; blessed are they that mourn; blessed are the meek; blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; blessed are the merciful; blessed are the pure in heart; whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, etc.; whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, etc.; love your enemies; take no thought for your life,” and others of the like nature, which imply inward exercises: and when Christ says, <sup><B4E></sup>John 14:2, “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me;” he has evidently a special respect to that command several times repeated in the same discourse (which he calls, by way of eminence, his commandment), that they should love one another as he had loved them (see chap. <sup><B3B></sup>13:34, and chap. <sup><B5D></sup>15:10, 12, 13, 14). But this command respects chiefly an exercise of the mind or heart, though exerted in practice. So when the Apostle John says, <sup><A1B></sup>1 John 2:3, “Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments;” he has plainly a principal respect to the same command, as appears by what follows, ver. 7-11, and 2nd Epist. ver. <sup><A1F></sup>5, 6; and when we are told in Scripture that men shall at the last day be judged according to their works, and all shall receive according to the things done in the body, it is not to be understood only of outward acts; for if so, why is God so often spoken of as searching the hearts and trying the reins, “that he may render to everyone according to his works?” As <sup><A1D></sup>Revelation 2:23, “And all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto everyone according to his works.” <sup><A1G></sup>Jeremiah 17:9, 10, “I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.” But if by his ways, and the fruit of his doings, is meant only the actions of his body, what need of searching the heart and reins in order to know them? Hezekiah in his sickness pleads his practice as an evidence of his title to God’s favor, as including not only his outward actions, but what was in his heart: <sup><A1B></sup>Isaiah 38:3, “Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart.”

Though in this great evidence of sincerity that the Scripture gives us, what is inward is of greatest importance; yet what is outward is included and

intended, as connected with the practical exertion of grace in the will, directing and commanding the actions of the body. And hereby are effectually cut off all pretensions that any man can have to evidences of godliness, who externally lives wickedly; because the great evidence lies in that inward exercise and practice of the soul, which consists in the acts of the will, commanding outward acts. But it is known, that these commanding acts of the will are not one way and the actions of the bodily organs another: for the unalterable law of nature is, that they should be united as long as soul and body are united, and the organs are not so destroyed as to be incapable of those motions that the soul commands. Thus it would be ridiculous for a man to plead, that the commanding act of his will was to go to the public worship, while his feet carry him to a tavern or brothel-house; or that the commanding act of his will was to give such a piece of money he had in his hand to a poor beggar, while his hand at the same instant kept it back, and held it fast.

*Secondly*, I proceed to show, that Christian practice, taken in the sense that has been explained, is the chief of all the evidences of a saving sincerity in religion, to the consciences of the professors of it; much to be preferred to the method of the first convictions, enlightenings, and comforts in conversion, or any immanent discoveries or exercises of grace whatsoever, that begin and end in contemplation.<sup>79</sup> The evidence of this appears by the following arguments.

## ARGUMENT 1

Reason plainly shows, that those things which put it to the proof what men will actually cleave to and prefer in their practice, when left to follow their own choice and inclinations, are the proper trial what they do really prefer in their hearts. Sincerity in religion, as has been observed already, consists in setting God highest in the heart, in choosing him before other things, in having a heart to sell all for Christ, etc. But a man's actions are the proper trial what a man's heart prefers. As for instance, when it is so that God and other things come to stand in competition, God is as it were set before a man on one hand, and his worldly interest or pleasure on the other (as it often is so in the course of a man's life); his behavior in such case, in actually cleaving to the one and forsaking the other, is the proper trial which he prefers. Sincerity consists in forsaking all for Christ in heart;

but to forsake all for Christ in heart, is the very same thing as to have a heart to forsake all for Christ; but certainly the proper trial whether a man has a heart to forsake all for Christ is his being actually put to it, the having Christ and other things coming in competition, that he must actually or practically cleave to one and forsake the other. To forsake all for Christ in heart, is the same thing as to have a heart to forsake all for Christ when called to it: but the highest proof to ourselves and others, that we have a heart to forsake all for Christ when called to it, is actually doing it when called to it, or so far as called to it. To follow Christ in heart is to have a heart to follow him. To deny ourselves in heart for Christ, is the same thing as to have a heart to deny ourselves for him in fact. The main and most proper proof of a man's having a heart to any thing, concerning which he is at liberty to follow his own inclinations, and either to do or not to do as he pleases, is his doing of it. When a man is at liberty whether to speak or keep silence, the most proper evidence of his having a heart to speak, is his speaking. When a man is at liberty whether to walk or sit still, the proper proof of his having a heart to walk, is his walking. Godliness consists not in a heart to intend to do the will of God, but in a heart to do it. The children of Israel in the wilderness had the former, of whom we read, <sup>(REV)</sup> Deuteronomy 5:27, 28, 29, "Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say; and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear it, and do it. And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee; they have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!" The people manifested that they had a heart to intend to keep God's commandments, and to be very forward in those intentions; but God manifests, that this was far from being the thing that he desired, wherein true godliness consists, even a heart actually to keep them.

It is therefore exceedingly absurd, and even ridiculous, for any to pretend that they have a good heart, while they live a wicked life, or do not bring forth the fruit of universal holiness in their practice. For it is proved in fact, that such men do not love God above all. It is foolish to dispute against plain fact and experience. Men that live in ways of sin, and yet

flatter themselves that they shall go to heaven, or expect to be received hereafter as holy persons, without a holy practice, act as though they expected to make a fool of their Judge. Which is implied in what the apostle says (speaking of men's doing good works and living a holy life, thereby exhibiting evidence of their title to everlasting life), <sup><K017></sup>Galatians 6:7: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." As much as to say, "Do not deceive yourselves with an expectation of reaping life everlasting hereafter, if you do not sow to the Spirit here; it is in vain to think that God will be made a fool of by you, that he will be shammed and baffled with shadows instead of substances, and with vain pretense, instead of that good fruit which he expects, when the contrary to what you pretend appears plainly in your life, before his face." In this manner the word mock is sometimes used in Scripture. Thus Delilah says to Samson, "behold thou hast mocked me, and told me lies." <sup><0710></sup>Judges 16:10, 13; i.e., "Thou hast baffled me, as though you would have made a fool of me, as if I might be easily turned off with any vain pretense, instead of the truth." So it is said that Lot, when he told his sons in law that God would destroy that place, "he seemed as one that mocked, to his sons in law," <sup><0194></sup>Genesis 19:14; i.e., he seemed as one that would make a game of them, as though they were such credulous fools as to regard such bugbears. But the great Judge, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, will not be mocked or baffled with any pretenses, without a holy life. If in his name men have prophesied and wrought miracles, and have had faith, so that they could remove mountains, and cast out devils, and however high their religious affections have been, however great resemblances they have had of grace, and though their hiding-place has been so dark and deep, that no human skill nor search could find them out, yet if they are workers or practicers of iniquity, they cannot hide their hypocrisy from their Judge: <sup><3302></sup>Job 34:22, there is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves." Would a wise prince suffer himself to be fooled and baffled by a subject, who should pretend that he was a loyal subject, and should tell his prince that he had an entire affection to him, and that at such and such a time he had experience of it, and felt his affections strongly working towards him, and should come expecting to be accepted and rewarded by his prince, as one of his best friends on that account, though he lived in rebellion against him, following some pretender to his

crown, and from time to time stirring up sedition against him? Or would a master suffer himself to be shammed and gulled by a servant, that should pretend to great experiences of love and honor towards him in his heart, and a great sense of his worthiness and kindness to him, when at the same time he refused to obey him, and he could get no service done by him?

## ARGUMENT 2


As reason shows, that those things which occur in the course of life, that put it to the proof whether men will prefer God to other things in practice, are the proper trial of the uprightness and sincerity of their hearts; so the same are represented as the proper trial of the sincerity of professors in the Scripture. There we find that such things are called by that very name, trials or temptations (which I before observed are both words of the same signification). The things that put it to the proof, whether men will prefer God to other things in practice, are the difficulties of religion, or those things which occur, that make the practice of duty difficult and cross to other principles beside the love of God; because in them, God and other things are both set before men together, for their actual and practical choice; and it comes to this, that we cannot hold to both, but one or the other must be forsaken. And these things are all over the Scripture called by the name of trials or proofs.<sup>80</sup> And they are called by this name, because hereby professors are tried and proved of what sort they be, whether they be really what they profess and appear to be; and because in them, the reality of a supreme love to God is brought to the test of experiment and fact; they are the proper proofs in which it is truly determined by experience, whether men have a thorough disposition of heart to cleave to God or no: (H88) Deuteronomy 8:2, “And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no:” (H12) Judges 2:21, 22, “I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them, of the nations which Joshua left when he died; that through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord.” So chap. (H88) 3:1, 4, and (H10) Exodus 16:4.

The Scripture, when it calls these difficulties of religion by the name of temptations or trials, explains itself to mean thereby the trial or

experiment of their faith: <sup><500></sup>James 1:2, 3, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.” <sup><600></sup>1 Peter 1:6, 7, “Now, for a season ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold,” etc. So the Apostle Paul speaks of that expensive duty of parting with our substance to the poor, as the proof of the sincerity of the love of Christians: <sup><400></sup>2 Corinthians 8:8. And the difficulties of religion are often represented in Scripture, as being the trial of professors, in the same manner that the furnace is the proper trial of gold and silver: <sup><500></sup>Psalms 66:10, 11, “Thou, O God, hast proved us: thou has tried us as silver is tried: thou broughtest us into the net, thou laidest affliction upon our loins.” <sup><300></sup>Zechariah 13:9, “And I will bring the third part of them through the fire; and I will refine them as silver is refined; and I will try them as gold is tried.” That which has the color and appearance of gold, is put into the furnace to try whether it be what it seems to be, real gold or no. So the difficulties of religion are called trials, because they try those that have the profession and appearance of saints, whether they are what they appear to be, real saints.

If we put true gold into the furnace, we shall find its great value and preciousness: so the truth and inestimable value of the virtues of a true Christian appear when under these trials: <sup><600></sup>1 Peter 1:7, “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory.” True and pure gold will come out of the furnace in full weight, so true saints, when tried, come forth as gold, <sup><800></sup>Job 23:10. Christ distinguishes true grace from counterfeit by this, that it is gold tried in the fire, <sup><600></sup>Revelation 3:17, 18. So that it is evident, that these things are called trials in Scripture, principally as they try or prove the sincerity of professors. And, from what has now been observed, it is evident that they are the most proper trial or proof of their sincerity; inasmuch as the very meaning of the word trial, as it is ordinarily used in Scripture, is the difficulty occurring in the way of a professor’s duty, as the trial or experiment of his sincerity. If trial of sincerity be the proper name of these difficulties of religion, then, doubtless, these difficulties of religion are properly and eminently the trial of sincerity; for they are doubtless eminently what they are called by the Holy Ghost: God gives things their name from that which is eminently their nature. And, if it be

so, that these things are the proper and eminent trial, proof, or experiment of the sincerity of professors, then certainly the result of the trial or experiment (that is, persons' behavior or practice under such trials) is the proper and eminent evidence of their sincerity; for they are called trials or proofs, only with regard to the result, and because the effect is eminently the proof or evidence. And this is the most proper proof and evidence to the conscience of those that are the subjects of these trials. For when God is said by these things to try men, and prove them, to see what is in their hearts, and whether they will keep his commandments or no; we are not to understand, that it is for his own information, or that he may obtain evidence himself of their sincerity (for he needs no trials for his information); but chiefly for their conviction, and to exhibit evidence to their consciences.<sup>81</sup>

Thus, when God is said to prove Israel by the difficulties they met with in the wilderness, and by the difficulties they met with from their enemies in Canaan, to know what was in their hearts, whether they would keep his commandments or no; it must be understood, that it was to discover them to themselves, that they might know what was in their own hearts. So when God tempted or tried Abraham with that difficult command of offering up his son, it was not for his satisfaction, whether he feared God or no, but for Abraham's own greater satisfaction and comfort, and the more clear manifestation of the favor of God to him. When Abraham had proved faithful under this trial, God says to him, "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." Which plainly implies, that in this practical exercise of Abraham's grace under this trial, was a clearer evidence of the truth of his grace, than ever was before; and the greatest evidence to Abraham's conscience; because God himself gives it to Abraham as such, for his comfort and rejoicing; and speaks of it to him as what might be the greatest evidence to his conscience of his being upright in the sight of his Judge. Which proves what I say, that holy practice, under trials, is the highest evidence of the sincerity of professors to their own consciences. And we find that Christ, from time to time, took the same method to convince the consciences of those that pretended friendship to him, and to show them what they were. This was the method he took with the rich young man,  Matthew 19:16, etc. He seemed to show a great respect to Christ; he came kneeling to high



and called him good Master, and made a great profession of obedience to the commandments; but Christ tried him, by bidding him go and sell all that he had, and give to the poor, and come and take up his cross and follow him, telling him that then he should have treasure in heaven. So he tried another that we read of, ~~4183~~ Matthew 8:20. He made a great profession of respect to Christ: says he, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. Christ immediately puts his friendship to the proof, by telling him, that the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, but that the Son of Man had not where to lay his head. And thus Christ is wont still to try professed disciples in general, in his providence. So the seed sown, in every kind of ground, stony ground, thorny ground, and good ground, which, in all appears alike, when it first springs up; yet is tried, and the difference made to appear, by the burning heat of the sun.

Seeing therefore, that these are the things that God makes use of to try us, it is undoubtedly the surest way for us to pass a right judgment on ourselves, to try ourselves by the same things. These trials of his are not for his information but for ours; therefore we ought to receive our information from thence. The surest way to know our gold, is to look upon it and examine it in God's furnace, where he tries it for that end, that we may see what it is. If we have a mind to know whether a building stands strong or no, we must look upon it when the wind blows. If we would know whether that which appears in the form of wheat, has the real substance of wheat, or be only chaff, we must observe it when it is winnowed. If we would know whether a staff be strong, or a rotten broken reed, we must observe it when it is leaned on, and weight is borne upon it. If we would weigh ourselves justly, we must weigh ourselves in God's scales that he makes use of to weigh us.<sup>82</sup> These trials, in the course of our practice, are as it were the balances in which our hearts are weighed, or in which Christ and the world, or Christ and his competitors, as to the esteem and regard they have in our hearts are weighed, or are put into opposite scales, by which there is opportunity to see which preponderates. When a man is brought to the dividing of paths, the one of which leads to Christ, and the other to the object of his lusts, to see which way he will go, or is brought, and as it were set between Christ and the world, Christ on the right hand, and the world on the left, so that, if he goes to one, he must leave the other, to see which his heart inclines most

to, or which preponderates in his heart; this is just the same thing as laying Christ and the world in two opposite scales; and his going to the one, and leaving the other, is just the same thing as the sinking of one scale, and rising of the other. A man's practice, therefore, under the trials of God's providence, is as much the proper evidence of the superior inclination of his heart as the motion of the balance, with different weights, in opposite scales, is the proper experiment of the superior weight.

### ARGUMENT 3

Another argument, that holy practice, in the sense which has been explained, is the highest kind of evidence of the truth of grace to the consciences of Christians, is, that in practice, grace, in Scripture style, is said to be made perfect, or to be finished. So the Apostle James says, <sup><G122></sup>James 2:22, "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect" (or finished, as the word in the original properly signifies)?" So the love of God is said to be made perfect, or finished, in keeping his commandments. <sup><G121></sup>1 John 2:4, 5, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him: but, whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." The commandment of Christ, which the apostle has especially respect to, when he here speaks of our keeping his commandments, is (as I observed before) that great commandment of his, which respects deeds of love to our brethren, as appears by the following verses. Again, the love of God is said to be perfected in the same sense, chapter <sup><G122></sup>4:12: "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." Here, doubtless, the apostle has still respect to loving one another, in the same manner that he had explained in the preceding chapter, speaking of loving one another, as a sign of the love of God, verses 17, 18: "Whoso hath this world's goods, and shutteth up his bowels, etc., how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed (or in work) and in truth." By thus loving in work, the apostle says, "The love of God is perfected in us." Grace is said to be perfected or finished in holy practice, as therein it is brought to its proper effect, and to that exercise which is the end of the principle; the tendency and design of grace herein is reached, and its operation completed and crowned. As the tree is made perfect in the fruit; it is not perfected in the seed's being

planted in the ground; it is not perfected in the first quickening of the seed, and in its putting forth root and sprout; nor is it perfected when it comes up out of the ground; nor is it perfected in bringing forth leaves; nor yet in putting forth blossoms: but, when it has brought forth good ripe fruit, when it is perfected, therein it reaches its end, the design of the tree is finished: all that belongs to the tree is completed and brought to its proper effect in the fruit. So is grace in its practical exercises. Grace is said to be made perfect or finished in its work or fruit, in the same manner as it is said of sin, <sup><915</sup>James 1:15, “When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” Here are three steps; first, sin in its principle or habit, in the being of lust in the heart; and nextly, here is its conceiving, consisting in the immanent exercises of it in the mind; and lastly, here is the fruit that was conceived, actually brought forth in the wicked work and practice. And this the apostle calls the finishing or perfecting of sin: for the word, in the original, is the same that is translated perfected in those forementioned places.

Now certainly, if it be so, if grace be in this manner made perfect in its fruit, if these practical exercises of grace are those exercises wherein grace is brought to its proper effect and end, and the exercises wherein whatsoever belongs to its design, tendency and operation, is completed and crowned; then these exercises must be the highest evidences of grace, above all other exercises. Certainly the proper nature and tendency of every principle must appear best and most fully in its most perfect exercises, or in those exercises wherein its nature is most completely exerted, and in its tendency most fully answered and crowned in its proper effect and end. If we would see the proper nature of anything whatsoever, and see it in its full distinction from other things; let us look upon it in the finishing of it. The Apostle James says, by works is faith made perfect; and introduces this as an argument to prove, that works are the chief evidence of faith, whereby the sincerity of the professors of faith is justified, <sup><916</sup>James 2. And the Apostle John, after he had once and again told us that love was made perfect in keeping Christ’s commandments, observes, <sup><917</sup>1 John 4:18. That perfect love casteth out fear; meaning (at least in part) love made perfect in this sense; agreeable to what he had said in the foregoing chapter that, by loving in deed, or work, we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts, verses 18, 19.

## ARGUMENT 4

Another thing which makes it evident, that holy practice is the principal evidence that we ought to make use of in judging both of our own and others' sincerity, is, that this evidence is above all others insisted on in Scripture. A common acquaintance with the Scripture, together with a little attention and observation, will be sufficient to show to anyone that this is ten times more insisted on as a note of true piety, throughout the Scripture, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelations, than anything else. And, in the New Testament, where Christ and his apostles do expressly, and of declared purpose, lay down signs of true godliness, this is almost wholly insisted on. It may be observed, that Christ, and his apostles, do not only often say those things, in their discoursing on the great doctrines of religion, which do show what the nature of true godliness must be, or from whence the nature and signs of it may be inferred by just consequence, and often occasionally mention many things which do appertain to godliness; but they do also often, of set purpose, give signs and marks for the trial of professors, putting them upon trying themselves by the signs they give, introducing what they say, with such like expressions as these: "By this you shall know, that you know God: by this are manifest the children of God, and the children of the devil: he that hath this, builds on a good foundation; he that hath it not, builds on the sand: hereby we shall assure our hearts: he is the man that loveth Christ," etc. But I can find no place, where either Christ or his apostles do, in this manner, give signs of godliness (though the places are many), but where Christian practice is almost the only thing insisted on. Indeed in many of these places, love to the brethren is spoken of as a sign of godliness; and, as I have observed before, there is no one virtuous affection, or disposition, so often expressly spoken of as a sign of true grace, as our having love one to another: but then the Scriptures explain themselves to intend chiefly this love as exercised and expressed in practice, or in deeds of love. So does the Apostle John, who, above all others, insists on love to the brethren as a sign of godliness, most expressly explain himself, in that <sup>GEN 1</sup> John 3:14, etc., "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren: he that loveth not his brother, abideth in death. Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion

from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us love, not in word, neither in tongue, but in deed (i.e., in deeds of love) and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.” So that when the Scripture so much insists on our loving one another, as a great sign of godliness, we are not thereby to understand the immanent workings of affection which men feel one to another, so much as the soul’s practicing all the duties of the second table of the law; all which the New Testament tells us again and again, a true love one to another comprehends, <sup><613></sup>Romans 13:8 and 10, <sup><614></sup>Galatians 5:14, <sup><423></sup>Matthew 22:39, 40. So that, really, there is no place in the New Testament where the declared design is to give signs of godliness, but that holy practice, and keeping Christ’s commandments, is the mark chosen out from all others to be insisted on. Which is an invincible argument, that it is the chief of all the evidences of godliness: unless we suppose that when Christ and his apostles, on design, set themselves about this business of giving signs, by which professing Christians, in all ages, might determine their state; they did not know how to choose signs so well as we could have chosen for them. But, if we make the word of Christ our rule, then undoubtedly those marks which Christ and his apostles did chiefly lay down, and give to us, that we might try ourselves by them, those same marks we ought especially to receive, and chiefly to make use of, in the trial of ourselves.<sup>83</sup> And surely those things, which Christ and his apostles chiefly insisted on, in the rules they gave, ministers ought chiefly to insist on in the rules they give. To insist much on those things that the Scripture insists little on, and to insist very little on those things on which the Scripture insists much, is a dangerous thing; because it is going out of God’s way, and is to judge ourselves, and guide others, in an unscriptural manner. God knew which way of leading and guiding souls was safest and best for them: he insisted so much on some things, because he knew it to be needful that they should be insisted on; and let other things more alone as a wise God, because he knew it was not best for us, so much to lay the weight of the trial there. As the Sabbath was made for man, so the Scriptures were made for man; and they are, by infinite wisdom, fitted for our use and benefit. We should, therefore, make them our guide in all things, in our thoughts of religion, and of ourselves. And for us to make that great which the Scripture makes little, and that little which the Scripture makes great, tends to give us a monstrous idea of

religion; and (at least indirectly and gradually) to lead us wholly away from the right rule, and from a right opinion of ourselves, and to establish delusion and hypocrisy.

## ARGUMENT 5

Christian practice is plainly spoken of in the word of God, as the main evidence of the truth of grace, not only to others, but to men's own consciences. It is not only more spoken of and insisted on than other signs, but in many places where it is spoken of, it is represented as the chief of all evidences. This is plain in the manner of expression from time to time. If God were now to speak from heaven to resolve our doubts concerning signs of godliness, and should give some particular sign, that by it all might know whether they were sincerely godly or not, with such emphatical expressions as these, the man that has such a qualification or mark, "that is the man that is a true saint, that is the very man, by this you may know, this is the thing by which it is manifest who are saints and who are sinners, such men as these are saints indeed;" should not we look upon it as a thing beyond doubt, that this was given, as a special, and eminently distinguishing note of true godliness? But this is the very case with respect to the sign of grace I am speaking of; God has again and again uttered himself in his word in this very manner, concerning Christian practice, as John 14, "he that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." Thus Christ in this place gives to the disciples, not so much to guide them in judging of others, as to apply to themselves for their own comfort after his departure, as appears by every word of the context. And by the way I would observe, that not only the emphasis with which Christ utters himself is remarkable, but also his so much insisting on, and repeating the matter, as he does in the context: verse 15, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Verse 23, "If a man love me, he will keep my words." And verse 24, "He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings." And in the next chapter over and over: verse 2, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit; he purgeth it." Verse 8. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." Verse 14, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." We have this mark laid down with the same emphasis again, ~~John~~ John 8:31 "If ye continue in my

word, then are ye my disciples indeed.” And again <sup><188></sup>1 John 2:3, “Hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.” And verse 5, “Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we, that we are in him” And chapter <sup><188></sup>3:18, 19, “Let us love in deed, and in truth; hereby we know that we are of the truth.” What is translated hereby would have been a little more emphatical if it had been rendered more literally from the original, by this we do know. — And how evidently is holy practice spoken of as the grand note of distinction between the children of God and the children of the devil, in verse 10, of the same chapter? “In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil.” Speaking of a holy, and a wicked practice, as may be seen in all the context; as verse 3, “Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure.” Verses 6-10, “Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous: he that committeth sin is of the devil. — Whosoever is born of God sinneth not. — Whosoever doeth not righteousness, is not of God.” So we have the like emphasis, <sup><188></sup>2 John 6: “This is love, that we walk after his commandments;” that is (as we must understand it), this is the proper evidence of love. So <sup><188></sup>1 John 5:3, “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.” So the Apostle James, speaking of the proper evidences of true and pure religion, says, <sup><188></sup>James 1:27, “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” We have the like emphatical expressions used about the same thing in the Old Testament, <sup><188></sup>Job 28:28: “And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.” <sup><188></sup>Jeremiah 22:16, 16, “Did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice? He judged the cause of the poor and needy: was not this to know me? saith the Lord.” <sup><188></sup>Psalms 34:11, etc. “Come, ye children, unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord. — Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile; depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it.” Psalm 15, at the beginning, “Who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly,” etc. <sup><188></sup>Psalms 24:3, 4, “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart,” etc. <sup><188></sup>Psalms 119:1, “Blessed are the

undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.” Verse 6, “Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments.”

~~1083~~ Proverbs 8:13, “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil.”

So the Scripture never uses such emphatical expressions concerning any other signs of hypocrisy, and unsoundness of heart, as concerning an unholy practice. So ~~887~~ Galatians 6:7, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” ~~469~~ 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10, “Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, etc., shall inherit the kingdom of God.” ~~485~~ Ephesians 5:5, 6, “For this ye know, that no whore-monger nor unclean person, etc, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words.”

~~481~~ 1 John 3:7, 8, “Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous; he that committeth sin is of the devil.” Chap. ~~482~~ 2:4, “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” And chap. ~~486~~ 1:6. “If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.” ~~502~~ James 1:26, “If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain.” Chap. ~~504~~ 3:14, 15, “If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.” ~~495~~ Psalm 125:5, “As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.” ~~489~~ Isaiah 35:8, “A high way shall be there, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it.” ~~492~~ Revelation 21:27, “And there shall in no noise enter into it, whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.” And in many places, “Depart from me, I know you not, ye that work iniquity.”

## ARGUMENT 6

Another thing which makes it evident, that holy practice is the chief of all the signs of the sincerity of professors, not only to the world, but to their own consciences, is, that this is the grand evidence which will hereafter be made use of, before the judgment seat of God; according to which his judgment will be regulated, and the state of every professor of religion unalterably determined. In the future judgment, there will be an open trial of professors, and evidences will be made use of in the judgment. For



God's future judging of men, in order to their eternal retribution, will not be his trying, and finding out, and passing a judgment upon the state of men's hearts, in his own mind; but it will be, a declarative judgment; and the end of it will be, not God's forming a judgment within himself, but the manifestation of his judgment, and the righteousness of it, to men's own consciences, and to the world. And therefore the day of judgment is called the day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, <sup><610></sup>Romans 2:6. And the end of God's future trial and judgment of men, as to the part that each one in particular is to have in the judgment, will be especially the clear manifestation of God's righteous judgment, with respect to him, to his conscience; as is manifest by <sup><608></sup>Matthew 18:31, to the end; chap. <sup><610></sup>20:8-15, chap. <sup><621></sup>22:11, 12, 13, chap. <sup><629></sup>25:19-30, and verse 35, to the end, <sup><606></sup>Luke 19:16-23. And therefore, though God needs no medium whereby to make the truth evident to himself, yet evidences will be made use of in his future judging of men. And doubtless the evidences that will be made use of in their trial, will be such as will be best fitted to serve the ends of the judgment; viz., the manifestation of the righteous judgment of God, not only to the world, but to men's own consciences. But the Scriptures do abundantly teach us, that the grand evidences which the Judge will make use of in the trial, for these ends, according to which the judgment of everyone shall be regulated, and the irreversible sentence passed, will be men's works, or practice, here in this world: <sup><610></sup>Revelation 20:12, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; — and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." So verse 13, "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works." <sup><629></sup>2 Corinthians 5:10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, whether it be good or bad." So men's practice is the only evidence that Christ represents the future judgment as regulated by, in that most particular description of the day of judgment, which we have in the Holy Bible, Matthew 25 at the latter end. See also <sup><610></sup>Romans 2:6, 13, <sup><6170></sup>Jeremiah 17:10, <sup><6341></sup>Job 34:11, <sup><6142></sup>Proverbs 24:12, <sup><6392></sup>Jeremiah 32:19, <sup><6212></sup>Revelation 22:12, <sup><6162></sup>Matthew 16:27, <sup><6123></sup>Revelation 2:23, <sup><6331></sup>Ezekiel 33:20, <sup><6117></sup>1 Peter 1:17. The Judge, at the day of judgment, will not (for the conviction of men's own consciences, and to manifest them to the world)

go about to examine men, as to the method of their experiences, or set every man to tell his story of the manner of his conversion; but his works will be brought forth, as evidences of what he is; what he has done in darkness and in light: <sup>2124</sup>Ecclesiastes 12:14, “For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” In the trial that professors shall be the subjects of, in the future judgment, God will make use of the same evidences, to manifest them to themselves and to the world, which he makes use of to manifest them, in the temptations or trials of his providence here, viz., their practice, in cases wherein Christ and other things come into actual and immediate competition. At the day of judgment, God, for the manifestation of his righteous judgment, will weigh professors in a balance that is visible. And the balance will be the same that he weighs men in now, which has been already described.

Hence we may undoubtedly infer, that men’s works (taken in the sense that has been explained) are the highest evidences by which they ought to try themselves. Certainly that which our supreme Judge will chiefly make use of to judge us by, when we come to stand before him, we should chiefly make use of, to judge ourselves by. <sup>84</sup> If it had not been revealed in what manner, and by what evidence the Judge would proceed with us hereafter, how natural would it be for one to say, “O that I knew what token God will chiefly look for and insist upon in the last and decisive judgment, and which he expects that all should be able to produce, who would then be accepted of him, and according to which sentence shall be passed; that I might know what token or evidence especially to look at and seek after now, as I would be sure not to fail then.” And seeing God has so plainly and abundantly revealed what this token or evidence is, surely, if we act wisely, we shall regard it as of the greatest importance.

Now from all that has been said, I think it to be abundantly manifest, that Christian practice is the most proper evidence of the gracious sincerity of professors, to themselves and others; and the chief of all the marks of grace, the sign of signs, and evidence of evidences, that which seals and crowns all other signs. — I had rather have the testimony of my conscience, that I have such a saying of my Supreme Judge on my side, as that, <sup>2125</sup>John 14:21, “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me;” than the judgment and fullest approbation of all

the wise, sound, and experienced divines, that have lived this thousand years, on the most exact and critical examination of my experiences, as to the manner of my conversion. Not that there are no other good evidences of a state of grace but this. There may be other exercises of grace besides these efficient exercises, which the saints may have in contemplation, that may be very satisfying to them, but yet this is the chief and most proper evidence. There may be several good evidences that a tree is a fig tree; but the highest and most proper evidence of it is, that it actually bears figs. It is possible, that a man may have a good assurance of a state of grace, at his first conversion, before he has had opportunity to gain assurance, by this great evidence I am speaking of. — If a man hears that a great treasure is offered him, in a distant place, on condition that he will prize it so much, as to be willing to leave what he possesses at home, and go a journey for it, over the rocks and mountains that are in the way, to the place where it is; it is possible the man may be well assured, that he values the treasure to the degree spoken of, as soon as the offer is made him: he may feel within him, a willingness to go for the treasure, beyond all doubt; but yet, this does not hinder but that his actual doing for it, is the highest and most proper evidence of his being willing, not only to others, but to himself. But then as an evidence to himself, his outward actions, and the motions of his body in his journey, are not considered alone, exclusive of the action of his mind, and a consciousness within himself, of the thing that moves him, and the end he goes for; otherwise his bodily motion is no evidence to him of his prizing the treasure. In such a manner is Christian practice the most proper evidence of a saving value of the pearl of great price, and treasure hid in the field.

Christian practice is the sign of signs, in this sense, that it is the great evidence, which confirms and crowns all other signs of godliness. There is no one grace of the Spirit of God, but that Christian practice is the most proper evidence of the truth of it. As it is with the members of our bodies, and all our utensils, the proper proof of the soundness and goodness of them, is in the use of them: so it is with our graces (which are given to be used in practice, as much as our hands and feet, or the tools with which we work, or the arms with which we fight), the proper trial and proof of them is in their exercise in practice. Most of the things we use are serviceable to us, and so have their serviceableness proved, in some pressure, straining,

agitation, or collision. So it is with a bow, a sword, an axe, a saw, a cord, a chain, a staff, a foot, a tooth, etc. And they that are so weak, as not to bear the strain or pressure we need to put them to, are good for nothing. So it is with all the virtues of the mind. The proper trial and proof of them, is in being exercised under those temptations and trials that God brings us under, in the course of his providence, and in being put to such service as strains hard upon the principles of nature.

Practice is the proper proof of the true and saving knowledge of God; as appears by that of the apostle already mentioned, “hereby do we know that we know him, that we keep his commandments.” It is in vain for us to profess that we know God, if in works we deny him, <sup><4016></sup>Titus 1:16. And if we know God, but glorify him not as God; our knowledge will only condemn us, and not save us, <sup><4012></sup>Romans 1:21. The great note of that knowledge which saves and makes happy, is, that it is practical: <sup><4037></sup>John 13:17, “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.” <sup><4038></sup>Job 28:28, “To depart from evil is understanding.”

Holy practice is the proper evidence of repentance. When the Jews professed repentance, when they came confessing their sins, to John, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; he directed them to the right way of getting and exhibiting proper evidences of the truth of their repentance, when he said to them, “Bring forth fruits meet for repentance,” <sup><4038></sup>Matthew 3:8. Which was agreeable to the practice of the Apostle Paul; see <sup><4031></sup>Acts 26:20. Pardon and mercy are from time to time promised to him who has this evidence of true repentance, that he forsakes his sin, <sup><4013></sup>Proverbs 28:13, and <sup><4010></sup>Isaiah 55:7, and many other places.

Holy practice is the proper evidence of a saving faith. It is evident that the Apostle James speaks of works, as what do eminently justify faith, or (which is the same thing) justify the professors of faith, and vindicate and manifest the sincerity of their profession, not only to the world, but to their own consciences; as is evident by the instance he gives of Abraham, <sup><4021></sup>James 2:21-24. And in verses 20 and 26, he speaks of the practical and working nature of faith, as the very life and soul of it; in the same manner that the active nature and substance, which is in the body of a man, is the life and soul of that. And if so, doubtless practice is the proper evidence of

the life and soul of true faith by which it is distinguished from a dead faith. For doubtless, practice is the most proper evidence of a practical nature, and operation the most proper evidence of an operative nature.

Practice is the best evidence of a saving belief of the truth. That is spoken of as the proper evidence of the truth's being in a professing Christian, that he walks in the truth, ~~600B~~ 3 John 3: "I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth."

Practice is the most proper evidence of a true coming to Christ, and accepting of, and closing with him. A true and saving coming to Christ, is (as Christ often teaches) a coming so as to forsake all for him. And, as was observed before, to forsake all for Christ in heart, is the same thing as to have a heart actually to forsake all; but the proper evidence of having a heart actually to forsake all, is, indeed, actually to forsake all so far as called to it. If a prince make suit to a woman in a far country, that she would forsake her own people, and father's house, and come to him to be his bride; the proper evidence of the compliance of her heart with the king's suit, is her actually forsaking her own people and father's house, and coming to him. — By this her compliance with the king's suit is made perfect, in the same sense that the Apostle James says, By works is faith made perfect.<sup>85</sup> Christ promises us eternal life, on condition of our coming to him: but it is such a coming as he directed the young man to, who came to inquire what he should do that he might have eternal life; Christ bade him go and sell all that he had, and come to him, and follow him. If he had consented in his heart to the proposal, and had therein come to Christ in his heart, the proper evidence of it would have been his doing of it; and therein his coming to Christ would have been made perfect. When Christ called Levi the publican, when sitting at the receipt of custom, and in the midst of his worldly gains; the closing of Levi's heart with this invitation of his Savior to come to him, was manifested, and made perfect by his actually rising up, leaving all, and following him, ~~4127~~ Luke 5:27, 28. Christ, and other things, are set before us together, for us particularly to cleave to one, and forsake the other; in such a case, a practical cleaving to Christ is a practical acceptance of Christ; as much as a beggar's reaching out his hand and taking a gift that is offered, is his

practical acceptance of the gift. Yea, that act of the soul that is in cleaving to Christ in practice is itself the most perfect coming of the soul to Christ.

Practice is the most proper evidence of trusting in Christ for salvation. The proper signification of the word trust, according to the more ordinary use of it, both in common speech and in the Holy Scriptures, is the emboldening and encouragement of a person's mind, to run some venture in practice, or in something that he does on the credit of another's sufficiency and faithfulness. And, therefore, the proper evidence of his trusting, is the venture he runs in what he does. He is not properly said to run any venture, in a dependence on any thing, that does nothing on that dependence, or whose practice is no otherwise than if he had no dependence. For a man to run a venture on a dependence on another, is for him to do something from that dependence by which he seems to expose himself, and which he would not do, were it not for that dependence. And, therefore, it is in complying with the difficulties, and seeming dangers of Christian practice, in a dependence on Christ's sufficiency and faithfulness to bestow eternal life, that persons are said to venture themselves upon Christ, and trust in him for happiness and life. They depend on such promises as that, ~~1008~~ Matthew 10:39, "He that loseth his life for my sake, shall, find it." And so they part with all, and venture their all, in a dependence on Christ's sufficiency and truth. And this is the Scripture notion of trusting in Christ, in the exercise of a saving faith in him. Thus Abraham, the father of believers, trusted in Christ, and by faith forsook his own country, in a reliance on the covenant of grace God established with him, ~~8108~~ Hebrews 11:8, 9. Thus also, "Moses, by faith refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," ~~8112~~ Hebrews 11:23, etc. So by faith, others exposed themselves to be stoned and sawn asunder, or slain with the sword; "endured the trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, bonds and imprisonments, and wandered about in sheep skins, and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented." And in this sense the Apostle Paul, by faith trusted in Christ, and committed himself to him, venturing himself, and his whole interest, in a dependence on the ability and faithfulness of his Redeemer, under great persecutions, and in suffering the loss of all things: ~~8112~~ 2 Timothy 1:12, "For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not

ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded, that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”

If a man should have word brought him from the king of a distant island, that he intended to make him his heir, if, upon receiving the tidings, he immediately leaves his native land and friends, and all that he has in the world, to go to that country, in a dependence on what he hears, then he may be said to venture himself, and all that he has in the world upon it. But, if he only sits still, and hopes for the promised benefit, inwardly pleasing himself with the thoughts of it; he cannot properly be said to venture himself upon it; he runs no venture in the case; he does nothing, otherwise than he would do, if he had received no such tidings, by which he would be exposed to any suffering in case all should fail. So he that, on the credit of what he hears of a future world, and, in a dependence on the report of the gospel, concerning life and immortality, forsakes all, or does so at least, so far as there is occasion, making everything entirely give place to his eternal interest; he, and he only, may properly be said to venture himself on the report of the gospel. And this is the proper evidence of a true trust in Christ for salvation.

Practice is the proper evidence of a gracious love, both to God and men. The texts that plainly teach this, have been so often mentioned already, that it is needless to repeat them.

Practice is the proper evidence of humility. That expression, and manifestation of humility of heart, which God speaks of, as the great expression of it, that he insists on; that we should look upon as the proper expression and manifestation of it: but this is walking humbly. <sup><308></sup>Micah 6:8, “He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

This is also the proper evidence of the true fear of God: <sup><308></sup>Proverbs 8:13, “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil.” <sup><304></sup>Psalms 34:11, etc., “Come, ye children, hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile: depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it.” <sup><307></sup>Proverbs 3:7, “Fear the Lord, and depart from evil.” <sup><306></sup>Proverbs 16:6, “By the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil.” <sup><308></sup>Job 1:8, “Hast thou considered my servant Job — a

perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" Chap. <sup><KJB></sup>2:3, "Hast thou considered my servant Job-a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him."

<sup><KJB></sup>Psalm 36:1, "The transgression of the wicked saith within thy heart, There is no fear of God before his eyes."

So practice, in rendering again according to benefits received, is the proper evidence of true thankfulness. <sup><KJB></sup>Psalm 116:12, "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?" <sup><KJB></sup>2 Chronicles 32:25, "But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him." Paying our vows unto God, and ordering our conversation aright, seem to be spoken of as the proper expression and evidence of true thankfulness, in the 50th Psalm, <sup><KJB></sup>ver. 14: "Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High." Verse 92, etc; Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God."

So the proper evidence of gracious desires and longings, and that which distinguishes them from those that are false and vain, is, that they are not idle wishes and wouldings like Balaam's; but effectual in practice, to stir up persons earnestly and thoroughly to seek the things they long for.

<sup><KJB></sup>Psalm 27:4 "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after."

<sup><KJB></sup>Psalm 63:1, 2, "O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is, to see thy power and thy glory." Verse 8, "My soul followeth hard after thee." <sup><KJB></sup>Cant. 1:4, "Draw me, we will run after thee."

Practice is the proper evidence of a gracious hope: <sup><KJB></sup>1 John 3:3, "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure."

Patient continuance in well-doing, through the difficulties and trials of the Christian course, is often mentioned as the proper expression and fruit of a Christian hope. <sup><KJB></sup>1 Thessalonians 1:3, "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope." <sup><KJB></sup>1 Peter 1:13, 14, "Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ, as obedient children," etc. <sup><KJB></sup>Psalm 119:166, "Lord, I have hoped in thy salvation, and done thy commandments." <sup><KJB></sup>Psalm 78:7,



“That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of the Lord, but keep his commandments.”

A cheerful practice of our duty, and doing the will of God, is the proper evidence of a truly holy joy. <sup><260></sup>Isaiah 64:5, “Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness.” <sup><261></sup>Psalms 119:111, 112, “Thy testimonies have I taken for my heritage forever; for they are the rejoicing of my heart. I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes always, even to the end.” Verse 14, “I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies as much as in all riches.” <sup><262></sup>1 Corinthians 13:6, “Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.” <sup><263></sup>2 Corinthians 8:2, “The abundance of their joy abounded unto the riches of their liberality.”

Practice also is the proper evidence of Christian fortitude. The trial of a good soldier is not in his chimney corner, but in the field of battle, <sup><264></sup>1 Corinthians 9:25, 26, <sup><265></sup>2 Timothy 2:3, 4, 6.

And, as the fruit of holy practice is the chief evidence of the truth of grace, so the degree in which experiences have influence on a person’s practice, is the surest evidence of the degree of that which is spiritual and divine in his experiences. Whatever pretenses persons may make to great discoveries, great love and joys, they are no further to be regarded than they have influence on their practice. Not but that allowances must be made for the natural temper. But that does not hinder, but that the degree of grace is justly measured, by the degree of the effect in practice. For the effect of grace is as great, and the alteration as remarkable, in a very ill natural temper, as another. Although a person of such a temper will not behave himself so well, with the same degree of grace as another, the diversity from what was before conversion, may be as great; because a person of a good natural temper did not behave himself so in before conversion.

Thus I have endeavored to represent the evidence there is, that Christian practice is the chief of all the signs of saving grace. And, before I conclude this discourse, I would say something briefly in answer to two objections that may possibly be made by some against what has been said upon this head.

## OBJECTION 1

Some may be ready to say this seems to be contrary to that opinion, so much received among good people; that professors should judge of their state, chiefly by their inward experience, and that spiritual experiences are the main evidences of true grace.

I answer, it is doubtless a true opinion, and justly much received among good people, that professors should chiefly judge of their state by their experience. But it is a great mistake, that what has been said is at all contrary to that opinion. The chief sign of grace to the consciences of Christians being Christian practice, in the sense that has been explained, and according to what has been shown to be the true notion of Christian practice, is not at all inconsistent with Christian experience, being the chief evidence of grace. Christian or holy practice is spiritual practice; and that is not the motion of a body that knows not how, nor when, nor wherefore it moves: but spiritual practice in man is the practice of a spirit and body jointly, or the practice of a spirit animating, commanding, and actuating a body to which it is united, and over which it has power given it by the Creator. And, therefore, the main thing, in this holy practice, is the holy action of the mind, directing and governing the motions of the body. And the motions of the body are to be looked upon as belonging to Christian practices only secondarily, and as they are dependent and consequent on the acts of the soul. The exercises of grace that Christians find, or are conscious to within themselves, are what they experience within themselves; and herein therefore lies Christian experience: and this Christian experience consists as much in those operative exercises of grace in the will, that are immediately concerned in the management of the behavior of the body, as in other exercises. These inward exercises are not the less a part of Christian experience, because they have outward behavior immediately connected with them. A strong act of love to God, is not the less a part of spiritual experience, because it is the act that immediately produces and effects some self-denying and expensive outward action, which is much to the honor and glory of God.

To speak of Christian experience and practice, as if they were two things, properly and entirely distinct, is to make a distinction without consideration or reason. Indeed, all Christian experience is not properly

called practice, but all Christian practice is properly experience. And the distinction that is made between them, is not only an unreasonable, but an unscriptural distinction. Holy practice is one kind or part of Christian experience; and both reason and Scripture represent it as the chief, and most important and most distinguishing part of it. So it is represented in <sup><2025></sup>Jeremiah 22:15, 16: “Did not thy father eat and drink, and do justice and judgment? He judged the cause of the poor and needy—Was not this to know me, saith the Lord?” Our inward acquaintance with God surely belongs to the head of experimental religion: but this, God represents as consisting chiefly in that experience which there is in holy practice. So the exercises of those graces of the love of God, and the fear of God are a part of experimental religion: but these the Scripture represents as consisting chiefly in practice, in those forementioned texts: <sup><1000></sup>1 John 5:3, “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.” <sup><1000></sup>2 John 6, “This is love, that we walk after his commandments.” <sup><1000></sup>Psalms 34:11, etc., “Come, ye children, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord: depart from evil, and do good.” Such experiences as these Hezekiah took comfort in, chiefly on his sick bed, when he said, “Remember, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart.” And such experiences as these, the Psalmist chiefly insists upon, in the 119th Psalm, and elsewhere.

Such experiences as these the Apostle Paul mainly insists upon, when he speaks of his experiences in his epistles; as, <sup><1000></sup>Romans 1:9, “God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son.” <sup><1000></sup>2 Corinthians 1:12, “For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that—by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.” Chap. <sup><1000></sup>4:13, “We, having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I have believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak.” Chap. <sup><1000></sup>5:7, “We walk by faith, not by sight.” Ver. 14, “The love of Christ constraineth us.” Chap. <sup><1000></sup>6:4-7, “In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in labors, in watchings, in fastings. By pureness, by knowledge, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned; by the power of God.” <sup><1000></sup>Galatians 2:20, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life, which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God.”

Philippians 3:7, 8, “But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ.” Colossians 1:29, “Whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.” 1 Thessalonians 2:2, “We were bold in our God, to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.” Ver. 8, 9, 10, “Being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travel, laboring night and day. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblamably, we behaved ourselves among you.” And such experiences as these they were, that this blessed apostle chiefly comforted himself in the consideration of, when he was going to martyrdom: 2 Timothy 4:6, 7, “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.”

And not only does the most important and distinguishing part of Christian experience lie in spiritual practice; but such is the nature of that sort of exercises of grace, wherein spiritual practice consists, that nothing is so properly called by the name of experimental religion. For, that experience, which is in these exercises of grace, that are found and prove effectual at the very point of trial, wherein God proves, which we will actually cleave to, whether Christ or our lusts, is, as has been shown already, the proper experiment of the truth and power of our godliness; wherein its victorious power and efficacy, in producing its proper effect, and reaching its end, is found by experience. This is properly Christian experience, wherein the saints have opportunity to see, by actual experience and trial, whether they have a heart to do the will of God, and to forsake other things for Christ, or no. As that is called experimental philosophy which brings opinions and notions to the test of fact, so is that properly called experimental religion, which brings religious affections and intentions to the like test.

There is a sort of external religious practice, wherein is no inward experience, which no account is made of in the sight of God, but it is esteemed good for nothing. And there is what is called experience, that is without practice, being neither accompanied nor followed with a Christian

behavior; and this is worse than nothing. Many persons seem to have very wrong notions of Christian experience and spiritual light and discoveries. Whenever a person finds within him a heart to treat God as God, at the time that he has the trial, and finds his disposition effectual in the experiment, that is the most proper, and most distinguishing experience. And to have, at such a time, that sense of divine things, that apprehension of the truth, importance and excellency of the things of religion, which then sways and prevails, and governs his heart and hands; this is the most excellent spiritual light, and these are the most distinguishing discoveries. Religion consists much in holy affection; but those exercises of affection which are most distinguishing of true religion, are these practical exercises. Friendship between earthly friends consists much in affection; but yet, those strong exercises of affection, that actually carry them through fire and water for each other, are the highest evidences of true friendship.

There is nothing in what has been said, contrary to what is asserted by some sound divines; when they say, that there are no sure evidences of grace, but the acts of grace. For that doth not hinder, but that these operative, productive acts, those exercises of grace that are effectual in practice, may be the highest evidences above all other kinds of acts of grace. Nor does it hinder, but that, when there are many of these acts and exercises, following one another in a course, under various trials of every kind, the evidence is still heightened; as one act confirms another. A man, once by seeing his neighbor, may have good evidence of his presence; but by seeing him from day to day, and conversing with him in a course, in various circumstances, the evidence is established. The disciples when they first saw Christ, after his resurrection, had good evidence that he was alive; but, by conversing with him for forty days, and his showing himself to them alive by many infallible proofs, they had yet higher evidence.<sup>86</sup>

The witness or seal of the Spirit that we read of, doubtless consists in the effect of the Spirit of God on the heart, in the implantation and exercises of grace there, and so consists in experience. And it is also beyond doubt, that this seal of the Spirit, is the highest kind of evidence of the saints' adoption, that ever they obtain. But in these exercises of grace in practice, that have been spoken of, God gives witness, and sets to his seal, in the most conspicuous, eminent, and evident manner. It has been abundantly found to be true in fact, by the experience of the Christian church, that

Christ commonly gives, by his Spirit, the greatest and most joyful evidences to his saints of their sonship, in those effectual exercises of grace under trials, which have been spoken of; as is manifest in the full assurance, and unspeakable joys of many of the martyrs. Agreeable to that, <sup><1044></sup>1 Peter 4:14, “If ye are reproached for the name of Christ happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory, and of God resteth upon you.” And that in <sup><882></sup>Romans 5:2, 3, “We rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and glory in tribulations.” And agreeable to what the Apostle Paul often declares of what he experienced in his trials. And when the Apostle Peter, in my text, speaks of the joy unspeakable, and full of glory, which the Christians to whom he wrote, experienced; he has respect to what they found under persecution, as appears by the context. Christ’s thus manifesting himself, as the friend and savior of his saints, cleaving to him under trials seems to have been represented of old, by his coming and manifesting himself, to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, in the furnace. And when the apostle speaks of the witness of the Spirit, in <sup><815></sup>Romans 8:15, 16, 17, he has a more immediate respect to what the Christians experienced, in their exercises of love to God, in suffering persecution; as is plain by the context. He is, in the foregoing verses, encouraging the Christian Romans under their sufferings, that though their bodies be dead because of sin, yet they should be raised to life again. But it is more especially plain by the verse immediately following, verse 18, “For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.” So the apostle has evidently respect to their persecutions, in all that he says to the end of the chapter. So when the apostle speaks of the earnest of the Spirit, which God had given to him, in <sup><815></sup>2 Corinthians 5:5, the context shows plainly that he has respect to what was given him in his great trials and sufferings. And in that promise of the white stone and new name, to him that overcomes, <sup><1027></sup>Revelation 2:17, it is evident Christ has a special respect to a benefit that Christians should obtain, by overcoming, in the trial they had, in that day of persecution. This appears by verse 13, and many other passages in this epistle, to the seven churches of Asia.

## OBJECTION 2

Some also may be ready to object against what has been said of Christian practice being the chief evidence of the truth of grace, that this is a legal doctrine; and that this making practice a thing of such great importance in religion, magnifies works, and tends to lead men to make too much of their own doings, to the diminution of the glory of free grace, and does not seem well to consist with the great gospel doctrine of justification by faith alone.

But this objection is altogether without reason. Which way is it inconsistent with the freeness of God's grace, that holy practice should be a sign of God's grace? It is our works being the price of God's favor, and not their being the sign of it, that is the thing which is inconsistent with the freeness of that favor. Surely the beggar's looking on the money he has in his hands, as a sign of the kindness of him who gave it to him, is in no respect inconsistent with the freeness of that kindness. It is his having money in his hands as the price of a benefit, that is the thing which is inconsistent with the free kindness of the giver. The notion of the freeness of the grace of God to sinners, as that is revealed and taught in the gospel, is not that no holy and amiable qualifications or actions in us shall be a fruit, and so a sign of that grace; but that it is not the worthiness or loveliness of any qualification or action of ours which recommends us to that grace; that kindness is shown to the unworthy and unlovely; that there is great excellency in the benefit bestowed and no excellency in the subject as the price of it; that goodness goes forth and flows out, from the fullness of God's nature, the fullness of the fountain of good, without any amiableness in the object to draw it. And this is the notion of justification without works (as this doctrine is taught in the Scripture), that it is not the worthiness or loveliness of our works, or anything in us, which is in any wise accepted with God, as a balance for the guilt of sin, or a recommendation of sinners to his acceptance as heirs of life. Thus we are justified only by the righteousness of Christ, and not by our righteousness. And when works are opposed to faith in this affair, and it is said that we are justified by faith and not by works; thereby is meant, that it is not the worthiness or amiableness of our works, or anything in us, which recommends us to an interest in Christ and his benefits; but that we have this interest only by faith, or by our souls receiving Christ, or

adhering to and closing with him. But that the worthiness or amiableness of nothing in us recommends and brings us to an interest in Christ, is no argument that nothing in us is a sign of an interest in Christ.

If the doctrines of free grace, and justification by faith alone, be inconsistent with the importance of holy practice as a sign of grace; then they are equally inconsistent with the importance of anything whatsoever in us as a sign of grace, any holiness, or any grace that is in us, or any of our experiences of religion; for it is as contrary to the doctrines of free grace and justification by faith alone, that any of these should be the righteousness which we are justified by, as that holy practice should be so. It is with holy works, as it is with holy qualifications; it is inconsistent with the freeness of gospel grace, that a title to salvation should be given to men for the loveliness of any of their holy qualifications, as much as that it should be given for the holiness of their works. It is inconsistent with the gospel doctrine of free grace, that an interest in Christ and his benefits should be given for the loveliness of a man's true holiness, for the amiableness of his renewed, sanctified, heavenly heart, his love to God, and being like God, or his experience of joy in the Holy Ghost, self-emptiness, a spirit to exalt Christ above all, and to give all glory to him, and a heart devoted unto him; I say it is inconsistent with the gospel doctrine of free grace, that a title to Christ's benefits should be given out of regard to the loveliness of any of these, or that any of these should be our righteousness in the affair of justification. And yet this does not hinder the importance of these things as evidences of an interest in Christ. Just so it is with respect to holy actions and works. To make light of works, because we be not justified by works, is the same thing in effect, as to make light of all religion, all grace and holiness, yea, true evangelical holiness, and all gracious experience; for all is included, when the Scripture says, we are not justified by works; for by works in this case, is meant all our own righteousness, religion, or holiness, and everything that is in us, all the good we do, and all the good which we are conscious of all external acts, and all internal acts and exercises of grace, and all experiences, and all those holy and heavenly things wherein the life and power, and the very essence of religion do consist, all those great things which Christ and his apostles mainly insisted on in their preaching, and endeavored to promote, as of the greatest consequence in the hearts and lives of men, and all good



dispositions, exercises and qualifications of every kind whatsoever; and even faith itself, considered as a part of our holiness. For we are justified by none of these things; and if we were, we should, in a Scripture sense, be justified by works. And therefore if it be not legal, and contrary to the evangelical doctrine of justification without works, to insist on any of these, as of great importance, as evidences of an interest in Christ; then no more is it, thus to insist on the importance of holy practice. It would be legal to suppose, that holy practice justifies by bringing us to a title to Christ's benefits, as the price of it, or as recommending to it by its preciousness or excellence; but it is not legal to suppose, that holy practice justifies the sincerity of a believer, as the proper evidence of it. The Apostle James did not think it legal to say, that Abraham our father was justified by works in this sense. The Spirit that indited the Scripture, did not think the great importance and absolute necessity of holy practice, in this respect, to be inconsistent with the freeness of grace; for it commonly teaches them both together; as in ~~Gen~~ Revelation 21:6, 7, God says, "I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely;" and then adds, in the very next words, "he that overcometh shall inherit all things." As though behaving well in the Christian race and warfare, were the condition of the promise. So in the next chapter, in the 14th and 15th verses, Christ says, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city;" and then declares in the 15th verse, "how they that are of a wicked practice" shall be excluded; and yet in the two verses next following, does with very great solemnity give forth an invitation to all to come and take of the water of life freely: "I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth, say, come. And let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely." So chapter ~~Gen~~ 3:20, 21, "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me." But then it is added in the next words, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." And in that great invitation of Christ, Matthew 11 latter end, "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" Christ adds in the next words, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy,

and my burden is light:" as though taking the burden of Christ's service, and imitating his example, were necessary in order to the promised rest. So in that great invitation to sinners to accept of free grace, Isaiah 55, "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price;" even there, in the continuation of the same invitation, the sinner's forsaking his wicked practice is spoken of as necessary to the obtaining mercy: verse 7, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." So the riches of divine grace, in the justification of sinners, is set forth with the necessity of holy practice, <sup><2016</sup>Isaiah 1:16, etc.: "Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn too do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."


And in that most solemn invitation of wisdom, Proverbs 9, after it is represented what great provision is made, and how that all things were ready, the house built, the beasts killed, the wine mingled, and the table furnished, and the messengers sent forth to invite the guests; then we have the free invitation, verses 4, 5, 6: "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither; as for him that wanteth understanding (i.e. has no righteousness) she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." But then in the next breath it follows, "Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding;" as though forsaking sin, and going in the way of holiness, were necessary in order to life. So that the freeness of grace, and the necessity of holy practice, which are thus from time to time joined together in Scripture, are not inconsistent one with another. Nor does it at all diminish the honor and importance of faith, that the exercises and effects of faith in practice, should be esteemed the chief signs of it; any more than it lessens the importance of life, that action and motion are esteemed the chief signs of that.

So that in what has been said of the importance of holy practice as the main sign of sincerity; there is nothing legal, nothing derogatory to the freedom and sovereignty of gospel grace, nothing in the least clashing with

the gospel doctrine of justification by faith alone, without the works of the law, nothing in the least tending to lessen the glory of the Mediator, and our dependence on his righteousness, nothing infringing on the special prerogatives of faith in the affair of our salvation, nothing in any wise detracting from the glory of God and his mercy, or exalting man, or diminishing his dependence and obligation. So that if any are against such an importance of holy practice as has been spoken of, it must be only from a senseless aversion to the letters and sound of the word works, when there is no reason in the world to be given for it, but what may be given with equal force, why they should have an aversion to the words holiness, godliness, grace, religion, experience, and even faith itself; for to make a righteousness of any of these, is as legal, and as inconsistent with the way of the new covenant, as to make a righteousness of holy practice.

It is greatly to the hurt of religion, for persons to make light of, and insist little on, those things which the Scripture insists most upon, as of most importance in the evidence of our interest in Christ, under a notion that to lay weight on these things is legal, and an old covenant way; and so, to neglect the exercises, and effectual operations of grace in practice, and insist almost wholly on discoveries, and the method and manner of the immanent exercises of conscience and grace in contemplation; depending on an ability to make nice distinctions in these matters, and a faculty of accurate discerning in them, from philosophy or experience. It is in vain to seek for any better, or any further signs than those that the Scriptures have most expressly mentioned, and most frequently insisted on, as signs of godliness. They who pretend to a greater accuracy in giving signs, or by their extraordinary experience or insight into the nature of things, to give more distinguishing marks, which shall more thoroughly search out and detect the hypocrite, are but subtle to darken their own minds, and the minds of others; their refinings and nice discerning, are in God's sight, but refined foolishness and a sagacious delusion. Here are applicable those words of Agur, ~~2015~~ Proverbs 30:5, 6, "Every word of God is pure; he is a shield to them that put their trust in him: add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." Our discerning, with regard to the hearts of men, is not much to be trusted. We can see but a little way into the nature of the soul, and the depths of man's heart. The ways are so many whereby persons' affections may be moved without any

supernatural influence, the natural springs of the affections are so various and so secret, so many things have oftentimes a joint influence on the affections, the imagination, and that in ways innumerable and unsearchable, natural temper, education, the common influences of the Spirit of God, a surprising concurrence of affecting circumstances, an extraordinary coincidence of things in the course of men's thoughts, together with the subtle management of invisible malicious spirits, that no philosophy or experience will ever be sufficient to guide us safely through this labyrinth and maze, without our closely following the clew which God has given us in his word. God knows his own reasons why he insists on some things, and plainly sets them forth as the things that we should try ourselves by rather than others. It may be it is because he knows that these things are attended with less perplexity, and that we are less liable to be deceived by them than others. He best knows our nature; and he knows the nature and manner of his own operations; and he best knows the way of our safety; he knows what allowances to make for different states of his church, and different tempers of particular persons, and varieties in the manner of his own operations, how far nature may resemble grace, and how far nature may be mixed with grace, what affections may rise from imagination, and how far imagination may be mixed with spiritual illumination. And therefore it is our wisdom, not to take his work out of his hands, but to follow him, and lay the stress of the judgment of ourselves there, where he has directed us. If we do otherwise, no wonder if we are bewildered, confounded, and fatally deluded. But if we had got into the way of looking chiefly at those things, which Christ and his apostles and prophets chiefly insisted on, and so in judging of ourselves and others, chiefly regarding practical exercises and effects of grace, not neglecting other things; it would be of manifold happy consequence; it would above all things tend to the conviction of deluded hypocrites, and to prevent the delusion of those whose hearts were never brought to a thorough compliance with the straight and narrow way which leads to life; it would tend to deliver us from innumerable perplexities, arising from the various inconsistent schemes there are about methods and steps of experience; it would greatly tend to prevent professors neglecting strictness of life, and tend to promote their engagedness and earnestness in their Christian walk; and it would become fashionable for men to show their Christianity, more by an amiable distinguished behavior, than by an abundant and excessive

declaring their experiences; and we should get into the way of appearing lively in religion, more by being lively in the service of God and our generation, than by the liveliness and forwardness of our tongues, and making a business of proclaiming on the house tops, with our mouths, the holy and eminent acts and exercises of our own hearts; and Christians that are intimate friends, would talk together of their experiences and comforts, in a manner better becoming Christian humility and modesty, and more to each other's profit: their tongues not running before, but rather going behind their hands and feet, after the prudent example of the blessed apostle,  2 Corinthians 12:6, and many occasions of spiritual pride would be cut off; and so a great door shut against the devil; and a great many of the main stumbling-blocks against experimental and powerful religion would be removed; and religion would be declared and manifested in such a way that, instead of hardening spectators, and exceedingly promoting infidelity and atheism, would, above all things, tend to convince men that there is a reality in religion, and greatly awaken them, and win them, by convincing their consciences of the importance and excellency of religion. Thus the light of professors would so shine before men, that others, seeing their good works, would glorify their Father which is in heaven.

A

FAITHFUL NARRATIVE

OF THE

SURPRISING WORK OF GOD

BY

JONATHAN EDWARDS

**THE NARRATIVE IS DIVIDED INTO THREE SECTIONS:**

**I. A General Introductory Statement,**

**II. The Manner of Conversions Various, Yet Bearing a Great Analogy,**

**III. This Work Further Illustrated in Particular Instances.**

*Rev. and Honored Sir,*

Having seen your letter to my honored Uncle Williams of Hatfield, of July 20, wherein you inform him of the notice that has been taken of the late wonderful work of God, in this and some other towns in this country, by the Revelation Dr. Watts, and Dr. Guyse, of London, and the congregation to which the last of these preached on a monthly day of solemn prayer; also, of your desire to be more perfectly acquainted with it, by some of us on the spot: and having been since informed by my Uncle Williams that you desire me to undertake it, I would now do it, in a just and faithful a manner as in me lies.

## SECTION 1

### A GENERAL INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The people of the country, in general, I suppose, are as sober, orderly, and good sort of people, as in any part of New England; and I believe they have been preserved the freest by far of any part of the country, from error, and variety of sects and opinions. Our being so far within the land, at a distance from sea-ports, and in a corner of the country, has doubtless been one reason why we have not been so much corrupted with vice, as most other parts. But without question, the religion and good order of the county, and purity in doctrine, has, under God, been very much owing to the great abilities, and eminent piety of my venerable and honored grandfather Stoddard. I suppose we have been the freest of any part of the land from unhappy divisions and quarrels in our ecclesiastical and religious affairs, till the late lamentable Springfield contention. [The Springfield Contention relates to the settlement of a minister there, which occasioned too warm debates between some, both pastors and people, that were for it, and others that were against it, on account of their different apprehensions about his principles, and about some steps that were taken to procure his ordination.]

Being much separated from other parts of the province and having comparatively but little intercourse with them, we have always managed our ecclesiastical affairs within ourselves. It is the way in which the country, from its infancy, has gone on, by the practical agreement of all; and the way in which our peace and good order has hitherto been maintained.

The town of Northampton is of about 82 years standing, and has now about 200 families; which mostly dwell more compactly together than any town of such a size in these parts of the country. This probably has been an occasion, that both our corruptions and reformatations have been, from time to time, the more swiftly propagated from one to another through the town. Take the town in general, and so far as I can judge, they are as rational and intelligent a people as most I have been acquainted with. Many of them have been noted for religion; and particularly remarkable for

their distinct knowledge in things that relate to heart religion, and Christian experience, and their great regards thereto.

I am the third minister who has been settled in the town. The Revelation Mr. Eleazer Mather, who was the first, was ordained in July, 1669. He was one whose heart was much in his work, and abundant in labors for the good of precious souls. He had the high esteem and great love for his people, and was blessed with no small success. The Revelation Mr. Stoddard who succeeded him, came first to the town the November after his death; but was not ordained till September 11, 1672, and died February 11, 1728-9. So that he continued in the work of the ministry here, from his first coming to town, near 60 years. And as he was eminent and renowned for his gifts and grace; so he was blessed, from the beginning, with extraordinary success in his ministry, in the conversion of many souls. He had five harvests, as he called them. The first was about 57 years ago; the second about 53; the third about 40; the fourth about 24; the fifth and last about 18 years ago. Some of these times were much more remarkable than others, and the ingathering of souls more plentiful. Those about 53, and 40, and 24 years ago, were much greater than either the first or the last: but in each of them, I have heard my grandfather say, the greater part of the young people in the town, seemed to be mainly concerned for their eternal salvation.

After the last of these, came a far more degenerate time (at least among the young people), I suppose, than ever before. Mr. Stoddard, indeed, had the comfort, before he died, of seeing a time where there were no small appearances of a divine work among some, and a considerable ingathering of souls, even after I was settled with him in the ministry, which was about two years before his death; and I have reason to bless God for the great advantage I had by it. In these two years there were nearly twenty that Mr. Stoddard hoped to be savingly converted; but there was nothing of any general awakening. The greater part seemed to be at that time very insensible of the things of religion, and engaged in other cares and pursuits. Just after my grandfather's death, it seemed to be a time of extraordinary dullness in religion. Licentiousness for some years prevailed among the youth of the town; there were many of them very much addicted to night-walking, and frequenting the tavern, and lewd practices, wherein some, by their example, exceedingly corrupted others. It was their manner



very frequently to get together, in conventions of both sexes for mirth and jollity, which they called frolics; and they would often spend the greater part of the night in them, without regard to any order in the families they belonged to: and indeed family government did too much fail in the town. It was become very customary with many of our young people to be indecent in their carriage at meeting, which doubtless would not have prevailed in such a degree, had it not been that my grandfather, through his great age (though he retained his powers surprisingly to the last), was not so able to observe them. There had also long prevailed in the town a spirit of contention between two parties, into which they had for many years been divided; by which they maintained a jealousy one of the other, and were prepared to oppose one another in all public affairs. But in two or three years after Mr. Stoddard's death, there began to be a sensible amendment to these evils. The young people showed more of a disposition to hearken to counsel, and by degrees left off their frolics; they grew observably more decent in their attendance on the public worship, and there were more who manifested a religious concern than there used to be.

At the latter end of the year 1733, there appeared a very unusual flexibleness, and yielding to advice, in our young people. It had been too long their manner to make the evening after the sabbath, [It must be noted, that it has never been our manner, to observe the evening that follows the sabbath, but that which precedes it, as part of the holy time], and after our public lecture, to be especially the times of their mirth, and company-keeping. But a sermon was now preached on the sabbath before the lecture, to show the evil tendency of the practice, and to persuade them to reform it; and it was urged on heads of families that it should be a thing agreed upon among them, to govern their families, and keep their children at home, at these times. It was also more privately moved, that they should meet together the next day, in their several neighborhoods, to know each other's minds; which was accordingly done, and the notion complied with throughout the town. But parents found little or no occasion for the exercise of government in the case. The young people declared themselves convinced by what they had heard from the pulpit, and were willing of themselves to comply with the counsel that had been given: and it was immediately, and, I suppose, almost universally,

complied with; and there was a thorough reformation of these disorders thenceforward, which has continued ever since.

Presently after this, there began to appear a remarkable religious concern at a little village belonging to the congregation called Pascommuck, where a few families were settled, at about three miles distance from the main body of the town. At this place, a number of persons seemed to be savingly wrought upon. In the April following, anno 1734, there happened a very sudden and awful death of a young man in the bloom of his youth; who being violently seized with a pleurisy, and taken immediately very delirious, died in about two days; which (together with what was preached publicly on that occasion) much affected many young people. This was followed with another death of a young married woman, who had been considerably exercised in mind, about the salvation of her soul, before she was ill, and was in great distress in the beginning of her illness; but seemed to have satisfying evidences of God's mercy to her, before her death; so that she died very full of comfort, in a most earnest and moving manner warning and counseling others. This seemed to contribute to render solemn the spirits of many young persons; and there began evidently to appear more of a religious concern on people's minds.

In the fall of the year I proposed it to the young people, that they should agree among themselves to spend the evenings after lectures in social religion, and to that end divide themselves into several companies to meet in various parts of the town; which was accordingly done, and those meetings have been since continued, and the example imitated by elder people. This was followed with the death of an elderly person, which was attended with many unusual circumstances, by which many were much moved and affected.

About this time began the great noise, in this part of the country, about Arminianism, which seemed to appear with a very threatening aspect upon the interest of religion here. The friends of vital piety trembled for fear of the issue; but it seemed, contrary to their fear, strongly to be overruled for the promoting of religion. Many who looked on themselves as in a Christless condition, seemed to be awakened by it, with fear that God was about to withdraw from the land, and that we should be given up to heterodoxy and corrupt principles; and that then their opportunity for

obtaining salvation would be past. Many who were brought a little to doubt about the truth of the doctrines they had hitherto been taught, seemed to have a kind of trembling fear with their doubts, lest they should be led into by-paths, to their eternal undoing; and they seemed, with much concern and engagedness of mind, to inquire what was indeed the way in which they must come to be accepted with God. There were some things said publicly on that occasion, concerning justification by faith alone.

Although great fault was found with meddling with the controversy in the pulpit, by such a person, and at that time-and though it was ridiculed by many elsewhere-yet it proved a word spoken in season here; and was most evidently attended with a very remarkable blessing of heaven to the souls of the people in this town. They received thence a general satisfaction, with respect to the main thing in question, which they had been in trembling doubts and concern about; and their minds were engaged the more earnestly to seek that they might come to be accepted of God, and saved in the way of the gospel, which had been made evident to them to be the true and only way. And then it was, in the latter part of December, that the Spirit of God began extraordinarily to set in, and wonderfully to work amongst us; and there were very suddenly, one after another, five or six persons, who were to all appearances savingly converted, and some of them wrought upon in a very remarkable manner.

Particularly, I was surprised with relation of a young woman, who had been one of the greatest company-keepers in the whole town. When she came to me, I had never heard that she was become in any wise serious, but by the conversation I then had with her, it appeared to me, that what she gave an account of, was a glorious work of God's infinite power and sovereign grace; and that God had given her a new heart, truly broken and sanctified. I could not then doubt of it, and have seen much in my acquaintance with her since to confirm it. Though the work was glorious, yet I was filled with concern about the effect it might have upon others. I was ready to conclude (though too rashly), that some would be hardened by it in carelessness and looseness of life; and would take occasion from it to open their mouths in reproaches of religion. But the event was the reverse, to a wonderful degree. God made it, I suppose, the greatest occasion of awakening to others, of any thing that ever came to pass in the town. I have had abundant opportunity to know the effect it had, by my

private conversation with many. The news of it seemed to be almost like a flash of lightning, upon the hearts of young people, all over the town, and upon many others. Those persons amongst us, who used to be farthest from seriousness, and that I most feared would make an ill improvement of it, seemed to be awakened with it. Many went to talk with her, concerning what she had met with; and what appeared in her seemed to be to the satisfaction of all that did so.

Presently upon this, a great and earnest concern about the great things of religion and the eternal world, became universal in all parts of the town, and among persons of all degrees, and all ages. The noise amongst the dry bones waxed louder and louder; all other talk but about spiritual and eternal things, was soon thrown by; all the conversation, in all companies and upon all occasions, was upon these things only, unless so much as was necessary for people carrying on their ordinary secular business. Other discourse than of the things of religion would scarcely be tolerated in any company. The minds of people were wonderfully taken off from the world, it was treated amongst us as a thing of very little consequence. They seemed to follow their worldly business, more as a part of their duty, than from any disposition they had to it; the temptation now seemed to lie on that hand, to neglect worldly affairs too much, and to spend too much time in the immediate exercise of religion. This was exceedingly misrepresented by reports that were spread in distant parts of the land, as though the people here had wholly thrown by all worldly business, and betook themselves entirely to reading and praying, and such like religious exercises.

But although people did not ordinarily neglect their worldly business, yet religion was with all sorts the great concern, and the world was a thing only by the bye. The only thing in their view was to get the kingdom of heaven, and every one appeared pressing into it. The engagedness of their hearts in this great concern could not be hid, it appeared in their very countenances. It then was a dreadful thing amongst us to lie out of Christ, in danger every day of dropping into hell; and what persons' minds were intent upon, was to escape for their lives, and to fly from wrath to come. All would eagerly lay hold of opportunities for their souls, and were wont very often to meet together in private houses, for religious purposes: and such meetings when appointed were greatly thronged.

There was scarcely a single person in the town, old or young, left unconcerned about the great things of the eternal world. Those who were wont to be the vainest and loosest, and those who had been disposed to think and speak lightly of vital and experimental religion, were now generally subject to great awakenings. And the work of conversion was carried on in a most astonishing manner, and increased more and more; souls did as it were come by flocks to Jesus Christ. From day to day for many months together, might be seen evident instances of sinners brought out of darkness into marvelous light, and delivered out of an horrible pit, and from the miry clay, and set upon a rock, with a new song of praise to God in their mouths. This work of God, as it was carried on, and the number of true saints multiplied, soon made a glorious alteration in the town: so that in the spring and summer following, anno 1735, the town seemed to be full of the presence of God: it never was so full of love, nor of joy, and yet so full of distress, as it was then. There were remarkable tokens of God's presence in almost every house. It was a time of joy in families on account of salvation being brought to them; parents rejoicing over their children as new born, and husbands over their wives, and wives over their husbands. The doings of God were then seen in His sanctuary, God's day was a delight, and His tabernacles were amiable. Our public assemblies were then beautiful: the congregation was alive in God's service, every one earnestly intent on the public worship, every hearer eager to drink in the words of the minister as they came from his mouth; the assembly in general were, from time to time, in tears while the word was preached; some weeping with sorrow and distress, others with joy and love, others with pity and concern for the souls of their neighbors.

Our public praises were then greatly enlivened; God was then served in our psalmody, in some measure, in the beauty of holiness. It has been observable, that there has been scarce any part of divine worship, wherein good men amongst us have had grace so drawn forth, and their hearts so lifted up in the ways of God, as in singing His praises. Our congregation excelled all that ever I knew in the external part of the duty before, the men generally carrying regularly, and well, three parts of music, and the women a part by themselves; but now they were evidently wont to sing with unusual elevation of heart and voice, which made the duty pleasant indeed. In all companies, on other days, on whatever occasions persons met

together, Christ was to be heard of, and seen in the midst of them. Our young people, when they met, were wont to spend the time in talking of the excellency and dying love of Jesus Christ, the glory of the way of salvation, the wonderful, free, and sovereign grace of God, His glorious work in the conversion of a soul, the truth and certainty of the great things of God's word, the sweetness of the views of His perfections, etc. And even at weddings, which formerly were mere occasions of mirth and jollity, there was now no discourse of any thing but religion, and no appearance of any but spiritual mirth. Those amongst us who had been formerly converted, were greatly enlivened, and renewed with fresh and extraordinary incomes of the Spirit of God; though some much more than others, according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Many who before had labored under difficulties about their own state, had now their doubts removed by more satisfying experience, and more clear discoveries of God's love.

When this work first appeared and was so extraordinarily carried on amongst us in the winter, others round about us seemed not to know what to make of it. Many scoffed at and ridiculed it; and some compared what we called conversion, to certain distempers. But it was very observable of many, who occasionally came amongst us from abroad with disregardful hearts, that what they saw here cured them of such a temper of mind. Strangers were generally surprised to find things so much beyond what they had heard, and were wont to tell others that the state of the town could not be conceived of by those who had not seen it. The notice that was taken of it by the people who came to town on occasion of the court that sat here in the beginning of March, was very observable. And those who came from the neighborhood to our public lectures were for the most part remarkably affected. Many who came to town, on one occasion or other, had their consciences smitten, and awakened; and went home with wounded hearts, and with those impressions that never wore off till they had hopefully a saving issue; and those who before had serious thoughts, had their awakenings and convictions greatly increased. There were many instances of persons who came from abroad on visits, or on business, who had not been long here, before, to all appearances, they were savingly wrought upon, and partook of that shower of divine blessing which God

rained down here, and went home rejoicing; till at length the same work began evidently to appear and prevail in several other towns in the county.

In the month of March, the people in South-Hadley begun to be seized with deep concern about the things of religion; which very soon became universal. The work of God has been very wonderful there; not much, if any thing, short of what it has been here, in proportion to the size of the place. About the same time, it began to break forth in the west part of Suffield (where it also has been very great), and soon spread into all parts of the town. It appeared at Sunderland, and soon overspread the town: and I believe was, for a season, not less remarkable than it was here. About the same time it began to appear in a part of Deerfield, called Green River, and afterwards filled the town, and there has been a glorious work there. It began also to be manifest, in the south part of Hatfield, in a place call the Hill, and the whole town, in the second week in April, seemed to be seized, as it were at once, with concern about the things of religion; and the work of God has been great there. There has been also a very general awakening at West-Springfield, and Long Meadow; and in Enfield there was for a time a pretty general concern amongst some who before had been very loose persons. About the same time that this appeared at Enfield, the Revelation Mr. Bull, of Westfield, informed me, that there had been a great alteration there, and that more had been done in one week, than in seven years before. Something of this work likewise appeared in the first precinct in Springfield, principally in the north and south extremes of the parish. And in Hadley old town, there gradually appeared so much of a work of God on souls, as at another time would have been thought worthy of much notice. For a short time there was also a very great and general concern, of the like nature, at Northfield. And wherever this concern appeared, it seemed not to be in vain: but in every place God brought saving blessings with Him, and His word attended with His Spirit (as we have all reason to think) returned not void. It might well be said at that time, in all parts of the county, Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows?

As what other towns heard of and found in this, was a great means of awakening them; so our hearing of such a swift and extraordinary propagation, and extent of this work, did doubtless for a time serve to uphold the work amongst us. The continual news kept alive the talk of

religion, and did greatly quicken and rejoice the hearts of God's people, and much awakened those who looked on themselves as still left behind, and made them the more earnest that they also might share in the great blessings that others had obtained.

This remarkable pouring out in the Spirit of God, which thus extended from one end to the other of this county, was not confined to it, but many places in Connecticut have partaken in the same mercy. For instance, the first parish in Windsor, under the pastoral care of the Revelation Mr. Marsh, was thus blest about the same time as we in Northampton, while we had no knowledge of each other's circumstances. There has been a very great ingathering of souls to Christ in that place, and something considerable of the same work began afterwards in East Windsor, my honored father's parish, which has in times past been a place favored with mercies of this nature, above any on this western side of New England, excepting Northampton; there having been four or five seasons of the pouring out of the Spirit to the general awakening of the people there, since my father's settlement amongst them.

There was also the last spring and summer a wonderful work of God carried on at Coventry, under the ministry of the Revelation Mr. Meacham. I had opportunity to converse with some Coventry people, who gave me a very remarkable account of the surprising change that appeared in the most rude and vicious persons there. The like was also very great at the same time in a part of Lebanon, called the Crank, where the Revelation Mr. Wheelock, a young gentleman, is lately settled: and there has been much of the same at Durham, under the ministry of the Revelation Mr. Chauncey; and to appearance no small ingathering of souls there. Likewise amongst many of the young people in the first precinct in Stratford, under the ministry of the Revelation Mr. Gould; where the work was much promoted by the remarkable conversion of a young woman who had been a great company-keeper, as it was here.

Something of this work appeared in several others towns in those parts, as I was informed when I was there, the last fall. And we have since been acquainted with something very remarkable of this nature at another parish in Stratford, called Ripton, under the pastoral care of the Revelation Mr. Mills. There was a considerable revival of religion last summer at



Newhaven old town, as I was once and again informed by the Revelation Mr. Noyes, the minister there, and by others: and by a letter which I very lately received from Mr. Noyes, and also by information we have had other ways. This flourishing of religion still continues, and has lately much increased. Mr. Noyes writes, that many this summer have been added to the church, and particularly mentions several young persons that belong to the principal families of that town.

There has been a degree of the same work at a part of Guildford; and very considerable at Mansfield, under the ministry of the Revelation Mr. Eleazar Williams; and an unusual religious concern at Tolland; and something of it at Hebron, and Bolton. There was also no small effusion of the Spirit of God in the north parish in Preston, in the eastern part of Connecticut, of which I was informed, and saw something, when I was the last autumn at the house, and in the congregation of the Revelation Mr. Lord, the minister there; who, with the Revelation Mr. Owen, of Groton, came up hither in May, the last year, on purpose to see the work of God. Having heard various and contradictory accounts of it, they were careful when here to satisfy themselves; and to that end particularly conversed with many of our people; which they declared to be entirely to their satisfaction; and that the one half had not been told them, nor could be told them. Mr. Lord told me that, when he got home, he informed his congregation of what he had seen, and that they were greatly affected with it; and that it proved the beginning of the same work amongst them, which prevailed till there was a general awakening, and many instances of persons, who seemed to be remarkably converted. I also have lately heard that there has been something of the work at Woodbury.

But this shower of divine blessing has been yet more extensive: there was no small degree of it in some part of the Jerseys; as I was informed when I was at New York (in a long journey I took at that time of the year for my health), by some people of the Jerseys, whom I saw. Especially the Revelation William Tennent, a minister who seemed to have such things at heart, told me of a very great awakening of many in a place called the Mountains, under the ministry of one Mr. Cross; and of a very considerable revival of religion in another place under the ministry of his brother the Revelation Gilbert Tennent; and also at another place, under the ministry of a very pious young gentleman, a Dutch minister, whose

name as I remember was Freelinghousa. This seems to have been a very extraordinary dispensation of providence; God has in many respects gone out of, and much beyond, His usual and ordinary way. The work in this town, and others about us, has been extraordinary on account of the universality of it, affecting all sorts, sober and vicious, high and low, rich and poor, wise and unwise. I reached the most considerable families and persons, to all appearance, as much as others. In former stirrings of this nature, the bulk of the young people have been greatly affected; but old men and little children have been so now. Many of the last have, of their own accord, formed themselves into religious societies in different parts of the town. A loose careless person could scarcely be found in the whole neighborhood; and if there was any one that seemed to remain senseless or unconcerned, it would be spoken of as a strange thing.

This dispensation has also appeared very extraordinary in the numbers of those on whom we have reason to hope it has had a saving effect. We have about six hundred and twenty communicants, which include almost all our adult persons. The church was very large before; but persons never thronged into it as they did in the late extraordinary time. — Our sacraments are eight weeks asunder, and I received into our communion about a hundred before one sacrament, fourscore of them at one time, whose appearance, when they presented themselves together to make an open explicit profession of Christianity, was very affecting to the congregation. I took in near sixty before the next sacrament day: and I have very sufficient

evidence of the conversion of their souls, through divine grace, though it is not the custom here, as it is in many other churches in this country, to make a credible relation of their inward experiences the ground of admission to the Lord's supper. I am far from pretending to be able to determine how many have lately been the subjects of such mercy; but if I may be allowed to declare any thing that appears to me probable in a thing of thin nature, I hope that more than 300 souls were savingly brought home to Christ, in this town, in the space of half a year, and about the same number of males as females. By what I have heard Mr. Stoddard say, this was far from what has been usual in years past; for he observed that in his time, many more women were converted than men. Those of our young people who are on other accounts most considerable, are mostly, as

I hope, truly pious, and leading persons in the ways of religion. Those who were formerly loose young persons, are generally, to all appearance, become true lovers of God and Christ, and spiritual in their dispositions. I hope that by far the greater part of persons in this town, above sixteen years of age, are such as have the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. By what I have heard I suppose it is so in some other places, particularly at Sunderland and South Hadley.

This has also appeared to be a very extraordinary dispensation, in that the Spirit of God has so much extended not only His awakening, but regenerating influences, both to elderly persons, and also to those who are very young. It has been heretofore rarely heard of, that any were converted past middle age; but now we have the same ground to think that many such have at this time been savingly changed, as that others have been so in more early years. I suppose there were upwards of fifty persons converted in this town above forty years of age; more than twenty of them above fifty; about ten of them above sixty; and two of them above seventy years of age. It has heretofore been looked on as a strange thing, when any have seemed to be savingly wrought upon and remarkably changed in their childhood. But now, I suppose, near thirty were, to appearance, savingly wrought upon between ten and fourteen years of age; two between nine and ten, and one of about four years of age; and because I suppose this last will be with most difficulty believed, I will hereafter give a particular account of it. The influences of God's Holy Spirit have also been very remarkable on children in some other places; particularly at Sunderland, South Hadley, and the west part of Suffield. There are several families in this town who are all hopefully pious. Yea, there are several numerous families, in which, I think, we have reason to hope that all the children are truly godly, and most of them lately become so. There are very few houses in the whole town, into which salvation has not lately come, in one or more instances. There are several Negroes, who from what was seen in them then, and what is discernible in them since, appear to have been truly born again in the late remarkable season.

God has also seemed to have gone out of His usual way, in the quickness of His work, and the swift progress His Spirit has made in His operations on the hearts of many. It is wonderful that persons should be so suddenly and yet so greatly changed. Many have been taken from a loose and

careless way of living, and seized with strong convictions of their guilt and misery, and in a very little time old things have passed away, and all things have become new with them.

God's work has also appeared very extraordinary in the degrees of His influences; in the degrees both of awakening and conviction, and also of saving light, love, and joy, that many have experienced. It has also been very extraordinary in the extent of it, and its being so swiftly propagated from town to town. In former times of the pouring out of the Spirit of God on this town, though in some of them it was very remarkable, it reached no further then; the neighboring towns all around continued unmoved.

This work seemed to be at its greatest height in this town in the former part of the spring, in March and April. At that time God's work in the conversion of souls was carried on amongst us in so wonderful a manner, that, so far as I can judge, it appears to have been at the rate at least of four persons in a day; or near thirty in a week, take one with another, for five or six weeks together. When God in so remarkable a manner took the work into His own hands, there was as much done in a day or two, as at ordinary times, with all endeavors that men can use, and with such a blessing as we commonly have, is done in a year.

I am very sensible, how apt many would be, if they should see the account I have here given, presently to think with themselves that I am very fond of making a great many converts, and of magnifying the matter; and to think that for want of judgment, I take every religious pang, and enthusiastic conceit, for saving conversion. I do not much wonder if they should be apt to think so; and, for this reason, I have forborne to publish an account of this great work of God, though I have often been solicited. But having now a special call to give an account of it, upon mature consideration I thought it might not be beside my duty to declare this amazing work, as it appeared to me to be indeed divine, and to conceal no part of the glory of it; leaving it with God to take care of the credit of His own work, and running the venture of any censorious thoughts, which might be entertained of me to my disadvantage. That distant persons may be under as great advantage as may be to judge for themselves of this matter, I would be a little more large and particular.

## SECTION 2

### THE MANNER OF CONVERSION VARIOUS, YET BEARING A GREAT ANALOGY.

I therefore proceed to give an account of the manner of persons being wrought upon; and here there is a vast variety, perhaps as manifold as the subjects of the operation; but yet in many things there is a great analogy in all. — Persons are first awakened with a sense of their miserable condition by nature, the danger they are in of perishing eternally, and that it is of great importance to them that they speedily escape and get into a better state.

Those who before were secure and senseless, are made sensible how much they were in the way to ruin, in their former courses. Some are more suddenly seized with convictions—it may be, by the news of others' conversion, or some thing they hear in public, or in private conference—their consciences are smitten, as if their hearts were pierced through with a dart. Others are awakened more gradually, they begin at first to be something more thoughtful and considerate, so as to come to a conclusion in their minds, that it is their best and wisest way to delay no longer, but to improve the present opportunity. They have accordingly set themselves seriously to meditate on those things that have the most awakening tendency, on purpose to obtain convictions; and so their awakenings have increased, till a sense of their misery, by God's Holy Spirit setting in therewith, has had fast hold of them. Others who before had been somewhat religious, and concerned for their salvation, have been awakened in a new manner; and made sensible that their slack and dull way of seeking, was never like to attain that purpose.

These awakenings when they have first seized on persons, have had two effects; one was, that they have brought them immediately to quit their sinful practices; and the looser sort have been brought to forsake and dread their former vices and extravagances. When once the Spirit of God began to be so wonderfully poured out in a general way through the town, people had soon done with their old quarrels, backbitings, and intermeddling with other men's matters. The tavern was soon left empty, and persons kept

very much at home; none went abroad unless on necessary business, or on some religious account, and every day seemed in many respects like a Sabbath-day. The other effect was, that it put them on earnest application to the means of salvation, reading, prayer, meditation, the ordinances of God's house, and private conference; their cry was, What shall we do to be saved? The place of resort was now altered, it was no longer the tavern, but the minister's house that was thronged far more than ever the tavern had been wont to be.

There is a very great variety, as to the degree of fear and trouble that persons are exercised with, before they attain any comfortable evidences of pardon and acceptance with God. Some are from the beginning carried on with abundantly more encouragement and hope than others. Some have had ten times less trouble of mind than others, in whom yet the issue seems to be the same. Some have had such a sense of the displeasure of God, and the great danger they were in of damnation, that they could not sleep at nights; and many have said that when they have laid down, the thoughts of sleeping in such a condition have been frightful to them; they have scarcely been free from terror while asleep, and they have awakened with fear, heaviness, and distress still abiding on their spirits. It has been very common, that the deep and fixed concern on persons minds, has had a painful influence on their bodies, and given disturbance to animal nature. The awful apprehensions persons have had of their misery, have for the most part been increasing, the nearer they have approached to deliverance; though they often pass through many changes and alterations in the frame and circumstances of their minds. Sometimes they think themselves wholly senseless, and fear that the Spirit of God has left them, and that they are given up to judicial hardness; yet they appear very deeply exercised about that fear, and are in great earnest to obtain convictions again.

Together with those fears, and that exercise of mind which is rational, and which they have just ground for, they have often suffered many needless distresses of thought, in which Satan probably has a great hand, to entangle them, and block up their way. Sometimes the distemper of melancholy has been evidently mixed; of which, when it happens, the tempter seems to take great advantage, and puts an unhappy bar in the way of any good effect. One knows not how to deal with such persons;

they turn every thing that is said to them the wrong way, and most to their own disadvantage. There is nothing that the devil seems to make so great a handle of, as a melancholy humor; unless it be the real corruption of the heart.

But it is very remarkable, that there has been far less of this mixture at this time of extraordinary blessing, than there was wont to be in persons under awakenings at other times; for it is evident that many who before had been exceedingly involved in such difficulties, seemed now strangely to be set at liberty. Some persons who had before, for a long time, been exceedingly entangled with peculiar temptations of one sort or other, unprofitable and hurtful distresses, were soon helped over former stumbling-blocks, that hindered their progress towards saving good; convictions have wrought more kindly, and they have been successfully carried on in the way to life. And thus Satan seemed to be restrained, till towards the latter end of this wonderful time, when God's Holy Spirit was about to withdraw.

Many times persons under great awakenings were concerned, because they thought they were not awakened, but miserable, hard-hearted, senseless, sottish creatures still, and sleeping upon the brink of hell. The sense of the need they have to be awakened, and of their comparative hardness, grows upon them with their awakenings; so that they seem to themselves to be very senseless, when indeed most sensible. There have been some instances of persons who have had as great a sense of their danger and misery as their natures could well subsist under, so that a little more would probably have destroyed them; and yet they have expressed themselves much amazed at their own insensibility and sottishness at such an extraordinary time.

Persons are sometimes brought to the borders of despair, and it looks as black as midnight to them a little before the day dawns in their souls. Some few instances there have been, of persons who have had such a sense of God's wrath for sin, that they have been overborne; and made to cry out under an astonishing sense of their guilt, wondering that God suffers such guilty wretches to live upon earth, and that he doth not immediately send them to hell. Sometimes their guilt doth so stare them in the face, that they are in exceeding terror for fear that God will instantly do it; but more commonly their distresses under legal awakenings have not been to such a

degree. In some, these terrors do not seem to be so sharp, when near comfort, as before; their convictions have not seemed to work so much that way, but to be led further down into their own hearts, to a further sense of their own universal depravity and deadness in sin.

The corruption of the heart has discovered itself in various exercises, in the time of legal convictions; sometimes it appears in a great struggle, like something roused by an enemy, and Satan, the old inhabitant, seems to exert himself, like a serpent disturbed and enraged. Many in such circumstances, have felt a great spirit of envy towards the godly, especially towards those who are thought to have been lately converted, and most of all towards acquaintances and companions, when they are thought to be converted. Indeed, some have felt many heart-risings against God, and murmurings at His way of dealing with mankind, and His dealings with themselves in particular. It has been much insisted on, both in public and private, that persons should have the utmost dread of such envious thoughts; which if allowed tend exceedingly to quench the Spirit of God, if not to provoke Him finally to forsake them. And when such a spirit has much prevailed, and persons have not so earnestly strove against it as they ought to have done, it has seemed to be exceedingly to the hindrance of the good of their souls. But in some other instances, where persons have been much terrified at the sight of such wickedness in their hearts, God has brought good to them out of evil; and made it a means of convincing them of their own desperate sinfulness, and bringing them off from all self-confidence.

The drift of the Spirit of God in His legal strivings with persons, has seemed most evidently to be, to bring to a conviction of their absolute dependence on His sovereign power and grace, and an universal necessity of a mediator. This has been effected by leading them more and more to a sense of their exceeding wickedness and guiltiness in His sight; their pollution, and the insufficiency of their own righteousness; that they can in no wise help themselves, and that God would be wholly just and righteous in rejecting them and all that they do, and in casting them off for ever. There is however a vast variety as to the manner and distinctness of such convictions.



As they are gradually more and more convinced of the corruption and wickedness of their hearts, they seem to themselves to grow worse and worse, harder and blinder, and more desperately wicked, instead of growing better. They are ready to be discouraged by it, and oftentimes never think themselves so far off from good as when they are nearest. Under the sense which the Spirit of God gives them of their sinfulness, they often think that they differ from all others; their hearts are ready to sink with the thought that they are the worst of all, and that none ever obtained mercy who were so wicked as they. When awakenings first begin, their consciences are commonly most exercised about their outward vicious course, or other acts of sin; but afterwards are much more burdened with a sense of heart-sins, the dreadful corruption of their nature, their enmity against God, the pride of their hearts, their unbelief, their rejection of Christ, the stubbornness and obstinacy of their wills; and the like. In many, God makes much use of their own experience, in the course of their awakenings and endeavors after saving good, to convince them of their own vile emptiness and universal depravity.

Very often, under first awakenings, when they are brought to reflect on the sin of their past lives, and have something of a terrifying sense of God's anger, they set themselves to walk more strictly, and confess their sins, and perform many religious duties, with a secret hope of appeasing God's anger, and making up for the sins they have committed. And oftentimes, at first setting out, their affections are so moved, that they are full of tears, in their confessions and prayers; which they are ready to make very much of, as though they were some atonement, and had power to move correspondent affections in God too. Hence they are for a while big with expectation of what God will do for them; and conceive they grow better apace, and shall soon be thoroughly converted. But these affections are but short-lived; they quickly find that they fail, and then they think themselves to be grown worse again. They do not find such a prospect of being soon converted, as they thought: instead of being nearer, they seem to be further off; their hearts they think are grown harder, and by this means their fears of perishing greatly increase. But though they are disappointed, they renew their attempts again and again; and still as their attempts are multiplied, so are their disappointments. All fails, they see no token of having inclined God's heart to them, they do not see that He

hears their prayers at all, as they expected He would; and sometimes there have been great temptations arising hence to leave off seeking, and to yield up the case. But as they are still more terrified with fears of perishing, and their former hopes of prevailing on God to be merciful to them in a great measure fail, sometimes their religious affections have turned into heart risings against God, because He will not pity them, and seems to have little regard to their distress, and piteous cries, and to all the pains they take. They think of the mercy God has shown to others; how soon and how easily others have obtained comfort, and those too who were worse than they, and have not labored so much as they have done; and sometimes they have had even dreadful blasphemous thoughts, in these circumstances. But when they reflect on these wicked workings of heart against God-if their convictions are continued, and the Spirit of God is not provoked utterly to forsake them-they have more distressing apprehensions of the anger of God towards those whose hearts work after such a sinful manner about Him; and it may be, have great fears that they have committed the unpardonable sin, or that God will surely never show mercy to them who are such vipers; and are often tempted to leave off in despair. But then perhaps by something they read or hear of the infinite mercy of God, and all-sufficiency of Christ for the chief of sinners, they have some encouragement and hope renewed; but think that as yet they are not fit to come to Christ; they are so wicked that Christ will never accept them. And then it may be they set themselves upon a new course of fruitless endeavors, in their own strength, to make themselves better, and still meet with new disappointments. They are earnest to inquire what they shall do. They do not know but there is something else to be done, in order to their obtaining converting grace, that they have never done yet. It may be they hope that they are something better than they were; but then the pleasing dream all vanishes again. If they are told that they trust too much to their own strength and righteousness, they cannot unlearn this practice all at once, and find not yet the appearance of any good, but all looks as dark as midnight to them. Thus they wander about from mountain to hill, seeking rest, and finding none. When they are beat out of one refuge, they fly to another; till they are as it were debilitated, broken, and subdued with legal humblings; in which God gives them a conviction of their own utter helplessness and insufficiency, and discovers the true remedy in a clearer knowledge of Christ and His gospel.

When they begin to seek salvation, they are commonly profoundly ignorant of themselves; they are not sensible how blind they are; and how little they can do towards bringing themselves to see spiritual things aright, and towards putting forth gracious exercises in their own souls. They are not sensible how remote they are from love to God, and other holy dispositions, and how dead they are in sin. When they see unexpected pollution in their own hearts, they go about to wash away their own defilements, and make themselves clean; and they weary themselves in vain, till God shows them that it is in vain, and that their help is not where they have sought it. But some persons continue wandering in such a kind of labyrinth, ten times as long as others, before their own experience will convince them of their insufficiency; and so it appears not to be their own experience only, but the convincing influence of God's Holy Spirit with their experience, that attains the effect. God has of late abundantly shown that He does not need to wait to have men convinced by long and often repeated fruitless trials; for in multitudes of instances He has made a shorter work of it. He has so awakened and convinced persons' consciences, and made them so sensible of their exceeding great vileness, and given them such a sense of His wrath against sin, as has quickly overcome all their vain self-confidence, and born them down into the dust before a holy and righteous God. There have been some who have not had great terrors, but have had a very quick work. Some of those who have not had so deep a conviction of these things before their conversion, have much more of it afterwards. God has appeared far from limiting Himself to any certain method in His proceedings with sinners under legal convictions. In some instances, it seems easy for our reasoning powers to discern the methods of divine wisdom, in His dealings with the soul under awakenings; in others, His footsteps cannot be traced, and His ways are past finding out.

Some who are less distinctly wrought upon, in what is preparatory to grace, appear no less eminent in gracious experiences afterwards. There is in nothing a greater difference, in different persons, than with respect to the time of their being under trouble; some but a few days, and others for months or years. There were many in this town, who had been, before this effusion of the Spirit upon us, for years, and some for many years, concerned about their salvation. Though probably they were not

thoroughly awakened, yet they were concerned to such a degree as to be very uneasy, so as to live an uncomfortable disquieted life. They continued in a way of taking considerable pains about their salvation; but had never obtained any comfortable evidence of a good state. Several such persons, in this extraordinary time, have received light; but many of them were some of the last. They first saw multitudes of others rejoicing, with songs of deliverance in their mouths, who before had seemed wholly careless and at ease, and in pursuit of vanity; while they had been bowed down with solicitude about their souls. Yea, some had lived licentiously, and so continued till a little before they were converted; and yet soon grew up to a holy rejoicing in the infinite blessings God had bestowed upon them.

Whatever minister has a like occasion to deal with souls, in a flock under such circumstances, as this was in the last year, I cannot but think he will soon find himself under a necessity, greatly to insist upon it with them, that God is under no manner of obligation to show mercy to any natural man, whose heart is not turned to God: and that a man can challenge nothing either in absolute justice, or by free promise, from any thing he does before he has believed on Jesus Christ, or has true repentance begun in him. It appears to me, that if I had taught those who came to me under trouble any other doctrine, I should have taken a most direct course utterly to undo them. I should have directly crossed what was plainly the drift of the Spirit of God in His influences upon them; for if they had believed what I said, it would either have promoted self-flattery and carelessness, and so put an end to their awakenings; or cherished and established their contention and strife with God, concerning His dealings with them and others, and blocked up their way to that humiliation before the Sovereign Disposer of life and death, whereby God is wont to prepare them for His consolations. And yet those who have been under awakenings have oftentimes plainly stood in need of being encouraged, by being told of the infinite and all-sufficient mercy of God in Christ; and that it is God's manner to succeed diligence, and to bless His own means, that so awakenings and encouragements, fear and hope, may be duly mixed and proportioned to preserve their minds in a just medium between the two extremes of self-flattery and despondence, both which tend to slackness and negligence, and in the end to security. I think I have found that no

discourses have been more remarkably blessed, than those in which the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty with regard to the salvation of sinners, and His just liberty with regard to answering the prayers, or succeeding the pains, of natural men, continuing such, have been insisted on. I never found so much immediate saving fruit, in any measure, of any discourses I have offered to my congregation, as some from these words, ~~ROM~~ Romans 3:19. "That every mouth may be stopped;" endeavoring to show from thence that it would be just with God for ever to reject and cast off mere natural men.

As to those in whom awakenings seem to have a saving issue, commonly the first thing that appears after their legal troubles, is a conviction of the justice of God in their condemnation, appearing in a sense of their own exceeding sinfulness, and the vileness of all their performances. In giving an account of this, they expressed themselves very variously; some, that they saw God was sovereign, and might receive others and reject them; some, that they were convinced God might justly bestow mercy on every person in the town, in the world, and damn themselves to all eternity; some, that they see God may justly have no regard to all the pains they have taken, and all the prayers they have made; some, that if they should seek, and take the utmost pains all their lives, God might justly cast them into hell at last, because all their labors, prayers, and tears cannot make an atonement for the least sin, nor merit any blessing at the hands of God. Some have declared themselves to be in the hands of God, that He may dispose of them just as He pleases; some, that God may glorify Himself in their damnation, and they wonder that God has suffered them to live so long, and has not cast them into hell long ago. Some are brought to this conviction by a great sense of their sinfulness, in general, that they are such vile wicked creatures in heart and life: others have the sins of their lives in an extraordinary manner set before them, multitudes of them coming just then fresh to their memory, and being set before them with their aggravations. Some have their minds especially fixed on some particular wicked practice they have indulged. Some are especially convinced by a sight of the corruption and wickedness of their hearts. Some, from a view they have of the horridness of some particular exercises of corruption, which they have had in the time of their awakening, whereby the enmity of the heart against God has been manifested. Some

are convinced especially by a sense of the sin of unbelief, the opposition of their hearts to the way of salvation by Christ, and their obstinacy in rejecting Him and His grace. There is a great deal of difference as to distinctness here; some, who have not so clear a sight of God's justice in their condemnation, yet mention things that plainly imply it. They find a disposition to acknowledge God to be just and righteous in His threatenings, and that they are undeserving: and many times, though they had not so particular a sight of it at the beginning, they have very clear discoveries of it soon afterwards, with great humblings in the dust before God.

Commonly persons' minds immediately before this discovery of God's justice are exceedingly restless, in a kind of struggle and tumult, and sometimes in mere anguish; but generally, as soon as they have this conviction, it immediately brings their minds to a calm, and unexpected quietness and composure; and most frequently, though not always, then the pressing weight upon their spirits is taken away, and a general hope arises, that some time or other God will be gracious, even before any distinct and particular discoveries of mercy. Often they then come to a conclusion within themselves, that they will lie at God's feet, and wait His time; and they rest in that, not being sensible that the Spirit of God has now brought them to a frame whereby they are prepared for mercy. For it is remarkable, that persons when they first have this sense of the justice of God, rarely, at the time, think any thing of its being that humiliation they have often heard insisted on, and that others experience. In many persons, the first conviction of the justice of God in their condemnation which they take particular notice of, and probably the first distinct conviction of it that they have, is of such a nature, as seems to be above any thing merely legal. Though it be after legal humblings, and much of a sense of their own helplessness, and of the insufficiency of their own duties; yet it does not appear to be forced by mere legal terrors and convictions, but rather from a high exercise of grace, in saving repentance, and evangelical humiliation. For there is in it a sort of complacency of soul in the attribute of God's justice, as displayed in His threatenings of eternal damnation to sinners. Sometimes at the discovery of it, they can scarcely forbear crying out, It is just! It is just! Some express themselves, that they could see the glory of God would shine bright in their own condemnation; and they are ready to

think that if they are damned, they could take part with God against themselves, and would glorify His justice therein. And when it is thus, they commonly have some evident sense of free and all-sufficient grace, though they give no distinct account of it; but it is manifest, by that great degree of hope and encouragement they then conceive, though they were never so sensible of their own vileness and ill-deservings as they are at that time.

Some, when in such circumstances, have felt that sense of the excellency of God's justice, appearing in the vindictive exercises of it, against such sinfulness as theirs was; and have had such a submission of mind in their idea of this attribute, and of those exercises of it-together with an exceeding loathing of their own unworthiness, and a kind of indignation against themselves-that they have sometimes almost called it a willingness to be damned; though it must be owned they had not clear and distinct ideas of damnation, nor does any word in the Bible require such self-denial as this. But the truth is, as some have more clearly expressed it, that salvation has appeared too good for them, that they were worthy of nothing but condemnation, and they could not tell how to think of salvation being bestowed upon them, fearing it was inconsistent with the glory of God's majesty, that they had so much contemned and affronted.

That calm of spirit that some persons have found after their legal distresses, continues some time before any special and delightful manifestation is made to the soul of the grace of God as revealed in the gospel. But very often some comfortable and sweet view of a merciful God, of a sufficient Redeemer, or of some great and joyful things of the gospel, immediately follows, or in a very little time: and in some, the first sight of their just deserts of hell, and God's sovereignty with respect to their salvation, and a discovery of all-sufficient grace, are so near, that they seem to go as it were together.

These gracious discoveries given, whence the first special comforts are derived, are in many respects very various. More frequently, Christ is distinctly made the object of the mind, in His all-sufficiency and willingness to save sinners; but some have their thoughts more especially fixed on God, in some of His sweet and glorious attributes manifested in the gospel, and shining forth in the face of Christ. Some view the

all-sufficiency of the mercy and grace of God; some, chiefly the infinite power of God, and His ability to save them, and to do all things for them; and some look most at the truth and faithfulness of God. In some, the truth and certainty of the gospel in general is the first joyful discovery they have; in others, the certain truth of some particular promises; in some, the grace and sincerity of God in His invitations, very commonly in some particular invitation in the mind, and it now appears real to them that God does indeed invite them. Some are struck with the glory and wonderfulness of the dying love of Christ; and some with the sufficiency and preciousness of His blood, as offered to make an atonement for sin; and others with the value and glory of His obedience and righteousness. In some the excellency and loveliness of Christ, chiefly engages their thoughts; in some His divinity, that He is indeed the Son of the living God; and in others, the excellency of the way of salvation by Christ, and the suitableness of it to their necessities. Some have an apprehension of these things so given, that it seems more natural to them to express it by sight or discovery, others think what they experience is better expressed by the realizing conviction, or a lively or feeling sense of heart; meaning, as I suppose, no other difference but what is merely circumstantial or gradual.

There is, often, in the mind, some particular text of Scripture, holding forth some evangelical ground of consolation; sometimes a multitude of texts, gracious invitations and promises flowing in one after another, filling the soul more and more with comfort and satisfaction. Comfort is first given to some, while reading some portion of Scripture; but in some it is attended with no particular Scripture at all, either in reading or meditation. In some, many divine things seem to be discovered to the soul as it were at once; others have their minds especially fixing on some one thing at first, and afterwards a sense is given of others; in some with a swifter, and others a slower succession, and sometimes with interruptions of much darkness. The way that grace seems sometimes first to appear, after legal humiliation, is in earnest longings of soul after God and Christ: to know God, to love Him, to be humble before Him, to have communion with Christ in His benefits; which longings, as they express them, seem evidently to be of such a nature as can arise from nothing but a sense of the superlative excellency of divine things, with a spiritual taste and relish of them, and an esteem of them as their highest happiness and best



portion. Such longings as I speak of, are commonly attended with firm resolutions to pursue this good for ever, together with a hoping, waiting disposition. When persons have begun in such frames, commonly other experiences and discoveries have soon followed, which have yet more clearly manifested a change of heart. It must needs be confessed that Christ is not always distinctly and explicitly thought of in the first sensible act of grace (though most commonly He is), but sometimes He is the object of the mind only implicitly. Thus sometimes when persons have seemed evidently to be stripped of all their own righteousness, and to have stood self-condemned as guilty of death, they have been comforted with a joyful and satisfying view, that the mercy and grace of God is sufficient for them-that their sins, though never so great, shall be no hindrance to their being accepted; that there is mercy enough in God for the whole world, and the like-when they give no account of any particular or distinct thought of Christ. But yet, when the account they give is duly weighed, and they are a little interrogated about it, it appears that the revelation of mercy in the gospel is the ground of their encouragement and hope; and that it is indeed the mercy of God through Christ that is discovered in them, and that it is depended on in Him, and not in any wise moved by any thing in them. Sometimes disconsolate souls have been revived, and brought to rest in God, by a sweet sense of His grace and faithfulness, in some special invitation or promise; in which nevertheless there is no particular mention of Christ, nor is it accompanied with any distinct thought of Him in their minds: but yet, it is not received as out of Christ, but as one of the invitations or promises made of God to poor sinners through His Son Jesus. And such persons afterwards have had clear and distinct discoveries of Christ, accompanied with lively and special actings of faith and love towards Him.

Frequently, when persons have first had the gospel-ground of relief discovered to them, and have been entertaining their minds with the sweet prospect, they have thought nothing at that time of their being converted. To see that there is an all-sufficiency in God, and such plentiful provision made in Christ, after they have been born down and sunk with a sense of their guilt and fears of wrath, exceedingly refreshes them. The view is joyful to them to seek conversion. This begets in them a strong resolution to devote themselves and their whole lives to God and His Son, and

patiently to wait till God shall see fit to make all effectual; and they very often entertain a strong persuasion that He will in His own time do it for them.

There is wrought in them a holy repose of soul in God through Christ, with a secret disposition to fear and love Him, and to hope for blessings from Him in this way. Yet they have no imagination that they are now converted; it does not so much as come in their minds: and very often the reason is, that they do not see that they accept of this sufficiency of salvation they behold in Christ, having entertained a wrong notion of acceptance; not being sensible that the obedient and joyful entertainment which their hearts give to this discovery of grace is a real acceptance of it. They know not that the sweet complacency they feel in the mercy and complete salvation of God, as it includes pardon and sanctification, and is held forth to them only through Christ, is a true receiving of this mercy, or a plain evidence of their receiving it. They expected I know not what kind of act of soul, and perhaps they had no distinct idea of it themselves.

And indeed it appears very plainly in some of them, that before their own conversion they had very imperfect ideas what conversion was. It is all new and strange, and what there was no clear conception of before. It is most evident, as they themselves acknowledge, that the expressions used to describe conversion, and the graces of God's Holy Spirit—such as a spiritual sight of Christ, faith in Christ, poverty of spirit, trust in God, etc. — did not convey those distinct ideas to their minds which they were intended to signify. Perhaps to some of them it was but little more than the names of colors are to convey the ideas to one that is blind from his birth. In this town there has always been a great deal of talk about conversion and spiritual experiences; and therefore people in general had formed a notion in their own minds what these things were.

But when they come to be the subjects of them, they find themselves much confounded in their notions, and overthrown in many of their former conceits. And it has been very observable, that persons of the greatest understanding, and who had studied most about things of this nature, have been more confounded than others. Some such persons declare, that all their former wisdom is brought to nought, and that they appear to have been mere babes, who knew nothing. It has appeared, that none have stood

more in need of instruction, even of their fellow-Christians, concerning their own circumstances and difficulties, than they: and it seems to have been with delight, that they have seen themselves thus brought down, and become nothing; that free grace and divine power may be exalted in them. It was very wonderful to see how persons affections were sometimes moved-when God did as it were suddenly open their eyes, and let into their minds a sense of the greatness of His grace, the fullness of Christ, and His readiness to save-after having been broken with apprehensions of divine wrath, and sunk into an abyss, under a sense of guilt which they were ready to think was beyond the mercy of God. Their joyful surprise has caused their hearts as it were to leap, so that they have been ready to break forth into laughter, tears often at the same time issuing like a flood, and intermingling a loud weeping.

Sometimes they have not been able to forbear crying out with a loud voice, expressing their great admiration. In some, even the view of the glory of God's sovereignty, in the exercises of His grace, has surprised the soul with such sweetness, as to produce the same effects. I remember an instance of one, who, reading something concerning God's sovereign way of saving sinners, as being self-moved-having no regard to men's own righteousness as the motive of His grace, but as magnifying Himself and abasing man, or to that purpose-felt such a sudden rapture of joy and delight in the consideration of it: and yet then he suspected himself to be in a Christless condition, and had been long in great distress for fear that God would not have mercy on him.

Many continue a long time in a course of gracious exercises and experiences, and do not think themselves to be converted, but conclude otherwise; and none knows how long they would continue so, were they not helped by particular instructions. There are undoubted instances of some who have lived in this way for many years together; and these circumstances had various consequences, with various persons, and with the same persons, at various times. Some continue in great encouragement and hope, that they shall obtain mercy in a steadfast resolution to persevere in seeking it, and in an humble waiting in it before God. But very often, when the lively sense of the sufficiency of Christ and the riches of divine grace, begins to vanish, upon a withdrawalment of divine influences, they return to greater distress than ever. For they have now a far greater

sense of the misery of a natural condition than before, being in a new manner sensible of the reality of eternal things, the greatness of God, His excellency, and how dreadful it is to be separated from Him, and to be subject to His wrath; so that they are sometimes swallowed up with darkness and amazement. Satan has a vast advantage in such cases to ply them with various temptations, which he is not wont to neglect: in such a case, persons very much need a guide to lead them to an understanding of what we are taught in the word of God concerning the nature of grace, and to help them to apply it to themselves.

I have been much blamed and censured by many, that I should make it my practice, when I have been satisfied concerning persons' good estate, to signify it to them. This has been greatly misrepresented abroad, as innumerable other things concerning us, to prejudice the country against the whole affair. But let it be noted, that what I have undertaken to judge of, has rather been qualifications, and declared experiences, than persons. Not but that I have thought it my duty, as a pastor, to assist and instruct persons in applying Scripture-rules and characters to their own case (in which, I think, many greatly need a guide); and I have, where the case appeared plain, used freedom in signifying my hope of them to others. But I have been far from doing this concerning all that I have had some hopes of; and I believe have used much more caution than many have supposed. Yet I should account it a great calamity to be deprived of the comfort of rejoicing with those of my flock who have been in great distress, whose circumstances I have been acquainted with, when there seems to be good evidence that those who were dead are alive, and that those who were lost are found. I am sensible the practice would have been safer in the hands of one of a riper judgment and greater experience: but yet, there seems to be an absolute necessity of it on the forementioned accounts; and it has been found what God has most remarkably owned and blessed amongst us, both to the persons themselves, and to others. Grace in many persons, through this ignorance of their state, and their looking on themselves still as the objects of God's displeasure, has been like the trees in winter, or like seed in the spring suppressed under a hard clod of earth. Many in such cases have labored to their utmost to divert their minds from the pleasing and joyful views they have had, and to suppress those consolations and gracious affections that arose thereupon. And when it has

once come into their minds to inquire, whether or not this was not true grace, they have been much afraid lest they should be deceived with common illuminations and flashes of affection, and eternally undone with a false hope. But when they have been better instructed, and so brought to allow of hope, this has awakened the gracious disposition of their hearts into life and vigor as the warm beams of the sun in the spring have quickened the seeds and productions of the earth. Grace being now at liberty, and cherished with hope, has soon flowed out to their abundant satisfaction and increase.

There is no one thing that I know of which God has made such a means of promoting His work amongst us, as the news of others' conversion. This has been owned in awakening sinners, engaging them earnestly to seek the same blessing, and in quickening saints. Though I have thought that a minister declaring his judgment about particular persons' experiences, might from these things be justified; yet I often signify to my people how unable man is to know another's heart, and how unsafe it is to depend merely on the judgment of others. I have abundantly insisted, that a manifestation of sincerity in fruits brought forth, is better than any manifestation they can make of it in words alone: and that without this, all pretenses to spiritual experiences are vain. This all my congregation can witness. And the people in general have manifested an extraordinary dread of being deceived; being exceeding fearful lest they should build wrong. Some of them have been backward to receive hope, even to a great extreme, which has occasioned me to dwell longer on this part of the narrative.

Conversion is a great and glorious work of God's power, at once changing the heart, and infusing life into the dead soul; though the grace then implanted more gradually displays itself in some than in others. But as to fixing on the precise time when they put forth the very first act of grace, there is a great deal of difference in different persons; in some it seems to be very discernible when the very time was; but others are more at a loss. In this respect, there are very many who do not know, even when they have it, that it is the grace of conversion, and sometimes do not think it to be so till a long time after. Many, even when they come to entertain great hopes that they are converted, if they remember what they experienced in the first exercises of grace, they are at a loss whether it was any more than a common illumination; or whether some other more clear and remarkable

experience which they had afterwards, was not the first of a saving nature. The manner of God's work on the soul, sometimes especially, is very mysterious; and it is with the kingdom of God as to its manifestation in the heart of a convert, as is said, ~~1000~~ Mark 4:26, 27, 28, "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how; for the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." In some, converting light is like a glorious brightness suddenly shining upon a person, and all around him: they are in a remarkable manner brought out of darkness into marvelous light. In many others it has been like the dawning of the day, when at first but a little light appears, and it may be presently hid with a cloud; and then it appears again, and shines a little brighter, and gradually increases, with intervening darkness, till at length it breaks forth more clearly from behind the clouds. And many are, doubtless, ready to date their conversion wrong, throwing by those lesser degrees of light that appeared at first dawning, and calling some more remarkable experience they had afterwards, their conversion. This often, in a great measure, arises from a wrong understanding of what they have always been taught, that conversion is a great change, wherein old things are done away, and all things become new, or at least from a false inference from that doctrine.

Persons commonly at first conversion, and afterwards, have had many texts of Scripture brought to their minds, which are exceeding suitable to their circumstances, often come with great power, as the word of God or of Christ indeed; and many have a multitude of sweet invitations, promises, and doxologies flowing in one after another, bringing great light and comfort with them, filling the soul brimful, enlarging the heart, and opening the mouth in religion. And it seems to be necessary to suppose that there is an immediate influence of the Spirit of God, oftentimes, in bringing texts of Scripture to the mind. Not that I suppose it is done in a way of immediate revelation, without any use of the memory; but yet there seems plainly to be an immediate and extraordinary influence, in leading their thoughts to such and such passages of Scripture, and exciting them in the memory. Indeed in some, God seems to bring texts of Scripture to their minds no otherwise than by leading them into such

frames and meditations as harmonize with those Scriptures; but in many persons there seems to be something more than this.

Those who, while under legal convictions, have had the greatest terrors, have not always obtained the greatest light and comfort; nor have they always light most suddenly communicated; but yet, I think, the time of conversion has generally been most sensible in such persons. Oftentimes, the first sensible change after the extremity of terrors, is a calmness, and then the light gradually comes in; small glimpses at first, after their midnight darkness, and a word or two of comfort, as it were softly spoken to them. They have a little taste of the sweetness of divine grace, and the love of a Savior, when terror and distress of conscience begin to be turned into an humble, meek sense of their own unworthiness before God. There is felt, inwardly, sometimes a disposition to praise God; and after a little while the light comes in more clearly and powerfully. But yet, I think, more frequently, great terrors have been followed with more sudden and great light and comfort; when the sinner seems to be as it were subdued and brought to a calm, from a kind of tumult of mind, then God lets in an extraordinary sense of His great mercy through a Redeemer.

Converting influences very commonly bring an extraordinary conviction of the reality and certainty of the great things of religion; though in some this is much greater some time after conversion, than at first. They have that sight and taste of the divine excellency there is in the gospel, which is more effectual to convince them than reading many volumes of arguments without it. It seems to me, that in many instances, when the glory of Christian truths has been set before persons, and they have at the same time as it were seen, and tasted, and felt the divinity of them, they have been as far from doubting their truth as they are from doubting whether there be a sun, when their eyes are open in the midst of a clear hemisphere, and the strong blaze of His light overcomes all objections. And yet, many of them, if we should ask them why they believed those things to be true, would not be able well to express or communicate a sufficient reason to satisfy the inquirer; and perhaps would make no other answer but that they see Him to be true. But a person might soon be satisfied, by a particular conversation with them, that what they mean by such an answer is, that they have intuitively beheld, and immediately felt, most illustrious and powerful evidence of divinity in them.

Some are thus convinced of the truth of the gospel in general, and that the Scriptures are the word of God: others have their minds more especially fixed on some particular great doctrine of the gospel, some particular truths that they are meditating on, or reading of, in some portion of Scripture. Some have such conviction in a much more remarkable manner than others: and there are some who never had such a special sense of the certainty of divine things impressed upon them, with such inward evidence and strength, but who yet have very clear exercises of grace; i.e. of love to God, repentance, and holiness. And if they be more particularly examined, they appear plainly to have an inward firm persuasion of the reality of divine things, such as they did not use to have before their conversion. And those who have the most clear discoveries of divine truth in the manner that has been mentioned, cannot have this always in view. When the sense and relish of the divine excellency of these things fades, on a withdrawment of the Spirit of God, they have not the medium of the conviction of their truth at command. In a dull frame, they cannot recall the idea and inward sense they had, perfectly to mind; things appear very dim to what they did before. And though there still remains an habitual strong persuasion; yet not so as to exclude temptations to unbelief, and all possibility of doubting. But then, at particular times, by God's help, the same sense of things revives again, like fire that lay hid in ashes. I suppose the grounds of such a conviction of the truth of divine things to be just and rational; but yet, in some, God makes use of their own reason much more sensibly than in others. Oftentimes persons have (so far as could be judged) received the first saving conviction from reasoning which they have heard from the pulpit; and often in the course of reasoning they are led into in their own meditations.

The arguments are the same that they have heard hundreds of times; but the force of the arguments, and their conviction by them, is altogether new; they come with a new and before unexperienced power. Before, they heard it was so, and they allowed it to be so; but now they see it to be so indeed. Things now look exceeding plain to them, and they wonder they did not see them before.

They are so greatly taken with their new discovery, and things appear so plain and so rational to them, that they are often at first ready to think they can convince others; and are apt to engage in talk with every one they



meet with, almost to this end; and when they are disappointed, are ready to wonder that their reasonings seem to make no more impression. Many fall under such a mistake as to be ready to doubt of their good estate, because there was so much use made of their own reason in the convictions they have received; they are afraid that they have no illumination above the natural force of their own faculties: and many make that an objection against the spirituality of their convictions, that it is so easy to see things as they now see them. They have often heard, that conversion is a work of mighty power, manifesting to the soul what neither man nor angel can give such a conviction of; but it seems to them that these things are so plain and easy, and rational, that any body can see them. If they are asked, why they never saw thus before, they say, it seems to them it was because they never thought of it. But very often these difficulties are soon removed by those of another nature; for when God withdraws, they find themselves as it were blind again, they for the present lose their realizing sense of those things that looked so plain to them, and, by all they can do, they cannot recover it, till God renews the influence of His Spirit.

Persons after their conversion often speak of religious things as seeming new to them; that preaching is a new thing; that it seems to them they never heard preaching before; that the Bible is a new book: they find there new chapters, new psalms, new histories, because they see them in a new light. Here was a remarkable instance of an aged woman, of about seventy years, who had spent most of her days under Mr. Stoddard's powerful ministry. Reading in the New Testament concerning Christ's sufferings for sinners, she seemed to be astonished at what she read, as what was real and very wonderful, but quite new to her. At first, before she had time to turn her thoughts, she wondered within herself, that she had never heard of it before; but then immediately recollected herself, and thought she had often heard of it, and read it, but never till now saw it as real. She then cast in her mind how wonderful this was, that the Son of God should undergo such things for sinners, and how she had spent her time in ungratefully sinning against so good a God, and such a Savior; though she was a person, apparently, of a very blameless and inoffensive life. And she was so overcome by those considerations that her nature was ready to fail under

them: those who were about her, and knew not what was the matter, were surprised, and thought she was dying.

Many have spoken much of their hearts being drawn out in love to God and Christ; and of their minds being wrapt up in delightful contemplation of the glory and wonderful grace of God, the excellency and dying love of Jesus Christ; and of their souls going forth in longing desires after God and Christ. Several of our young children have expressed much of this; and have manifested a willingness to leave father and mother and all things in the world, to go and be with Christ; some persons having had such longing desires after Christ, or which have risen to such degree, as to take away their natural strength. Some have been so overcome with a sense of the dying love of Christ to such poor, wretched, and unworthy creatures, as to weaken the body. Several persons have had so great a sense of the glory of God, and excellency of Christ, that nature and life seemed almost to sink under it; and in all probability, if God had showed them a little more of Himself, it would have dissolved their frame. I have seen some, and conversed with them in such frames, who have certainly been perfectly sober, and very remote from any thing like enthusiastic wildness. And they have talked, when able to speak, of the glory of God's perfections, the wonderfulness of His grace in Christ, and their own unworthiness, in such a manner as cannot be perfectly expressed after them. Their sense of their exceeding littleness and vileness, and their disposition to abase themselves before God, has appeared to be great in proportion to their light and joy.

Such persons amongst us as have been thus distinguished with the most extraordinary discoveries, have commonly nowise appeared with the assuming, self-conceited, and self-sufficient airs of enthusiasts, but exceedingly the contrary. They are eminent for a spirit of meekness, modesty, self-diffidence, and a low opinion of themselves. No persons appear so sensible of their need of instruction and so eager to receive it, as some of them; nor so ready to think others better than themselves.

Those that have been considered as converted amongst us, have generally manifested a longing to lie low and in the dust before God; withal complaining of their not being able to lie low enough. They speak much of their sense of excellency in the way of salvation by free and sovereign

grace, through the righteousness of Christ alone; and how it is with delight that they renounce their own righteousness, and rejoice in having no account made of it. Many have expressed themselves to this purpose, that it would lessen the satisfaction they hope for in heaven to have it by their own righteousness, or in any other way than as bestowed by free grace, and for Christ's sake alone. They speak much of the inexpressibleness of what they experience, how their words fail, so that they cannot declare it. And particularly they speak with exceeding admiration of the superlative excellency of that pleasure and delight which they sometimes enjoy; how a little of it is sufficient to pay them for all the pains and trouble they have gone through in seeking salvation; and how far it exceeds all earthly pleasures. Some express much of the sense which these spiritual views give them of the vanity of earthly enjoyments, how mean and worthless all these things appear to them.

Many, while their minds have been filled with spiritual delights, have as it were forgot their food; their bodily appetite has failed, while their minds have been entertained with meat to eat that others knew not of. The light and comfort which some of them enjoy, give a new relish to their common blessings, and cause all things about them to appear as it were beautiful, sweet, and pleasant. All things abroad, the sun, moon, and stars, the clouds and sky, the heavens and earth, appear as it were with a divine glory and sweetness upon them. Though this joy includes in it a delightful sense of the safety of their own state, yet frequently, in times of their highest spiritual entertainment, this seems not to be the chief object of their fixed thought and meditation. The supreme attention of their minds is to the glorious excellencies of God and Christ; and there is very often a ravishing sense of God's love accompanying a sense of His excellency. They rejoice in a sense of the faithfulness of God's promises, as they respect the future eternal enjoyment of Him.

The unparalleled joy that many of them speak of, is what they find when they are lowest in the dust, emptied most of themselves, and as it were annihilating themselves before God; when they are nothing, and God is all; seeing their own unworthiness, depending not at all on themselves, but alone on Christ, and ascribing all glory to God. Then their souls are most in the enjoyment of satisfying rest; excepting that, at such times, they apprehend themselves to be not sufficiently self-abased; for then above all

times do they long to be lower. Some speak much of the exquisite sweetness, and rest of soul, that is to be found in the exercise of resignation to God, and humble submission to His will. Many express earnest longings of soul to praise God; but at the same time complain that they cannot praise Him as they would, and they want to have others help them in praising Him. They want to have every one praise God, and are ready to call upon every thing to praise Him. They express a longing desire to live to God's glory, and to do something to His honor; but at the same time complain of their insufficiency and barrenness; that they are poor and impotent creatures, can do nothing of themselves, and are utterly insufficient to glorify their Creator and Redeemer.

While God was so remarkably present amongst us by His Spirit, there was no book so delightful as the Bible; especially the Book of Psalms, the Prophecy of Isaiah, and the New Testament. Some, by reason of their love to God's word, at times have been wonderfully delighted and affected at the sight of a Bible; and then, also, there was no time so prized as the Lord's day, and no place in this world so desired as God's house. Our converts then remarkably appeared united in dear affection to one another, and many have expressed much of that spirit of love which they felt toward all mankind; and particularly to those who had been least friendly to them. Never, I believe, was so much done in confessing injuries, and making up differences, as the last year. Persons, after their own conversion, have commonly expressed an exceeding great desire for the conversion of others. Some have thought that they should be willing to die for the conversion of any soul, though of one of the meanest of their fellow-creatures, or of their worst enemies; and many have, indeed, been in great distress with desires and longings for it. This work of God had also a good effect to unite the people's affections much to their minister.

There are some persons whom I have been acquainted with, but more especially two, that belong to other towns, who have been swallowed up exceedingly with a sense of the awful greatness and majesty of God; and both of them told me to this purpose, that if, at the time, they had entertained the least fear that they were not at peace with this so great a God, they should certainly have died. It is worthy to be remarked, that some persons, by their conversion, seem to be greatly helped as to their doctrinal notions of religion. It was particularly remarkable in one, who,

having been taken captive in his childhood, was trained up in Canada in the popish religion. Some years since he returned to this his native place, and was in a measure brought off from popery; but seemed very awkward and dull in receiving any clear notion of the Protestant scheme till he was converted; and then he was remarkably altered in this respect.

There is a vast difference, as observed, in the degree, and also in the particular manner, of persons' experiences, both at and after conversion; some have grace working more sensibly in one way, others in another. Some speak more fully of a conviction of the justice of God in their condemnation; others, more of their consenting to the way of salvation by Christ; and some, more of the actings of love to God and Christ. Some speak more of acts of affiance, in a sweet and assured conviction of the truth and faithfulness of God in His promises; others, more of their choosing and resting in God as their whole and everlasting portion; and of their ardent and longing desire after God, to have communion with Him; and others, more of their abhorrence to themselves for their past sins, and earnest longings to live to God's glory for the time to come. But it seems evidently to be the same work, the same habitual change wrought in the heart; it all tends the same way, and to the same end; and it is plainly the same spirit that breathes and acts in various persons. There is an endless variety in the particular manner and circumstances in which persons are wrought on; and an opportunity of seeing so much will show that God is further from confining Himself to a particular method in His work on souls than some imagine. I believe it has occasioned some good people amongst us, who were before too ready to make their own experience a rule to others, to be less censorious and more extended in their charity; and this is an excellent advantage indeed. The work of God has been glorious in its variety; it has the more displayed the manifold and unsearchable wisdom of God, and wrought more charity among His people.

There is a great difference among those who are converted, as to the degree of hope and satisfaction they have concerning their own state. Some have a high degree of satisfaction in this matter almost constantly; and yet it is rare that any enjoy so full an assurance of their interest in Christ that self-examination should seem needless to them; unless it be at particular seasons, while in the actual enjoyment of some great discovery God gives of His glory and rich grace in Christ, to the drawing forth of extraordinary

acts of grace. But the greater part, as they sometimes fall into dead frames of spirit, are frequently exercised with scruples and fears concerning their condition. They generally have an awful apprehension of the dreadful nature of a false hope; and there has been observable in most a great caution, lest in giving an account of their experiences, they should say too much, and use too strong terms. Many, after they have related their experiences, have been greatly afflicted with fears, lest they have played the hypocrite, and used stronger terms than their case would fairly allow of; and yet could not find how they could correct themselves.

I think the main ground of the doubts and fears that persons after their conversion have been exercised with about their own state, has been, that they have found so much corruption remaining in their hearts. At first, their souls seem to be all alive, their hearts are fixed, and their affections flowing; they seem to live quite above the world, and meet with but little difficulty in religious exercises; and they are ready to think it will always be so. Though they are truly abased under a sense of their vileness, by reason of former acts of sin, yet they are not then sufficiently sensible what corruption still remains in their hearts; and therefore are surprised when they find that they begin to be in dull and dead frames, troubled with wandering thoughts at the time of public and private worship, and utterly unable to keep themselves from them. When they find themselves unaffected, while yet there is the greatest occasion to be affected; and when they feel worldly dispositions working in them—pride, envy, stirrings of revenge, or some ill spirit towards some person that has injured them, as well as other workings of indwelling sin—their hearts are almost sunk with the disappointment; and they are ready presently to think that they are mere hypocrites.

They are ready to argue that, if God had indeed done such great things for them, as they hoped, such ingratitude would be inconsistent with it. They complain of the hardness and wickedness of their hearts; and say there is so much corruption, that it seems to them impossible there should be any goodness there. Many of them seem to be much more sensible how corrupt their hearts are, than before they were converted; and some have been too ready to be impressed with fear, that instead of becoming better, they are grown much worse, and make it an argument against the goodness of their state. But the truth, the case seems plainly to be, that now they

feel the pain of their own wound; they have a watchful eye upon their hearts, that they did not use to have. They take more notice of what sin is there, which is now more burdensome to them; they strive more against it, and feel more of its strength.

They are somewhat surprised that they should in this respect find themselves so different from the idea they generally had entertained of godly persons. For, though grace be indeed of a far more excellent nature than they imagined, yet those who are godly have much less of it, and much more remaining corruption, than they thought. They never realized it, that persons were wont to meet with such difficulties, after they were once converted. When they are thus exercised with doubts about their state, through the deadness of their frames, as long as these frames last, they are commonly unable to satisfy themselves of the truth of their grace, by all their self-examination. When they hear of the signs of grace laid down for them to try themselves by, they are often so clouded, that they do not know how to apply them. They hardly know whether they have such and such things or no, and whether they have experienced them or not. That which was the sweetest, best, and most distinguishing in their experiences, they cannot recover a sense of. But on a return of the influences of the Spirit of God, to revive the lively actings of grace, the light breaks through the cloud, and doubting and darkness soon vanish away.

Persons are often revived out of their dead and dark frames by religious conversation: while they are talking of divine things, or ever they are aware, their souls are carried away into holy exercises with abundant pleasure. And oftentimes, while relating their past experiences to their Christian brethren, they have a sense of them revived, and the same experiences are in a degree again renewed. Sometimes, while persons are exercised in mind with several objections against the goodness of their state, they have Scriptures one after another coming to their minds, to answer their scruples, and unravel their difficulties, exceedingly apposite and proper to their circumstances. By these means, their darkness is scattered; and often, before the bestowment of any new remarkable comfort, especially after long continued deadness and ill frames, there are renewed humblings, in a great sense of their own exceeding vileness and unworthiness, as before their first comforts were bestowed.

Many in the country have entertained a mean thought of this great work, from what they have heard of impressions made on persons' imaginations. But there have been exceeding great misrepresentations, and innumerable false reports, concerning that matter. It is not, that I know of, the profession or opinion of any one person in the town, that any weight is to be laid on any thing seen with the bodily eyes. I know the contrary to be a received and established principle amongst us. I cannot say that there have been no instances of persons who have been ready to give too much heed to vain and useless imaginations; but they have been easily corrected, and I conclude it will not be wondered at, that a congregation should need a guide in such cases, to assist them in distinguishing wheat from chaff. But such impressions on the imaginations as have been more usual seem to me to be plainly no other than what is to be expected in human nature in such circumstances, and what is the natural result of the strong exercise of the mind, and impressions on the heart.

I do not suppose, that they themselves imagine they saw any thing with their bodily eyes; but only have had within them ideas strongly impressed, and as it were lively pictures in their minds. For instance, some when in great terrors, through fear of hell, have had lively ideas of a dreadful furnace. Some, when their hearts have been strongly impressed, and their affections greatly moved with a sense of the beauty and excellency of Christ, have had their imaginations so wrought upon, that, together, with a sense of His glorious spiritual perfections, there has arisen in the mind an idea of One of glorious majesty, and of a sweet and gracious aspect. Some, when they have been greatly affected with Christ's death, have at the same time a lively idea of Christ hanging upon the cross, and His blood running from His wounds. Surely such things will not be wondered at by them who have observed how any strong affections about temporal matters will excite lively ideas and pictures of different things in the mind.

The vigorous exercises of the mind, doubtless, more strongly impress it with imaginary ideas in some than others, which probably may arise from the difference of constitution, and seems evidently in some, partly to arise from their peculiar circumstances. When persons have been exercised with extreme terrors, and there is a sudden change to light and joy, the imagination seems more susceptible of strong ideas; the inferior powers, and even the frame of the body, are much more affected, than when the



same persons have as great spiritual light and joy afterwards; of which it might, perhaps, be easy to give a reason. The forementioned Reverend Messrs. Lord and Owen-who, I believe, are esteemed persons of learning and discretion where they are best known-declared, that they found these impressions on persons' imaginations quite different things from what fame had before represented to them, and that they were what none need to wonder at-or to that purpose.

There have indeed been some few instances of impressions on persons imaginations, which have been somewhat mysterious to me, and I have been at a loss about them. For, though it has been exceeding evident to me, by many things that appeared both then and afterwards, that they indeed had a greater sense of the spiritual excellency of divine things accompanying them, yet I have not been able well to satisfy myself whether their imaginary ideas have been more than could naturally arise from their spiritual sense of things. However, I have used the utmost caution in such cases; great care has been taken both in public and in private to teach persons the difference between what is spiritual and what is merely imaginary. I have often warned persons not to lay the stress of their hope on any ideas of any outward glory, or any external thing whatsoever, and have met with no opposition in such instructions. But it is not strange if some weaker persons, in giving an account of their experiences, have not so prudently distinguished between the spiritual and imaginary part; of which some who have not been well affected to religion might take advantage.

There has been much talk in many parts of the country, as though the people have symbolized with the Quakers, and the Quakers themselves have been moved with such reports; and some came here, once and again, hoping to find good waters to fish in, but without the least success, and have left off coming. There have also been reports spread about the country, as though the first occasion of so remarkable a concern was an apprehension that the world was near to an end; which was altogether a false report. Indeed, after this concern became so general and extraordinary, as related, the minds of some were filled with speculation what so great a dispensation of Divine Providence might forebode; and some reports were heard from abroad, as though certain divines and others

thought the conflagration was nigh; but such reports were never generally looked upon worthy of notice.

The work which has now been wrought on souls, is evidently the same that was wrought in my venerable predecessor's days; as I have had abundant opportunity to know, having been in the ministry here two years with him, and so conversed with a considerable number whom my grandfather thought to be savingly converted at that time; and having been particularly acquainted with the experiences of many who were converted under his ministry before. And I know no one of them, who in the least doubts of its being the same Spirit and the same work. Persons have now no otherwise been subject to impressions on their imaginations than formerly: the work is of the same nature, and has not been attended with any extraordinary circumstances, excepting such as are analogous to the extraordinary degree of it before described. And God's people who were formerly converted have now partaken of the same shower of divine blessing-in the renewing, strengthening, edifying, influences of the Spirit of God-that others have in His converting influences; and the work here has also been plainly the same with that of other places which have been mentioned, as partaking of the same blessing. I have particularly conversed with persons about their experiences, who belong to all parts of the country, and in various parts of Connecticut, where a religious concern has lately appeared; and have been informed of the experiences of many others by their own pastors.

It is easily perceived by the foregoing account, that it is very much the practice of the people here, to converse freely one with another about their spiritual experiences; which many have been disgusted at. But however our people may have, in some respects, gone to extremes in it, it is, doubtless, a practice that the circumstances of this town, and neighboring towns, have naturally led them into. Whatsoever people have their minds engaged to such a degree in the same affair, that it is ever uppermost in their thoughts, they will naturally make it the subject of conversation when they get together, in which they will grow more and more free. Restraints will soon vanish, and they will not conceal from one another what they meet with. And it has been a practice which, in the general, has been attended with many good effects, and what God has greatly blessed amongst us: but it must be confessed, there may have been some ill

consequences of it; which yet are rather to be laid to the indiscreet management of it than to the practice itself; and none can wonder, if among such a multitude some fail of exercising so much prudence in choosing the time, manner, and occasion of such discourse, as is desirable.

## SECTION 3

### **THIS WORK FURTHER ILLUSTRATED IN PARTICULAR INSTANCES.**

But to give a clear idea of the nature and manner of the operation of God's Spirit, in this wonderful effusion if it, I would give an account of two particular instances. The first is an adult person, a young woman whose name was Abigail Hutchinson. I fix upon her especially, because she is now dead, and so it may be more fit to speak freely of her than of living instances: though I am under far greater disadvantages, on other accounts, to give a full and clear narrative of her experiences, than I might of some others; nor can any account be given but what has been retained in the memories of her friends, of what they have heard her express in her lifetime.

She was of an intelligent family: there could be nothing in her education that tended to enthusiasm, but rather to the contrary extreme. It is in no-wise the temper of the family to be ostentatious of experiences, and it was far from being her temper. She was, before her conversion, to the observation of her neighbors, of a sober and inoffensive conversation; and was a still, quiet, reserved person. She had long been infirm of body, but her infirmity had never been observed at all to incline her to be notional or fanciful, or to occasion any thing of religious melancholy. She was under awakenings scarcely a week, before there seemed to be plain evidence of her being savingly converted.

She was first awakened in the winter season, on Monday, by something she heard her brother say of the necessity of being in good earnest in seeking regenerating grace, together with the news of the conversion of the young woman before mentioned, whose conversion so generally affected most of the young people here. This news wrought much upon her, and

stirred up a spirit of envy in her towards this young woman, whom she thought very unworthy of being distinguished from others by such a mercy; but withal it engaged her in a firm resolution to do her utmost to obtain the same blessing. Considering with herself what course she should take, she thought that she had not a sufficient knowledge of the principles of religion to render her capable of conversion; whereupon she resolved thoroughly to search the Scriptures; and accordingly immediately began at the beginning of the Bible, intending to read it through. She continued thus till Thursday: and then there was a sudden alteration, by a great increase of her concern in an extraordinary sense of her own sinfulness, particularly the sinfulness of her nature, and wickedness of her heart. This came upon her, as she expressed it, as a flash of lightning, and struck her into an exceeding terror. Upon which she left off reading the Bible, in course, as she had begun; and turned to the New Testament, to see if she could not find some relief there for her distressed soul. Her great terror, she said, was, that she had sinned against God: her distress grew more and more for three days; until she saw nothing but blackness of darkness before her, and her very flesh trembled for fear of God's wrath: she wondered and was astonished at herself, that she had been so concerned for her body, and had applied so often to physicians to heal that, and had neglected her soul. Her sinfulness appeared with a very awful aspect to her, especially in three things; viz. her original sin, and her sin in murmuring at God's providence-in the weakness and afflictions she had been under-and in want of duty to parents, though others had looked upon her to excel in dutifulness. On Saturday, she was so earnestly engaged in reading the Bible and other books, that she continued in it, searching for something to relieve her, till her eyes were so dim that she could not know the letters. While she was thus engaged in reading, prayer, and other religious exercises, she thought of those words of Christ, wherein He warns us not to be as the heathen, that think they shall be heard for their much speaking; which, she said, led her to see that she had trusted to her own prayers and religious performances, and now she was put to a nonplus, and knew not which way to turn herself, or where to seek relief. While her mind was in this posture, her heart, she said, seemed to fly, to the minister for refuge, hoping that he could give her some relief. She came the same day to her brother, with the countenance of a person in distress, expostulating with him, why he had not told her more of her sinfulness,

and earnestly inquiring of him what she should do. She seemed that day to feel in herself an enmity against the Bible, which greatly affrighted her. Her sense of her own exceeding sinfulness continued increasing from Thursday till Monday and she gave this account of it: That it had been her opinion, till now, she was not guilty of Adam's sin, nor any way concerned in it, because she was not active in it; but that now she saw she was guilty of that sin, and all over defiled by it; and the sin which she brought into the world with her, was alone sufficient to condemn her.

On the Sabbath-day she was so ill, that her friends thought it best that she should not go to public worship, of which she seemed very desirous: but when she went to bed on the Sabbath night, she took up a resolution, that she would the next morning go to the minister, hoping to find some relief there. As she awakened on Monday morning, a little before day, she wondered within herself at the easiness and calmness she felt in her mind, which was of that kind she never felt before. As she thought of this, such words as these were in her mind: The words of the Lord are pure words, health to the soul, and marrow to the bones: and then these words, The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin; which were accompanied with a lively sense of the excellency of Christ, and His sufficiency to satisfy for the sins of the whole world. She then thought of that expression, It is a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the sun; which words then seemed to her to be very applicable to Jesus Christ. By these things her mind was led into such contemplations and views of Christ, as filled her exceeding full of joy. She told her brother, in the morning, that she had seen (i.e. in realizing views by faith) Christ the last night, and that she had really thought that she had not knowledge enough to be converted; but, says she, God can make it quite easy! On Monday she felt all day a constant sweetness in her soul. She had a repetition of the same discoveries of Christ three mornings together, and much in the same manner, at each time, waking a little before day; but brighter and brighter every day.

At the last time, on Wednesday morning, while in the enjoyment of a spiritual view of Christ's glory and fullness, her soul was filled with distress for Christless persons, to consider what a miserable condition they were in. She felt a strong inclination immediately to go forth to warn sinners; and proposed it the next day to her brother to assist her in going from house to house; but her brother restrained her, by telling her of the

unsuitableness of such a method. She told one of her sisters that day, that she loved all mankind, but especially the people of God. Her sister asked her why she loved all mankind. She replied, Because God has made them. After this, there happened to come into the shop where she was at work, three persons who were thought to have been lately converted: her seeing of them, as they stepped in one after another, so affected her, and so drew forth her love to them, that it overcame her, and she almost fainted. When they began to talk of the things of religion, it was more than she could bear; they were obliged to cease on that account. It was a very frequent thing with her to be overcome with the flow of affection to them whom she thought godly, in conversation with them, and sometimes only at the sight of them.

She had many extraordinary discoveries of the glory of God and Christ; sometimes, in some particular attributes, and sometimes in many. She gave an account, that once, as those four words passed through her mind, wisdom, justice, goodness, and truth, her soul was filled with a sense of the glory of each of these divine attributes, but especially the last. Truth, said she, sunk the deepest! And, therefore, as these words passed, this was repeated, truth, truth! Her mind was so swallowed up with a sense of the glory of God's truth and other perfections, that she said, it seemed as though her life was going, and that she saw it was easy with God to take away her life by discoveries of Himself. Soon after this she went to a private religious meeting, and her mind was full of a sense and view of the glory of God all the time. When the exercise was ended, some asked her concerning what she had experienced, and she began to give an account, but as she was relating it, it revived such a sense of the same things, that her strength failed, and they were obliged to take her and lay her upon the bed. Afterwards she was greatly affected, and rejoiced with these words, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain! She had several days together a sweet sense of the excellency and loveliness of Christ in His meekness, which disposed her continually to be repeating over these words, which were sweet to her, meek and lowly in heart, meek and lowly in heart. She once expressed herself to one of her sisters to this purpose, that she had continued whole days and whole nights, in a constant ravishing view of the glory of God and Christ, having enjoyed as much as her life could bear. Once, as her brother was speaking of the dying love of Christ, she told

him, she had such a sense of it, that the mere mentioning of it was ready to overcome her.

Once, when she came to me, she said,-that at such and such a time, she thought she saw as much of God, and had as much joy and pleasure, as was possible in this life; and that yet, afterwards, God discovered Himself far more abundantly. She saw the same things as before, yet more clearly, and in a far more excellent and delightful manner; and was filled with a more exceeding sweetness. She likewise gave me such an account of the sense she once had, from day to day, of the glory of Christ, and of God, in His various attributes, that it seemed to me she dwelt for days together in a kind of beatific vision of God; and seemed to have, as I thought, as immediate an intercourse with Him, as a child with a father. At the same time, she appeared most remote from any high thought of herself, and of her own sufficiency; but was like a little child, and expressed a great desire to be instructed, telling me that she longed very often to come to me for instruction, and wanted to live at my house, that I might tell her what was her duty. She often expressed a sense of the glory of God appearing in the trees, the growth of the fields, and other works of God's hands. She told her sister who lived near the heart of the town, that she once thought it a pleasant thing to live in the middle of the town, but now, says she, I think it much more pleasant to sit and see the wind blowing the trees, and to behold in the country what God has made. She had sometimes the powerful breathings of the Spirit of God on her soul, while reading the Scripture; and would express her sense of the certain truth and divinity thereof. She sometimes would appear with a pleasant smile on her countenance; and once, when her sister took notice of it, and asked why she smiled, she replied, I am brim-full of a sweet feeling within. She often used to express how good and sweet it was to lie low before God, and the lower (says she) the better! and that it was pleasant to think of lying in the dust, all the days of her life, mourning for sin. She was wont to manifest a great sense of her own meanness and dependence. She often expressed an exceeding compassion, and pitiful love, which she found in her heart towards persons in a Christless condition. This was sometimes so strong, that, as she was passing by such in the streets, or those that she feared were such, she would be overcome by the sight of them. She once

said, that she longed to have the whole world saved; she wanted, as it were, to pull them all to her, she could not bear to have one lost.

She had great longings to die, that she might be with Christ: which increased until she thought she did not know how to be patient to wait till God's time. But once, when she felt those longings, she thought with herself, If I long to die, why do I go to physicians? Whence she concluded that her longings for death were not well regulated. After this she often put it to herself, which she should choose, whether to live or to die, to be sick or to be well; and she found she could not tell, till at last she found herself disposed to say these words: I am quite willing to live, and quite willing to die; quite willing to be sick, and quite willing to be well; and quite willing for any thing that God will bring upon me! And then, said she, I felt myself perfectly easy, in a full submission to the will of God. She then lamented much, that she had been so eager in her longings for death, as it argued want of such a resignation to God as ought to be. She seemed henceforward to continue in this resigned frame till death.

After this, her illness increased upon her: and once after she had before spent the greater part of the night in extreme pain, she waked out of a little sleep with these words in her heart and mouth; "I am willing to suffer for Christ's sake, I am willing to spend and be spent for Christ's sake; I am willing to spend my life, even my very life, for Christ's sake!" And though she had an extraordinary resignation with respect to life or death, yet the thoughts of dying were exceeding sweet to her. At a time when her brother was reading in Job, concerning worms feeding on the dead body, she appeared with a pleasant smile; and being asked about it, she said, It was sweet to her to think of her being in such circumstances. At another time, when her brother mentioned the danger there seemed to be, that the illness she labored under might be an occasion of her death, it filled her with joy that almost overcame her. At another time, when she met a company following a corpse to the grave, she said, it was sweet to her to think that they would in a little time follow her in like manner.

Her illness, in the latter part of it, was seated much in her throat; and an inward swelling filled up the pipe, so that she could swallow nothing but what was perfectly liquid and but very little of that, with great and long strugglings. That which she took in fled out at her nostrils, till at last she



could swallow nothing at all. She had a raging appetite for food; so that she told her sister, when talking with her about her circumstances, that the worst bit would be sweet to her; but yet, when she saw that she could not swallow it, she seemed to be as perfectly contented without it, as if she had no appetite. Others were greatly moved to see what she underwent, and were filled with admiration at her unexampled patience. At a time when she was striving in vain to get down a little of something liquid, and was very much spent with it; she looked upon her sister with a smile, saying, O sister, this is for my good! At another time, when her sister was speaking of what she underwent, she told her, that she lived a heaven upon earth for all that. She used sometimes to say to her sister, under her extreme sufferings, It is good to be so! Her sister once asked her, why she said so; why, says she, because God would have it so: it is best that things should be as God would have them: it looks best to me. After her confinement, as they were leading her from the bed to the door, she seemed overcome by the sight of things abroad, as showing forth the glory of the Being who had made them. As she lay on her death-bed, she would often say these words, God is my friend! And once, looking upon her sister with a smile, said, O sister, How good it is! How sweet and comfortable it is to consider, and think of heavenly things! and used this argument to persuade her sister to be much in such meditations.

She expressed, on her death-bed, an exceeding longing, both for persons in a natural state, that they might be converted, and for the godly, that they might see and know more of God. And when those who looked on themselves as in a Christless state came to see her, she would be greatly moved with compassionate affection. One in particular, who seemed to be in great distress about the state of her soul, and had come to see her from time to time, she desired her sister to persuade not to come any more, because the sight of her so wrought on her compassions, that it overcame her nature. The same week that she died, when she was in distressing circumstances as to her body, some of her neighbors who came to see her, asked if she was willing to die! She replied, that she was quite willing either to live or die; she was willing to be in pain; she was willing to be so always as she was then, if that was the will of God. She willed what God willed. They asked her whether she was willing to die that night. She answered, Yes, if it be God's will. And seemed to speak all with that

perfect composure of spirit, and with such a cheerful and pleasant countenance, that it filled them with admiration.

She was very weak a considerable time before she died, having pined away with famine and thirst, so that her flesh seemed to be dried upon her bones; and therefore could say but little, and manifested her mind very much by signs. She said she had matter enough to fill up all her time with talk, if she had but strength. A few days before her death, some asked her, Whether she held her integrity still? Whether she was not afraid of death? She answered to this purpose, that she had not the least degree of fear of death. They asked her why she would be so confident? She answered, If I should say otherwise, I should speak contrary to what I know. There is, said she, indeed, a dark entry, that looks something dark, but on the other side there appears such a bright shining light, that I cannot be afraid! She said not long before she died, that she used to be afraid how she should grapple with death; but, says she, God has showed me that He can make it easy in great pain. Several days before she died, she could scarcely say any thing but just Yes, and No, to questions that were asked her; for she seemed to be dying for three days together. But she seemed to continue in an admirably sweet composure of soul, without any interruption, to the last, and died as a person that went to sleep, without any struggling, about noon, on Friday, June 27, 1735.

She had long been infirm, and often had been exercised with great pain; but she died chiefly of famine. It was, doubtless, partly owing to her bodily weakness, that her nature was so often overcome, and ready to sink with gracious affection; but yet the truth was, that she had more grace, and greater discoveries of God and Christ, than the present frail state did well consist with. She wanted to be where strong grace might have more liberty, and be without the clog of a weak body; there she longed to be, and there she doubtless now is. She was looked upon amongst us, as a very eminent instance of Christian experience; but this is but a very broken and imperfect account I have given of her: her eminency would much more appear, if her experiences were fully related, as she was wont to express and manifest them, while living. I once read this account to some of her pious neighbors, who were acquainted with her, who said, to this purpose, that the picture fell much short of the life; and particularly that it much failed of duly representing her humility, and that admirable lowliness of

heart, that all times appeared in her. But there are, blessed be God! many living instances, of much the like nature, and in some things no less extraordinary.

But I now proceed to the other instance, that of the little child before mentioned. Her name is Phebe Bartlet, [She was living in March, 1789, and maintained the character of a true convert.] daughter of William Bartlet. I shall give the account as I took it from the mouth of her parents, whose veracity none who know them doubt of.

She was born in March, 1731. About the latter end of April, or beginning of May, 1735, she was greatly affected by the talk of her brother, who had been hopefully converted a little before, at about eleven years of age, and then seriously talked to her about the great things of religion. Her parents did not know of it at that time, and were not wont, in the counsels they gave to their children, particularly to direct themselves to her, being so young, and, as they supposed, not capable of understanding. But after her brother had talked to her, they observed her very earnestly listen to the advice they gave to the other children; and she was observed very constantly to retire, several times in a day, as was concluded, for secret prayer. She grew more and more engaged in religion, and was more frequent in her closet; till at last she was wont to visit it five or six times a day: and was so engaged in it, that nothing would at any time divert her from her stated closet exercises. Her mother often observed and watched her, when such things occurred as she thought most likely to divert her, either by putting it out of her thoughts, or otherwise engaging her inclinations; but never could observe her to fail. She mentioned some very remarkable instances.

She once of her own accord spake of her unsuccessfulness, in that she could not find God, or to that purpose. But on Thursday, the last day of July, about the middle of the day, the child being in the closet, where it used to retire, its mother heard it speaking aloud; which was unusual, and never had been observed before. And her voice seemed to be as of one exceedingly importunate and engaged; but her mother could distinctly hear only these words, spoken in a childish manner, but with extraordinary earnestness, and out of distress of soul, pray, blessed Lord, give me salvation! I pray, beg, pardon all my sins! When the child had done

prayer, she came out of the closet, sat down by her mother, and cried out aloud. Her mother very earnestly asked her several times what the matter was, before she would make any answer; but she continued crying, and writhing her body to and fro, like one in anguish of spirit. Her mother then asked her, whether she was afraid that God would not give her salvation. She then answered, Yes, I am afraid I shall go to hell! Her mother then endeavored to quiet her, and told her she would not have her cry, she must be a good girl, and pray every day, and she hoped God would give her salvation. But this did not quiet her at all; she continued thus earnestly crying, and taking on for some time, till at length she suddenly ceased crying, and began to smile, and presently said with a smiling countenance, Mother, the kingdom of heaven is come to me! Her mother was surprised at the sudden alteration, and at the speech; and knew not what to make of it; but at first said nothing to her. The child presently spake again, and said, There is another come to me, and there is another, there is three; and being asked what she meant, she answered, One is, Thy will be done, and there is another, Enjoy Him for ever; by which it seems, that when the child said, There is three come to me; she meant three passages of her catechism that came to her mind.

After the child had said this, she retired again into her closet, and her mother went over to her brother's, who was next neighbor; and when she came back, the child, being come out of the closet, meets her mother with this cheerful speech; I can find God now! referring to what she had before complained of, that she could not find God. Then the child spoke again and said, I love God! Her mother asked her, how well she loved God, whether she loved God better than her father and mother. She said, Yes. Then she asked her, whether she loved God better than her little sister Rachel. She answered, Yes, better than any thing! Then her elder sister, referring to her saying she could find God now, asked her, where she could find God. She answered, In heaven. Why, said she, have you been in heaven? No, said the child. By this it seems not to have been any imagination of any thing seen with bodily eyes, that she called God, when she said, I can find God now. Her mother asked her, whether she was afraid of going to hell, and if that had made her cry? She answered, Yes, I was; but now I shan't. Her mother asked her, whether she thought that God had given her salvation: she answered, Yes. Her mother asked her.

When? She answered, Today. She appeared all that afternoon exceeding cheerful and joyful. One of the neighbors asked her, how she felt herself. She answered, I feel better than I did. The neighbor asked her, what made her feel better. She answered, God makes me. That evening, as she lay a-bed, she called one of her little cousins to her, who was present in the room, as having something to say to him; and when he came, she told him, that heaven was better than earth. The next day, her mother asked her what God made her for? She answered, To serve him; and added, Every body should serve God, and get an interest in Christ.

The same day the elder children, when they came home from school, seemed much affected with the extraordinary change that seemed to be made in Phebe. And her sister Abigail standing by, her mother took occasion to counsel her, now to improve her time, to prepare for another world. On which Phebe burst out in tears, and cried out, Poor Nabby! Her mother told her, she would not have to cry; she hoped that God would give Nabby salvation; but that did not quiet her, she continued earnestly crying for some time. When she had in a measure ceased, her sister Eunice being by her, she burst out again, and cried, Poor Eunice! and cried exceedingly; and when she had almost done, she went into another room, and there looked upon her sister Naomi: and burst out again, crying, Poor Amy! Her mother was greatly affected at such a behavior in a child, and knew not what to say to her. One of the neighbors coming in a little after, asked her what she had cried for. She seemed at first backward to tell the reason: her mother told her she might tell that person, for he had given her an apple: upon which she said, she cried because she was afraid they would go to hell. At night, a certain minister, who was occasionally in the town, was at the house, and talked with her of religious things. After he was gone, she sat leaning on the table, with tears running from her eyes; and being asked what made her cry, she said, I was thinking about God. The next day, being Saturday, she seemed a great part of the day to be in a very affectionate frame, had four turns of crying and seemed to endeavor to curb herself, and hide her tears, and was very backward to talk of the occasion. On the Sabbath-day she was asked, whether she believed in God; she answered, Yes. And being told that Christ was the Son of God, she made ready answer, and said, I know it.

From this time there appeared a very remarkable abiding change in the child. She has been very strict upon the Sabbath; and seems to long for the Sabbath-day before it comes, and will often in the week time be inquiring how long it is to the Sabbath-day, and must have the days between particularly counted over, before she will be contented. She seems to love God's house, and is very eager to go thither. Her mother once asked her, why she had such a mind to go? whether it was not to see fine folks? She said, No, it was to hear Mr. Edwards preach. When she is in the place of worship, she is very far from spending her time there as children at her age usually do, but appears with an attention that is very extraordinary for such a child. She also appears very desirous at all opportunities to go to private religious meetings; and is very still and attentive at home, during prayer, and has appeared affected in time of family-prayer. She seems to delight much in hearing religious conversation. When I once was there with some strangers, and talked to her something of religion, she seemed more than ordinarily attentive; and when we were gone, she looked out very wistfully after us, and said, I wish they would come again! Her mother asked her, Why? Says she, I love to hear 'em talk

She seems to have very much of the fear of God before her eyes, and an extraordinary dread of sinning against Him; of which her mother mentioned the following remarkable instance. Some time in August, the last year, she went with some bigger children to get some plums in a neighbor's lot, knowing nothing of any harm in what she did; but when she brought some of the plums into the house, her mother mildly reproved her, and told her that she must not get plums without leave, because it was sin: God had commanded her not to steal. The child seemed greatly surprised, and burst out in tears, and cried out, I won't have these plums! and turning to her sister Eunice, very earnestly said to her, Why did you ask me to go to that plum tree? I should not have gone, if you had not asked me. The other children did not seem to be much affected or concerned; but there was no pacifying Phebe. Her mother told her, she might go and ask leave, and then it would not be sin for her to eat them; and sent one of the children to that end; and, when she returned, her mother told her that the owner had given leave, now she might eat them, and it would not be stealing. This stilled her a little while; but presently she broke out again into an exceeding fit of crying. Her mother asked her, What made her cry again? Why she cried

now, since they had asked leave? What it was that troubled her now? And asked her several times very earnestly, before she made any answer; but at last said, It was because, because it was sin. She continued a considerable time crying; and said she would not go again if Eunice asked her an hundred times; and she retained her aversion to that fruit for a considerable time, under the remembrance of her former sin.

She sometimes appears greatly affected, and delighted with texts of Scripture that come to her mind. Particularly about the beginning of November, that text came to her mind, ~~and~~ Revelation 3:20, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in, and sup with him, and he with me.” She spoke of it to those of the family with a great appearance of joy, a smiling countenance, and elevation of voice; and afterwards she went into another room, where her mother overheard her talking very earnestly to the children about it; and particularly heard her say to them, three or four times over, with an air of exceeding joy and admiration, Why, it is to sup with God. Some time about the middle of winter, very late in the night, when all were a-bed, her mother perceived that she was awake, and heard her, as though she was weeping. She called to her, and asked her what was the matter. She answered with a low voice, so that her mother could not hear what she said; but thinking that it might be occasioned by some spiritual affection, said no more to her: but perceived her to lie awake, and to continue in the same frame, for a considerable time. The next morning she asked her, whether she did not cry the last night. The child answered, Yes, I did cry a little, for I was thinking about God and Christ, and they loved me. Her mother asked her, whether to think of God and Christ loving her made her cry? She answered, Yes, it does sometimes. She has often manifested a great concern for the good of others’ souls: and has been wont many times affectionately to counsel the other children. Once, about the latter end of September, the last year, when she and some others of the children were in a room by themselves, husking Indian corn, the child, after a while, came out and sat by the fire. Her mother took notice that she appeared with a more than ordinary serious and pensive countenance; but at last she broke silence, and said, I have been talking to Nabby and Eunice. Her mother asked her what she had said to them. Why, said she, I told them they must pray, and prepare to die; that they had but a little while to live in this

world, and they must be always ready. When Nabby came out, her mother asked her, whether she had said that to them. Yes, said she, She said that, and a great deal more. At other times, the child took opportunities to talk to the other children about the great concern of their souls, so as much to affect them. She was once exceeding importunate with her mother to go with her sister Naomi to pray: her mother endeavored to put her off; but she pulled her by the sleeve, and seemed as if she would by no means be denied. At last her mother told her, that Amy must go and pray by herself; but, says the child, she will not go; and persisted earnestly to beg of her mother to go with her.

She has discovered an uncommon degree of a spirit of charity, particularly on the following occasion. A poor man that lives in the woods, had lately lost a cow that the family much depended on; and being at the house, he was relating his misfortune, and telling of the straits and difficulties they were reduced to by it. She took much notice of it, and it wrought exceedingly on her compassion. After she had attentively heard him awhile, she went away to her father, who was in the shop, and entreated him to give that man a cow: and told him, that the poor man had no cow! that the hunters, or something else, had killed his cow! and entreated him to give him one of theirs. Her father told her that they could not spare one. Then she entreated him to let him and his family come and live at his house: and had much more talk of the same nature, whereby she manifested bowels of compassion to the poor.

She has manifested great love to her minister: particularly when I returned from my long journey for my health, the last fall. When she heard of it, she appeared very joyful at the news, and told the children of it, with an elevated voice, as the most joyful tidings; repeating it over and over. Mr. Edwards is come home! Mr. Edwards is come home! She still continues very constant in secret prayer, so far as can be observed, for she seems to have no desire that others should observe her when she retires, being a child of a reserved temper. Every night, before she goes to bed, she will say her catechism, and will by no means miss. She never forgot it but once, and then, after she was a-bed, thought of it, and cried out in tears, I hadn't said my catechism! and would not be quieted till her mother asked her the catechism as she lay in bed. She sometimes appears to be in doubt about the condition of her soul; and when asked, whether she thinks that she is



prepared for death, speaks something doubtfully about it. At other times she seems to have no doubt, but when asked, replies, Yes, without hesitation. In the former part of this great work of God amongst us, till it got to His height, we seemed to be wonderfully smiled upon and blessed in all respects. Satan seemed to be unusually restrained; persons who before had been involved in melancholy, seemed to be as it were waked up out of it; and those who had been entangled with extraordinary temptations, seemed wonderfully freed. And not only so, but it was the most remarkable time of health that ever I knew since I have been in the town. We ordinarily have several bills put up, every Sabbath, for sick persons; but now we had not so much as one for many sabbaths together. But after this it seemed to be otherwise. When this work of God appeared to be at its greatest height, a poor weak man who belongs to the town, being in great spiritual trouble, was hurried with violent temptations to cut his own throat, and made an attempt, but did not do it effectually. He, after this, continued a considerable time exceedingly overwhelmed with melancholy; but has not for a long time been very greatly delivered, by the light of God's countenance lifted up upon him, and has expressed a great sense of his sin in so far yielding to temptation; and there are in him all hopeful evidences of his having been made a subject of saving mercy. In the latter part of May, it began to be very sensible that the Spirit of God was gradually withdrawing from us, and after this time Satan seemed to be more let loose, and raged in a dreadful manner. The first instance wherein it appeared, was a person putting an end to his own life by cutting his throat. He was a gentleman of more than common understanding, of strict morals, religious in his behavior, and a useful and honorable person in the town; but was of a family that are exceedingly prone to the disease of melancholy, and his mother was killed with it. He had, from the beginning of this extraordinary time, been exceedingly concerned about the state of his soul, and there were some things in his experience that appeared very hopeful; but he durst entertain no hope concerning his own good estate. Towards the latter part of his time, he grew much discouraged, and melancholy grew again upon him, till he was wholly overpowered by it, and was in a great measure past a capacity of receiving advice, or being reasoned with to any purpose. The devil took the advantage, and drove him into despairing thoughts. He was kept awake at nights, meditating terror, so that he had scarce any sleep at all for a long time together; and it

was observed at last, that he was scarcely well capable of managing his ordinary business, and was judged delirious by the coroner's inquest. The news of this extraordinarily affected the minds of people here, and struck them as it were with astonishment. After this, multitudes in this and other towns seemed to have it strongly suggested to them, and pressed upon them, to do as this person had done. And many who seemed to be under no melancholy, some pious persons who had no special darkness or doubts about the goodness of their state-nor were under any special trouble or concern of mind about any thing spiritual or temporal-had it urged upon them as if somebody had spoke to them, Cut your throat, now is a good opportunity. Now! now! So that they were obliged to fight with all their might to resist it, and yet no reason suggested to them why they should do it.

About the same time, there were two remarkable instances of persons led away with strange enthusiastic delusions; one at Suffield, and another at South Hadley. That which has made the greatest noise in the country was the conduct of the man at South Hadley, whose delusion was, that he thought himself divinely instructed to direct a poor man in melancholy and despairing circumstances, to say certain words in prayer to God, as recorded in ~~EBB~~ Psalm 116:4, for his own relief. The man is esteemed a pious man. I have seen this error of his, had a particular acquaintance with him, and I believe none would question his piety who had such acquaintance. He gave me a particular account of the manner how he was deluded, which is too long to be here inserted; but, in short, he exceedingly rejoiced, and was elevated with the extraordinary work carried on in this part of the country; and was possessed with an opinion, that it was the beginning of the glorious times of the church spoken of in Scripture. He had read it as the opinion of some divines, that many in these times should be endued with extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, and had embraced the notion, though he had at first no apprehensions that any besides ministers would have such gifts. But he since exceedingly laments the dishonor he has done to God, and the wound he has given religion in it, and has lain low before God and man for it. After these things, the instances of conversion were rare here in comparison of what they had before been, though that remarkable instance before noticed of the little child, was after this. The Spirit of God, not long after this time, appeared very sensibly

withdrawing from all parts of the country, though we have heard of the work going on in some places of Connecticut, and that it continues to be carried on even to this day. But religion remained here, and I believe in some other places, the main subject of conversation for several months after. And there were some turns, wherein God's work seemed to revive, and we were ready to hope that all was going to be renewed again; yet, in the main, there was a gradual decline of that general, engaged, lively spirit in religion, which had been. Several things have happened since, which have diverted people's minds, and turned their conversation more to other affairs; particularly his Excellency the Governor's coming up, and the Committee of general court, on the treaty with the Indians. -Afterwards, the Springfield controversy; and since that, our people in this town have been engaged in the building of a new meeting-house. Some other occurrences might be mentioned, that have seemed to have this effect. But as to those who have been thought converted at this time, they generally seem to have had an abiding change wrought on them. I have had particular acquaintance with many of them since; and they generally appear to be persons who have a new sense of things, new apprehensions and views of God, of the divine attributes of Jesus Christ, and the great things of the gospel. They have a new sense of their truth, and they affect them in a new manner; though it is very far from being always alike with them, neither can they revive a sense of things when they please. Their hearts are often touched, and sometimes filled, with new sweetnesses and delights; there seems to express an inward ardor and burning of heart, like to which they never experienced before; sometimes, perhaps, occasioned only by the mention of Christ's name, or some one of the divine perfections. There are new appetites, and a new kind of breathings and pantings of heart, and groanings that cannot be uttered. There is a new kind of inward labor and struggle of soul towards heaven and holiness. Some who before were very rough in their temper and manners, seemed to be remarkably softened and sweetened. And some have had their souls exceedingly filled, and overwhelmed with light, love, and comfort, long since the work of God has ceased to be so remarkably carried on in a general way; and some have had much greater experiences of this nature than they had before. There is still a great deal of religious conversation continued in the town, amongst young and old; a religious disposition appears to be still maintained amongst our people, by their holding frequent private religious meetings;

and all sorts are generally worshipping God at such meetings on Sabbath-nights, and in the evening after our public lecture. Many children in the town still keep up such meetings among themselves. I know of no one young person in the town who has returned to former ways of looseness and extravagance in any respect; but we still remain a reformed people, and God has evidently made us a new people. I cannot say that there has been no instance of any one person who has conducted himself unworthily; nor am I so vain as to imagine that we have not been mistaken in our good opinion concerning any; or that there are none who pass amongst us for sheep, that are indeed wolves in sheep's clothing; and who probably may, some time or other, discover themselves by their fruits. We are not so pure, but that we have great cause to be humbled and ashamed that we are so impure; nor so religious, but that those who watch for our halting, may see things in us, whence they may take occasion to reproach us and religion. But in the main, there has been a great and marvelous work of conversion and sanctification among the people here; and they have paid all due respect to those who have been blest of God to be the instruments of it. Both old and young have shown a forwardness to hearken not only to my counsels, but even to my reproofs, from the pulpit. A great part of the country have not received the most favorable thoughts of this affair; and to this day many retain a jealousy concerning it, and prejudice against it. I have reason to think that the meanness and weakness of the instrument, that has been made use of in this town, has prejudiced many against it; nor does it appear to me strange that it should be so.

But yet the circumstances of this great work of God is analogous to other circumstances of it. God has so ordered the manner of the work in many respects, as very signally and remarkably to show it to be His own peculiar and immediate work; and to secure the glory of it wholly to His almighty power, and sovereign grace. And whatever the circumstances and means have been, and though we are so unworthy, yet so hath it pleased God to work! And we are evidently a people blessed of the Lord! For here, in this corner of the world, God dwells, and manifests His glory.

Thus, Reverend Sir, I have given a large and particular account of this remarkable affair; and yet, considering how manifold God's works have been amongst us, it is but a very brief one. I should have sent it much

sooner, had I not been greatly hindered by illness in my family, and also in my own person. It is probably much larger than you expected, and, it may be, than you would have chosen. I thought that the extraordinary nature of the thing, and the innumerable misrepresentations which have gone abroad of it, many of which, doubtless, have reached your ears, made it necessary that I should be particular. But I would leave it entirely with your wisdom to make what use of it you think best, to send a part of it to England, or all, or none, if you think it not worthy; or otherwise to dispose of it as you may think most for God's glory, and the interest of religion. If you are pleased to send any thing to the Revelation Dr. Guyse, I should be glad to have it signified to him, as my humble desire, that since he and the congregation to which he preached, have been pleased to take so much notice of us, as they have, that they would also think of us at the throne of grace, and seek there for us, that God would not forsake us, but enable us to bring forth fruit answerable to our profession, and our mercies; and that our "light may so shine before men, that others seeing our good works, may glorify our Father which is in heaven."

When I first heard of the notice the Revelation Dr. Watts and Dr. Guyse took of God's mercies to us, I took occasion to inform our congregation of it in a discourse from these words-A city that set upon a hill cannot be hid. And having since seen a particular account of the notice which the Revelation Dr. Guyse and his congregation took of it, in a letter you wrote to my honored uncle Williams, I read that part of your letter to the congregation, and labored as much as in me lay to enforce their duty from it. The congregation were very sensibly moved and affected at both times.

I humbly request of you, Reverend Sir, your prayers for this county, in its present melancholy circumstances, into which it is brought by the Springfield quarrel; which, doubtless, above all things that have happened, has tended to put a stop to the glorious work here, and to prejudice this country against it, and hinder the propagation of it. I also ask your prayers for this town, and would particularly beg an interest in them for him who is,

Honored Sir, With humble respect, Your obedient Son and Servant,  
Jonathan Edwards. Northampton, November 6, 1736.

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