



New Essays by John Robinson

New Essays; or Observations Divine and Moral, Collected out of the Holy Scriptures, ancient and modern writers, both divine and human; as also out of the great volume of men's manners: tending to the furtherance of knowledge and virtue

"Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser : teach a just man, and he will increase in learning." Prov.ix.9.

Experientia docet, aut nocet.

By John Robinson
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CHAPTER I: OF MAN'S KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

"The Lord giveth wisdom, and out of his mouth cometh knowledge, and understanding," saith Solomon, Prov. ii.6: and therein warneth us, to lay our ear close to the mouth of God, and when he speaketh once, Psa.lxii.11, we may hear twice, and having our closed hearts opened by his Spirit, may attend to the words of grace, and wisdom, which proceed from him, and are able to make us wise to salvation.

As all our wisdom to happiness consists, summarily, in the knowledge of God, and of ourselves [Calvin]; so is it not easy to determine, whether of the two goes before the other. But, as neither can be without other, in any competent, or profitable measure, or manner; and as in vain the eye of the mind is lifted up to see God, which is not fit to see itself [Bernard]; so seems the reasons of most weight, which prefer the knowledge of God to the first place. For, first, God in his word and works is the rule and measure of man's goodness, and man, at his best, but formed, and reformed after God's image. As in nature, the rule is before that which is to be ruled by it, so must it be in our knowledge. Secondly, such is our inbred pride, and hypocrisy, as that, whilst we look only upon ourselves, and upon other creatures here below, we think we are somebody for goodness, and virtue; but are then brought to that confusion in ourselves, which is requisite for our humiliation, when we come to take some knowledge of the super-excellency of God: even as our bodily eye forthwith dazzleth being cast upon the bright sun; how quick, and strong-sighted soever it seem, whilst it is set only upon earthly objects. Thirdly, so absolutely necessary is the knowledge of God, as that we can ascribe nothing, as is meet, unto him, of whom, and for whom, we and all thing are, till we first know him in his Word and works, but, even in our best devotions, with the superstitious Athenians, shall build our altars "to the unknown God," Acts xvii.23 and with the blind Samaritans, worship we "know not what," John iv.22. To conclude: he that pretends the service of God, and yet knows him not in his Word, and works of creation, and redemption also, wherein his face is seen, is like him that counterfeits himself to be the household servant of some great lord, whose face he never saw, nor once came within his court gates.

Some ambitious and curious wits, but not able, and no marvel, to raise up, and advance their notions to God's infiniteness, for the comprehending of it, have laboured to depress, and pull him down to their dwarfish conceptions of him; and have, indeed, rather made him some great and giant-like man, or angel, than, as he is in truth, an infinite God; allowing him an essence, power, and wisdom hugely great, but not properly infinite and immense; as though God could not be that, which they cannot conceive of him.

The essence of God is known only to himself, but is undiscernible to all men, and angels: partly by reason of its infiniteness, which therefore no finite understanding can comprehend; and partly, for that no voice, sign, or form can sufficiently express it either to sense or reason. And if God have placed such light and glory in some created bodies, as that we cannot intently fix our bodily eye upon them, without dazzling; what marvel is it, though the eye of the understanding of all men, and angels dazzle, in the too curious and intente contemplation of his infinite, and infinitely glorious majesty itself? So as, if the most wise and learned Christians should, with the heathen philosopher [Thales] undertake to descry God's being; they would be compelled, as he was, after one day's respite, to crave two; and after two, four; and so still to double the time, with acknowledgment, that the more they searched into it, the more unsearchable it appeared.

Albeit the understanding of man, though glorified, cannot possibly comprehend God's infinite being, yet shall we, coming to enjoy the blessed vision of God, whereof the angels, and "spirits of just men perfect," are made partakers, know in a far both greater measure, and more excellent, and immediate manner, than now we do. "We now walk by faith, and not by sight," 2 Cor. v.7, as we then shall do: "We now see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: knowing him even as we are known of him." 1 Cor. xiii.12. And for the present, we are by the means of revelation vouchsafed us in his Word and works, partly within and partly without us, to be led in our prayers, praises, and meditations of God, to such a being for the object thereof, as in which, first, there is nothing which hath the least affinity with the imperfection found in any creature [Dionysius]; for the expressing whereof those attributes serve, which we call negative; as immortal, invisible, a spirit, that is, no body, and the like; showing what God is not, though not what he is. Secondly, which is that eminently, infinitely, and essentially, which we, in the creature, call power, wisdom, goodness, and whatsoever else imports any perfection: and thirdly, which is that first fountain, and original of all goodness in all creatures. And by these three stairs doth our understanding raise up itself from created things to the knowledge of God. This knowledge we must seek with all earnest diligence, and store it up carefully in the treasury of our hearts: that knowing God, we may love him, and trust to him, and fear him, and honour him; that as the daughters of Jerusalem, Cant. v.8, though before marveling what ailed the spouse of Christ to be so affectioned towards her beloved, and so earnestly to seek after him, as she did, when they once came to take knowledge of his perfect beauty, would then seek him with her: so we knowing God, specially in the face of Christ Jesus, may so be ravished with love of his Majesty, as to have our whole heart set to seek, and find him, in whose presence is satiety of joys evermore.

CHAPTER II: OF GOD'S LOVE.

God loveth himself first, and most, as the chiefest good, and all other good things, as he communicates with them less, or more, the effects of his own goodness. And from this infinite love of his own infinite goodness is it, that is so severely punisheth some creatures, though the work of his own hands, which he always loveth. For, first, the creature by sin violating God's holiness, and despising his authority in his righteous commandments, and so going on impenitency, and unbelief; and withal it being impossible, that God's love of his own holiness, and justice, and the honour of the same, and the love of the creature's happiness, so obstinately dishonoring him, should stand together; it cannot be, but that the latter must give way to the former, and greater, and the creature so sinning become miserable, rather than God forgetful of his own honor and glory.

God reveals his glorious Majesty in the highest heavens, his fearful justice in the hell of the damned; his wise and powerful providence is manifest throughout the whole world; but his gracious love and mercy in, and unto his church here upon earth; which he therefore hath chosen, and taken near unto himself, that in it might be seen the riches of his glorious grace. And, albeit, all things in God are infinite, and one; yet are the effects of his love more wonderful, and excellent, than of any other of his attributes; as appears in that, his greatest, and strangest, work of giving his only begotten Son to the cursed death of the cross, for his enemies, out of his love and mercy. This the Scriptures, and worthily, call a "great mystery," 1 Tim. iii.16, and which, for the rareness of it, was not only "hidden from the sons of men," Eph. iii.10, but also from the very angels in their perfection of created knowledge. Which manifold grace, and wisdom of God they, therefore, "desire to look into, and learn by the church." 1 Pet. i. 10-12.

Love in the creature ever presupposeth some good, true, or apparent in the thing loved, by which that affection of union is drawn, as the iron by the lodestone: but the love of God on the contrary, causeth all good wrought,

or to be wrought in the creature [Scaliger]. He first loveth us in the free purpose of his will, and thence worketh good for, and in us; and then loves us actually for his own good work, for, and in us: and so still more and more, for his own further work. And hence ariseth the unchangeableness of God's love towards us, because it is founded in himself, and in the stableness of the good pleasure of his own will. And although the arguments of comfort be great, which we draw from the certain knowledge of our love to him; yet are those infinitely greater, which are taken from the consideration of his love to us; as being not only the ground of the other, but in him also infinite, and unchangeable. And, hereupon, it was, that the sisters of Lazarus seeking help for their sick brother sent Christ word, not that he, who loved him, though that were not nothing, but that "he whom he loved, was sick." John xi.3.

As by the hand of a friend reached unto us we are made partakers of the strength of his whole body, to hold, or help us up; so by the hand of the love of God reached down from heaven, in the Gospel, we become interested in the most comfortable apprehension, and happy use of all other his attributes whatsoever. The more wise, powerful, holy, glorious, eternal, and infinite God is, the more happy are we by means of his love, and mercy in Christ, which moveth him to use, and improve them all for our good, and to communicate them with us, as his friends [Philo], in their effects, so far as serves for our happiness. He, whom God loves though he know it not, is a happy man: he that knows it, knows himself to be happy. Which caused the apostle to make in his own name, and in the names of all the "beloved of God," Rom. viii. 35-39, that glorious insultation over all the enemies of his, and their happiness, that they could not separate him, or them, not from the power, or wisdom, or holiness; but not "from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus." From this "love of God," as from a spring-head, issueth all good both for grace, and glory. Yea by it, which is more, all evil by all creatures intended, or done against us, is turned to good to us. By it our afflictions work together with our election, redemption, vocation, &c., for our good. By reason of it "the stones of the field are at league with us, and the beasts of the field at peace with us," Job v.23: yea even the very sword that killeth us, the fire that burneth us, and the water that drowneth us, is a kind of spiritual, and invisible league with us, to do us good. Upon the knowledge of this "love of God shed abroad into our hearts by the Holy Ghost," is laid the foundation, and ground-work of whatsoever good thing we return again unto God, with acceptance at his hands. Upon this we do build our faith, and confidence in him, by this our cold and frozen hearts are not only thawed, but inflamed also with love again to him, and to men for him; as the earth being heated by the beams of the sun beating upon it, reflecteth heat again towards the heavens, and upon all the bodies between it, and them. Lastly, from hence arise all the pleasing services, wherewith we present his Majesty. For howsoever we owe ourselves, and whatsoever we are, or can do, unto him, as our gracious, and powerful Creator, and absolute Lord; yet can we do nothing heartily, and as we ought, but from the faith, and feeling of his love in Christ, and by the motion of "the spirit of a sound mind given unto us." 2 Tim. i.7. But being once drawn sweetly by the cords of God's goodness, and love, we readily, and pleasingly follow after him; as being debtors, and constrained, not by necessity, but, which binds more strongly, by love [Austin].

The tokens of this "love of God" in Christ are not only by us highly to be prized, but carefully to be discerned; lest we bring ourselves into a fool's paradise, and grow presumptuously secure; which is the forerunner of sudden, and certain destruction. We must therefore in this scrutiny neither trust ourselves, nor any other creature, but God alone in the testimony of his Word, and the Spirit, which "knows, and makes known the mind of God," 1 Cor. ii.10-12; and by which we may unerringly learn; first, what the tokens of his love are; and secondly, who they are which partake of them; and thirdly, that we ourselves are of that blessed number. Now, amongst them all, there is none so certain, and infallible, though those of feeling be more joyful, as the gracious work of true repentance in the "mortifying of the old man in his sinful affections," Rom. viii.12; and in "the quickening power of Christ's Spirit," Gal. v. 25, to willing, though weak, "obedience to all God's commandments." Psal. cxix. 6. As we may certainly know, that the sun shines, by the beams, and heat thereof below, though we climb not into heaven to see, so may we have certain knowledge of God's gracious love towards us, without searching further than our own hearts, and ways, and by finding them truly, and effectually turned from sin to God.

As God may so far hate some evil in a person, for example, the adultery of David, and other sins accompanying it, as to punish the same severely in this world, and yet not hate the person himself; so may he, on the other side, love some good in a man, so far, as to reward it highly in this life, and nevertheless, not love, but hate, the person in whom it is found; as may be seen in the zeal of Jehu for the Lord, 2 Kings ix.10, against wicked Ahab,

and his house. And if our narrow, and partial hearts can, upon occasion, hold and preserve this difference between persons, and things; how much more may, and doth the same right well stand, with the distribution of rewards, and punishments made by the most holy, and wise God? As then, when the Lord manifests some signs of his anger at us, and hatred against the evils in us, we must take heed we conclude not presently, that therefore we in our persons are hated of him, and castaways, except the evils reign in us without repentance; so must we, on the other side, take more care, considering how by self-love we are commonly in more danger thereof, that we conclude not of the love of God towards our persons, from every effect of some kind of love, and liking of some particular good things in us; and not except those good things be such, as make us good also, as faith and holiness do, transforming us, as it were, into their nature, and kind: as in the parable of the wheat, and tares, the good seed, Matt. xiii., is expounded, the children of the kingdom because they grow of the good seed of the Gospel; and by their regeneration, as it were, turn very word and spirit.

CHAPTER III: OF GOD'S PROMISES.

The promises of God are a kind of middle thing between his purpose, and performance of good unto them, who he loveth. And as wicked Jezebel, 1 Kings xix.2, could not satisfy her hatred of Elias the prophet in intending evil to him, and executing it upon him, in time, as she could; unless withal she thundered out against him terrible threatenings in the meanwhile: so, much less can the love of our good God satisfy itself in a gracious purpose of good towards us in his heart, and actual performance of it accordingly, in due time, except withal, he make it known unto us beforehand, both for our present comfort in the knowledge thereof, and for the ground of our hope and expectation of the good things promised, and accordingly to be received at his hands, in their time: he having by his promise bound over unto us both his love, and truth, and other attributes for performance. And herein the Lord provides very graciously for his poor servants, who are oftentimes brought into that distressed state both outward and inward, as they have very little else, save the promises of God, wherewith to comfort themselves. Which yet are sufficient, if we improve them, as we ought; considering, first, his love, moving him to promise, and the unchangeableness of it: secondly, his wisdom directing him to promise nothing unfit; thirdly, his power enabling him, and fourthly, his truth binding him to all performance: in regard whereof, God hath made himself a debtor, though not by receiving from us, yet by promising unto us; promise being, as we say, due debt [Austin].

God ever performeth what, and as, he promiseth, and not one good thing for another, as some think: no, not heavenly for earthly, nor a great good for a less. For howsoever so to do, might stand with his bounty, and goodness; yet his truth binds him to his word, which is truth, John vii.17. Spiritual good things necessarily accompanying salvation he promiseth absolutely unto his; other good things, ordinarily, upon condition. Which, considering, that through our abuse of them, they may prove prejudicial to our spiritual man, if so be the Lord should promise absolutely, as the former; it were, many times, indeed, not to promise a benefit, but to threaten a hurt rather. And, truly, we may observe in the dangerous falls, and miscarriages of the wise Solomon, unto whom temporal good things were absolutely promised, in the fullest measure, and accordingly performed, how graciously our wise, and good God provides for our slippery state, in scantling his promise of good things of that kind to our spiritual skill, and care of using them, for the advantage of our true, and eternal happiness. We are, therefore, first, to beware, that we expect not absolutely temporal prosperity, lest by so doing we both wrong the Lord's truth, and our own faith in the things promised indeed, by doubting of them, because we have failed of obtaining of other things by us presumed of, but not promised by the Lord. Secondly, we must as firmly believe, and expect the performance of temporal promises, as the Lord hath made them, as of eternal. For, albeit his love do not manifest itself in like degree in promising both; yet his truth is alike bound to exhibit both, being once promised. Neither is that person in earnest with God, who pretending faith for eternal good things, yet dare not trust his word for temporal. Such as despise heavenly things, and love earthly, usually pretend their trusting of God for the former, of which they are indeed profanely secure, but will trust themselves, and their own fingers for earthly, which in truth they set by. I must therefore thus conclude with myself touching those matters, - seeing "God hath promised all good things to them that love him," Psa. xxxiv.9: if this, or that bodily good thing, good in itself, be indeed for my good, I shall receive it from him, in due time: and if I receive it not, it is a real testimony from him, that indeed it is not good for me, how much

soever I desire it.

As God's goodness shines most clearly in his promises, so man's perverseness abuseth, and misapplieth them above all other parts of his Word. A great many divide God's promises from the other parts of his revealed will, and making small, or none account, that either the rules of the Word appertain unto them for direction, or the precepts for obedience, or the threatenings for restraint; yet do lay their sacrilegious hands boldly upon the promises, as their true, and undoubted right. And the reason is, because the promises contain in them things good, and pleasing to man's nature; which, because we would gladly have true, we readily believe, and apply. But, such separate what God hath joined together, and in effect, "take away from the words of the book of God; and God will take away their part out of the book of life." Rev. xxii.19. Others again transform commandments into promises, with great, and dangerous error. For example; where it is said, "The priest's lips should preserve knowledge," Mal. ii.7, the Romish priests challenge an immunity from erring, whence they should take warning, that they err not. So, from Christ's teaching, that a city set upon an hill, cannot be hid, they will wring a promise of perpetual visibility of church and ministry from him, where he intends only an exhortation to his disciples, after, to become apostles, unto answerableness both in life, and doctrine, to the eminency of their places. Some again make conditional promises, absolute, as that, "Whose sins ye bind upon earth, they are bound in heaven," Matt. xviii.18: forgetting that it must be the church gathered together in Christ's name, that is, both furnished with lawful authority, and using it lawfully. Likewise, that Christ will preserve the ministry, and ministers, and "be with them to the end of the world," Matt. xxviii.19,20: leaving out the condition going before, which is, that they do their duty in their places, in making disciples, and baptizing them, and teaching them to observe whatsoever he had commanded them. Lastly, how many, because God promiseth forgiveness to sinners, whensoever they repent, promise unto themselves repentance upon an hour's warning, before their death, though they go on in sin all their life long? but the saying of the ancient is memorable in this case, "He that promiseth forgiveness to him that repents, doth not promise repentance to him that sins." But, on the contrary, as he that makes a bridge of his own shadow, cannot but fall in the water; so neither can he escape the pit of hell, who lays his own presumption, this way, in the place of God's promise.

CHAPTER IV: OF THE WORKS OF GOD, AND HIS POWER, WISDOM, WILL, GOODNESS, ETC, SHINING IN THEM

It is a received truth in divinity, that whatsoever is in God, is God. So the will of God, considered as the foundation of that which he wills, and as inherent in him, is nothing else, but God willing; his justice nothing else, but God just; his mercy but God merciful; and so for the rest of the Divine attributes. And as every work of God is founded in some of those attributes: and that by name, in his understanding, as; judging the thing to be good; in his holy will agreeing thereunto; and in his power effecting all things: so this foundation and first cause of them all being immanent, and inherent in God, is God essentially, of what nature soever, always good, the work be without him, which his will and power effecteth. Neither is this will of God to work by his power, wrought in him by any thing without himself, for then he should receive addition of perfection from the creature moving him thereunto: though, yet it be most certain, that there are many things, which God neither in his wisdom judgeth fit to be done by him, nor wills the doing of them, nor would work or do them by his power, but upon the creature's work going before. For example: God wills, and works the condemnation of some sinners, because he judgeth fit, willeth, and will work therein the manifestation of the glory of his justice; but this condemnation, which otherwise he would not lay upon any, he both wills, and works by, and for, the creature's sin, according to his eternal, and unchangeable purpose of will in himself.

When the Scriptures speak, and we, according unto them, of any thing done by God, in respect of the creature, before the world was made; it must be understood as meant only of his foreknowledge, and decree of will, and purpose of doing. For things could be done no otherwise, than they could be; nor could be otherwise, than in God, who alone was; nor could be in God otherwise, than in his foreknowledge, and will: according to which he works them actually, in time, by his power.

These three attributes, as before I intimated, his power, will, and wisdom, do concur to the producing of all, and every one of his works. His power worketh and effecteth all things: his will sets his power a-working: his wisdom directs both the one, and other; his will in willing; and his power in working. Touching his power: "The

right hand of the Lord," Psa. cxviii.15, 16, which, in men, is the instrument of strength, is exalted, and by it he can do what he will, and much more than he will. And whereas God cannot lie, or deny himself, or the like, it is, immediately, because he will not, and that not of impotency in him, but of potency, and perfection of excellency [Tertullian]: as, on the contrary, it is the power of man's weakness that he can do amiss. So, for things importing contradiction, as that the same thing should be, and not be at once, or not be that which it is, or the like; it is religiously said by some, rather, that such things cannot be done by God, than, that God cannot do them; seeing the reason of this impossibility of their so being is not in God's nature, but in theirs.

The will of God is one, as God is one. But as there is "one spirit, but diversity of manifestations," 1 Cor. xii.5,6; so, this one internal will of God doth exercise, and extend itself diversely to, and upon, divers objects. This extension and exercise of this one will of God is, of us, to be considered in divers degrees. The weakest and most remiss degree is to will the suffering of evil [Scaliger, Junius]. For, though God, to speak properly, wills not sin, yet he willingly suffers it; not as ignorant of it, nor as neglecting it, nor as unable to prevent it, but as willingly, wittingly, and of purpose suffering that evil to be done, which he could easily hinder, if he would oppose his omnipotent power. The next degree of God's willing, stands in commanding good, and approving of it, where it is found: and thus God "wills and commands that all men should repent," Acts xvii.30: thus he wills, "that all should come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved," 1 Tim. ii.4: and thus, lastly, he would have "the wicked turn from his wickedness; and live, and not die," Ezek. xxxiii.11. And these things and the like he seriously wills, to wit, by way of commanding and requiring them, and of approving them, wheresoever they are found. The highest, and most intent degree of willing in God, is, when he so wills a thing, as withal, he employs his omnipotent power for the effecting of it: and by this: he doth whatsoever he pleaseth in the heavens, and in the earth," Psa. cxv.3. The former will, which stands in commanding, promising, and the like, may be, and is too often resisted, and made ineffectual by men; this latter, never possibly; except men be stronger than God. By it, his power availeth to make things to be, which were not, to continue them that are, to work all good, and to order all evil unto good.

And, as the works of God's power, according to his will, are manifold, so "hath he wrought them all in wisdom," Psa. civ.24. For, notwithstanding both the absoluteness of his will, and infiniteness of his power, in regard whereof one saith, it is more becoming God to ascribe any power to him, than to make him impotent [Tertullian]; yet is he neither willful in willing, nor unwieldy in working. By his wisdom he not only eternally, and infallibly knoweth himself, and all creatures that are, or can be, and what either he, or they, or both together will do, or can do, and that upon supposition of whatsoever can be supposed; but both willeth, and doth, in time, himself, what he willeth, and doth it also for good cause, and to good purpose, and accordingly, either, on the one side, hinders; or, on the other, sustains, effects, and orders every motion of every creature.

By exercising these attributes God worketh all his works whether immediate by himself alone, or mediate by the creatures, which he useth of all kinds, and every one according to his kind, whether good or evil, reasonable or without reason. By God's works, I mean all things whatsoever are in the world, or have any being, and existence in nature. For, "he hath made the whole world, and all things therein," Psa. cxlvi.6. "In him we live, and move, and have our being: he giveth all to all things," Acts xvii.28. "And of him, and through him, and for him are all things," Rom. xi.36. As he gives being unto all things that are, by communicating the effects of his being with them; so, is there nothing either so casual, in regard of men, as that he directs it not; or so voluntary, as that he determines it not; nothing so firm, but he sustains it; nor so small, but he regards it; nor so great, but he rules it; nor so evil, but he overrules it.

Neither can any of the works of God possibly be other than very good, and righteous, seeing they are all wrought by the exercising of his holy will, divine power, and godly wisdom. And, if a simple man owe the honor to him that is of greater wisdom and understanding than himself, to think, upon occasion, that the other hath reason for that which he speaks, or does, though he, in his shallowness, cannot reach unto it, how much more do all men and angels owe this honor unto God, to believe always, that whatsoever he saith is true, and whatsoever he doth, good, and righteous, though they discern not the reason of it [Austin].

Some of the works of God are such, as we can rather admire at them, than discern of them: some again are such as, at which proud flesh is ready to repine, and murmur. Amongst the works of God's most wise and powerful providence upon bodily things, it is most admirable, that the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon, and stars, should by their influence, and operation, have such power, and effects upon the bodies here below, as to change, order, and dispose the air, earth, and water, with all things framed, and compounded of them, as they appear to do, by

Scripture, sense and experience. Yet, if we consider, besides the two "greatest lights," Gen. i.14; and most powerful agents, the sun and moon, the numberless number of the stars, their huge greatness, the variety and excellency of virtues, wherewith they are furnished far above the most precious pearls, or any earthly quintessence, Job xxxviii.31-33; and with all these, the infinite power and wisdom of him that made, and constituted them; it will not seem incredible unto us, that the least, and suddenest natural change in the air, water, or other elementary bodies, should be wrought by the position, and disposition of the stars, and celestial bodies. Neither doth this at all diminish, or detract from the honour of the Lord in governing the world, but rather amplifieth it; as it adds to the honour of the skillful artificer, so as the first to frame his clock, or other work of like curious device, as that the several parts should constantly move, and order each other in infinite variety, he, as the maker and first mover moving, and ordering all. Where yet this difference must always be minded, that the artisan leaves his work, being once framed, to itself; but God by continual influx preserves, and orders both the being and motion of all creatures. Her also, we except both unnatural accidents; and specially, supernatural, and miraculous events; which are, as it were, so many particular creations, by the immediate hand of God.

In them that are made partakers of the grace of God, the remainder of corrupt reason is readiest to rise up at the work of God's providence in "the prosperity of the way of the wicked, and workers of iniquity," Jer. xii.1; Psa. xxxvii.1,35: especially, if they themselves be pressed with any singular afflictions; as we may see in David, Jeremiah, and others. But the same men of God, who were in their persons, present examples of human frailty, do in their writings, by the Holy Ghost, afford us matter sufficient for Divine comfort, and direction; as, first that, before we come to "plead with God, how his works are righteous, we know and acknowledge them all to be righteous," Jer. xii.1; that so we may learn how and wherein their righteousness consists. Secondly, that God, is both as good to whose whom he loves, in their afflictions, as in their prosperity; and as wroth with his enemies, in their momentary prosperity, as if his rod were already upon their backs. Thirdly, that he hath appointed a day, in which he will right whatsoever seemeth crooked in the meanwhile; and will fully, and for ever, recompense both the good and evil: in the expectation of which day, and of the work of the Lord in it, we should satisfy ourselves, for the present, and suspend our thoughts till the manifestation of his righteous judgment therein.

In them that desire to establish man's righteousness rather than God's either righteousness, or power, fleshly reason is most apt to quarrel, partly with that work of God's mercy, by which he freely justifies a sinner; and partly with those his just dispensations, upon which followeth the creature's sin and misery for sin. But for the former, it stands not with the riches of God's mercy, and grace, whereof he would make full manifestation in the justifying of sinners, to borrow any thing of man's merit; but well becomes his bounty, freely to bestow both the gift, and hand to receive it. For the latter, it must be considered, that God's work, so far as it is his, is good, as well in the sinful doings, or miserable sufferings of men, as in their most holy, and happy estate. The person that sinneth, with all his parts, and powers of soul, and body, is God's work: so is the preservation and sustentation of both person, and personal abilities; so is the natural motion itself, whether within, or without the person, in which, the sin is like the halting in the horse's going; and lastly, so is, not only the voluntary permission of the sin, which he could easily hinder by his omnipotent power, if he would oppose it; but also the ordering both of sin and sinner to his own supernatural ends. For example, the act of Judah and Tamar, morally considered, was sinful and impure; but naturally, good, and blessed of God with a son, of whom Christ came according to the flesh. So the abominable sins of Absalom were ordered of God unto most just punishments of the sins of his father David.

There is a twofold use of the world, and works of God in it: the one natural, the other supernatural [Bodinus]. The former is common to men with beasts; who are alike cherished with the heat and influence of the sun; alike nourished by the fruits of the earth. The other is peculiar to men with the holy angels, by which they behold the face of the Creator's power, wisdom, goodness, &c., as in a most clear looking-glass, Rom. i.20; Psa. xix.1-6; and are provoked according to praise, and glorify him in his wonderful works: even as by beholding some curious piece of workmanship, much more, if, therewith, we have singular use of it, of a skillful artificer, we are led, in the view of the work, to the commendation of the workman [Perkins]. And look how much the soul excelleth the body, yea the spiritual man the natural; so much is this use of God's creatures more excellent than the former. And so the opinion of the philosopher, who thought, he was born to look upon the sun, and heavens [Anaxagoras], was not wide, but short; nor absurd, but defective; for he should have pierced further, even

through the heavens, unto him, that made, and governs them, whose glorious power, and goodness shine in them; that so he might have glorified him as God, in his works. For, though by that glimpse of light in the creatures, we cannot attain to the knowledge of God, as our Father in Christ; yet are we both to honour him according to it, and to be provoked by it to further search, and inquiry after him, in such means of revelation, as by which he further manifests himself; which are his word and gospel of salvation: even as he, that lying in a dark dungeon spies some small glimpse of light, will grope towards it by the wall, hoping to find some door, or window, by which it comes in. Acts xvii.27. For neglect of this, the very wisest of the heathens were left inexcusable; and not glorifying God, whom they knew in his works of creation of the world, but becoming vain in their own imaginations, and serving the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever, were given over of God to a mind void of judgment, to do the things which are inconvenient. Rom. 1.20,21. Now, of how much sorer punishment shall we be guilty; if together with this lesser glimpse of Divine light by the creatures, we despise also the more glorious light of the gospel, not honoring God aright either as our powerful Creator, or merciful Redeemer by Christ Jesus? But if we so honor him, and make him great in our own hearts, and before men, what we can, as he hath manifested, and made known himself in his word, and works; he will honor us with himself for ever, in glory.

CHAPTER V: OF CREATED GOODNESS

Every thing that is, and hath being, is in that regard good, and of God. Rom. xi.36; Psa. clxvi.; Acts xiv.17; xvii.24-28. The natural parts and powers of body and soul of most wicked men remain in themselves, notwithstanding all infection of evil in them, God's good creatures; so do the natural acts and motions of those parts and powers, in themselves considered, notwithstanding any moral accessory of evil in them, arising either from the evil affection wherewith, or unlawful object, upon which they are performed. There can be no evil in the work, which is not first in the worker, as the cause. And so, a wicked person being worse than a wicked action, if the sin prevail not so far, as to make the part or faculty of the person in which it is, to cease to be a part, or power created of God; neither doth it so far prevail in the action, or work, as to make it cease to be, in itself, a created motion, and, therein, a natural good thing.

God is, and so, by all, is to be acknowledged for the giver of every good gift, James i.17, that is, of everything save sin: which sin is nothing that hath being in nature, but an absence of, and crossness to that which should be; as darkness is of, and unto light. And so the good father would not say, that his mother gave him milk, but God by her [Austin]. And though the good which we enjoy, come to us by never so ready, and ample means, yet must we always religiously mind, that both the means are of God's raising, and ordering; and the blessing upon them, for our good. And if Job say by faith, Job, 1,21,22, that all the evils and harms that came unto him and his, though by the devil's and wicked men's means, were from the Lord, as supreme orderer of all things; how much more should we look upon God, as the author, and worker of all the good that befallerth us?

Notwithstanding, if God so far honor any persons, as to make them hands, and instruments (especially voluntary) for the reaching of any blessing unto us from himself; we also, and that, even therefore, are to love and honor them: as David not only blessed the Lord as the author, but Abigail also, as the minister of the good counsel which she gave him, for the not avenging of himself upon Nabal. 1 Sam. xxv.32,33.

Actions, beside their natural entity, or being, are by one distinguished, and that aptly, according to a four-fold goodness [Lombard]. First, an action is sometimes "good in itself, and to them to whom it is done, but not to the doer; as works of mercy done, but not for God. Secondly, good in itself, and in the doer, but not to him, to whom it is done; as the preaching of the word to them that despise it. Thirdly, good in itself, and the doers, and to whom it is done; as the same preaching to him that receives it. Fourthly, though neither good in itself, nor in the doer, nor for him to whom it is done, as an evil, or injury; yet good, as it is ordered by God to an end supernaturally good." "Who," as saith another, "would not suffer evil, but as knowing how to work good out of it?" [Austin] In actions of the third kind only, goodness is entire in all its parts and relations.

A man should never glory in that good, how great soever, which is common to a beast with him; nor a wise man in that, which is common to a fool with him, no, nor a good man in that, which is common to a wicked man with him; seeing, notwithstanding it, the person may be out of God's favour, and accursed. And therefore Christ our Lord would not have his disciples rejoice, or, glory that the devils were subject unto them (which was, though much, yet common to the workers of iniquity, Matt. vii.23, with them), but that their names were written

in heaven. Luke x.20.

Many so measure the good which they afford others, by the list of their own will, as they deceive themselves in the whole piece of their goodness, by the bad list that goes about it. They will do what good they list, and when they list, and where they list, and as they list; as though their goodness were not due debt, though not immediately to men, yet to God, and so to men, for, and according unto God: for whom, even they owe love to all men, Rom. xii.10, who owe nothing else to any; and the same upon bill, and therefore to be payed, in law, whensoever, and by whomsoever the Lord will call for it, and not when, and as pleaseth them. These conditions are requisite, that we may do well, in doing good. First, we must do things in obedience to God's commandments, and in honor of his name, and gospel; and must ever have that end in our eye, as archers have their mark. Secondly, that we do it at all times, as we have opportunity; "sowing our seed in the morning, and in the evening not holding our hand." Eccl. xi.6. We must beware of that agreeish goodness, which comes by fits only, and when men are pleased: for so, they say, the devil is good.

Thirdly, we must do good readily, and whilst we have opportunity; "not saying to our neighbour, Go, and come again tomorrow, and we will do it," if it be in our power to-day. Gal. vi.10; Prov. iii.28. For who knoweth what a day will bring forth, and whether the opportunity of doing good, will continue till to-morrow, or no? He that giveth, or doth other good, readily, giveth twice [Seneca]; he scarce once, or at all, that doth it slackly: he rather, in truth, suffers a good turn to be drawn from him, than doeth it. Living springs send out streams of water; dead pits must have all that they afford, drawn out with buckets. We should, therefore, have the mind [Eusebius], though we want the ability, of Theodosius the emperor, who did much good, upon request; but more of his own accord and unasked: and so meet, as one saith, a just request in the teeth, and grant it before it be made; as God many times doth ours. Isa. lxxv.24. He that defers a good turn, loseth two things: the time, and manifestation of a loving affection [Seneca]. Both which, are precious. And without which loving affection, all the kindnesses, which we show to any, are but so many false witnesses to the unbelieving and unkind heart.

Fourthly, according to our ability; knowing, that as our receivings are from God, greater or less, so must our accounts be, for good doing. It is true, that God looks to the heart of the doer, and measure the work by the will, as men measure the will by the work: but this, according, to that which a man hath. 2 Cor. viii.12. Else, albeit poor men may love as much as the richer, though they have not so much money to do good withal; yet is not the will good, except they do the good they are able. [Bernard] And this our ability we must not measure according to our wantonness, and unbelief, but, according to the truth of the thing, and equity of the case: which is, that our superfluities give way to our brethren's conveniences: our conveniences to their necessities: yea even our, though great, necessities to their extremities, for the supplying of them. 2 Cor. viii.12-15.

Fifthly, we must have respect to men's present wants; and not only consider, what we can best spare, but withal, what they most need of; as having learned of our Lord and Master, in his Gospel, that our duty is to "feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick," Matt.xxv. 35, 36, &c., as their need is: whereby we may do a great good turn in a small matter: even one loaf, yea a shive [a slice], to him that is hungry, and the showing of a spring of water to him that is thirsty, being a benefit [Seneca].

Sixthly, "we must do good to all," Gal. vi.10, knowing, that wheresoever a man is, there is a place for a good turn [Seneca]: but, more specially, to some, according to the singular bond, natural, civil, or religious, wherewith God hath ties us together. To good men we must do good because they do deserve it; to strangers, because they may deserve it, and do stand in need of it; to all men, because God deserves it at our hands, for them; to our friends, because we owe it them; and to our enemies to heap coals of fire upon their heads - the coals of charity to thaw, and soften their hardness, if it may be, and at which we must aim: or else the coals of anger from God for their unpluckableness towards us. Matt. x.42; Luke x.32-37; Matt. v.44; Rom. xii.20.

Lastly, a good man, how gracious soever, and ready to do good, "guideth his affairs with discretion," Psa. cxii.65; not sowing his seed in barren ground, by bestowing favors without difference; for that is rather to throw away, than to bestow a benefit [Seneca]. And it is not the least difference between man's good nature, and God's good grace, that, whereas, the former makes men much what alike kind to all, the latter, though also to all, yet with great difference put between person and person; as men sow their seed diversely in soil that differ.

Although, this good nature, and the grace of God be as different as heaven and earth: the one being of ourselves, that is, of nature created; and the other the gift of God by supernatural grace: and that a man be neither the nearer God for his good nature; where the grace of God is wanting; nor the further off for his ill, where it pleaseth God to use his all-sufficient work of grace: yet the sweet and kind natural disposition in some, much

advantageth the manifestation of their smaller measure, which an ill nature, as we speak, so much obscures, as it can scarce be seen of other men; though the Lord's eye pierces through all such human prejudices.

It is the main order, which God hath set both in grace, and nature, that the superior should do good to the inferior. So, God doth good to all, and receives good from none: our "goodness reacheth not to him." Psa. xvi.2. The sun and stars give their light, and influence to the earth, Psa. cxxxvi.8,9, but receive nothing back from it : "parents lay up for their children, not children for their parents." 2 Cor. xii.14. And for this end God bestows good things, both inward and outward, upon some above others, in ample measure, that their abundance might supply the others want. It were good for other men, that the mighty of the earth, duly, considered this; but better for themselves, as it is better to do good to others, than to receive good from them. But this most wise and equal order of God is perverted everywhere, by man's iniquity; and they who are less able, must still be adding to the greater's heap [Terence]; so as, if accounts were diligently kept, it would be found in most places of the world, that the meaner sort bestow more on the better able, then these of them.

When I consider, what good the rich and mighty otherwise in the world, might easily do, if they had hearts answerable; and how little they do, for the most part; it seems horrible unthankfulness, and iniquity in them, and matter of indignation against them; but then, on the other side, when I consider, how little good I myself do, in my meanness, and others my like, to that which I should, and might do, if I did my utmost; I find reason to be most angry at myself, and mine own unprofitableness; and to be glad, and thankful, that so much good is done by the other, as is.

In benefits and good turns done, and received, it is the best, and right order, that he, who doth them, should forget and conceal them; and he remember, and speak of them, that receives them [Seneca]. And, therefore, the first of the three graces is so ordered, as ever to look forward for the doing of more good, and never backward, to upbraid with good done: which, where it is used, takes away the grace of the kindness; and is as displeasing, as the after upbraiding of meat in the stomach, eaten with delight. The other two ever look towards the first, to signify, in how continual remembrance, benefits received should be born. Which accordingly to acknowledge with thankfulness, is a ready way to procure further good; as from God, who specially delights in a thankful heart, and would have a reflux of his blessings to keep them sweet, as waters are by flowing to, and fro [Ferus]; so likewise from such men, as either are, or would seem to be like unto God, in goodness, and bounty. To use to speak much of men's unthankfulness, even where there hath been great fault that way, for benefits received, both argues a mind not so free in well-doing as is meet; and that looks too much for thanks from men, and too little for reward from God: and is, withal, a course for a man to quench his own charity and forwardness, in other men's unthankfulness.

It is a more blessed, that is, both, a more comfortable thing, and that, wherein a good work is more properly performed, to give, than to take; Acts xx.35, to do, than to receive good: and so all good men should strive both to be able, and willing, so to do. Yet should a good, and wise man, as God send occasion, be indifferent to either. Neither can he, in truth, do kindness, as he ought, that is not willing to receive kindness, as he needs. It comes partly from a suspicious, but specially, from a vain-glorious heart, that some, who are forward in affording kindness, can yet scarce, though there be just occasion, have the like fastened upon them. Such desire to be too like unto God, who doth good to all, but receives none back again from any: but the very greatest must remember that he is not God, but man, and so stands need of other men. "The head cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee." 1 Cor. xii.15. Besides, to refuse a kindness offered is to shame it, as a ball ill sent, and let fall to the ground [Plutarch]. Neither hath a true Christian any cause to be ashamed of his condition in receiving good from others: seeing that, as in doing good, he is in God's place; so, in receiving it, in Christ's stead. Matt. xxv.35-40.

CHAPTER VI: OF EQUABILITY, AND PERSEVERANCE IN WELL-DOING

Whatsoever is done for God, saith one, is done equally: and the apostle more fully: "The grace of God teaches us to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts; and to live soberly," Tit. ii.12, in ourselves, justly towards others, and holily towards God. True goodness is comely, and well proportioned in all the parts; whereas the counterfeit is still at jar in itself, and like the patches of a beggar's cloak. A wise man should be a wise man at all times, and in all things and so should a good man, be a good man. Otherwise when a good thing is done, specially if it be not so ordinary, the goodness seems rather to arise from some other motive from without, than from within the

person doing it. Besides, what strange thing is it to see a stone fall downward, or a spark fly upward? So, nor to see a fool do foolishly, or a lewd person like himself. But for a wise man to do foolishly, or a good man wickedly, is not only hateful, but monstrous.

He that hath not in him all Christian graces, in their measure, hath none; and he that hath any one truly, hath all. For, as in the first birth, the whole person is born, and not some parts, so is it in the work of regeneration, the whole person is born again, though not wholly. There is but one spirit, both of faith and hope and love and humility and patience; which all have, that are Christ's; and "if any have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Eph. iv.5,6; Gal. v.22; Rom. viii.9. This Spirit though God but drop, as it were, into some, and pour into others with a full hand, so as one Christian far exceeds another in degree of graces: yet are the habits of all graces, and that, as I conceive, equally one with another, though not equal to those in other men, infused, at once, into the same men's hearts, by that Spirit: but so as, in time, by divers occasions and means, both the habits, or graces themselves, and the exercise of them, inward, and outward, have their different increase in the same persons; till each have attained to the degree of grace allotted to him, and serving for the preparing of him for the glory prepared for him of God.

Perseverance in good is not any particular grace, or virtue [Bernard], but the consummation, and store-house of all virtue and goodness [Tertullian]. Evil men stand in need of all graces; the good, only of this of perseverance, without changing, to the end, that they lose not the things which they have done, or suffered, but that they may receive a full reward, and in due season reap, if they faint not, 2 John 8; Gal. vi.9.

Where I speak of the necessity of not changing, I mean that changing, which is either to the contrary reigning evil, or to a total want of true goodness. Otherwise, even nature, which works most necessarily, may have its most natural work interrupted, and changed, for a time, and yet not be destroyed: witness the fire in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, Dan. iii.21-27, which though it retained in it, both the nature and heat of fire, yet did not burn the three confessors, which were cast into it. How oft do men, though remaining, in nature, reasonable creatures, perform acts plainly unreasonable and brutish, through ignorance, or appetite? How much more is it possible, that a man though not wholly destitute of God's grace, may, through the remainders of his corruption, advantaged by occasion of temptation, practice some particular, and the same gross evils, out of which, in time, he recovers himself by repentance. Who, not foolish himself, will say that David was simply a fool, even when, by occasion of special temptation of Satan, he did a very foolish act, in numbering the people? 2 Sam. xxiv.10. We are not, therefore, to measure a person's state by some one, or few acts, done, as it were, by the way, and upon instance of some strong temptation, but according to the tenor, and course of his life. Else, what wise man should not be a fool also? Or what fool should not be a wise man? What Nabal should not be liberal, yea bounteous, when he makes a feast like a king? A rebel lurking in a kingdom, may by some advantage watched, and taken, prevail against the lawful king, in a conflict, or two; and yet, for all that, not reign in the kingdom: so may the treacherous flesh, lurking in a spiritual man, get the mastery in some combat; and yet not, therefore, drive the Lord quite out of his kingdom there. Yea, the same flesh ever lusting against the Spirit, Gal. v.17, even in them which are led of the Spirit, and leading them into captivity to the law of sin, Rom. vii.23, doth oft so far prevail in them, as to captive them in some particular by-paths both of judgment, and practice, not so easily discerned, all their life long. "For who can understand his errors?" Psa. xix.12. And for these particular enormities, whether actions or courses, of godly persons, howbeit, considering them in themselves, and in their external acts, there appear in them no difference, from those of the same kind, practised by men utterly godless; yet, is there a great difference in God's eye, not only in the person of the doer, in God's account, but also in his own heart, and affection, even in the very doing of them: in which the Lord sees the inward strugglings of grace, though, alas, too weak, by the person's default, tending and bending the clean contrary way and, therein, plainly differencing the doer from the profane contemners of God, doing the same things in whom there is, either altogether peace without any strife and resistance, whilst the strong man keeps the house; or that resistance which is merely of natural conscience, terrifying with fear of punishment only, without the hatred of sin, which is, though too weak and feeble, in the other.

Although, it be a greater work of grace to become of vicious and evil, good and virtuous; than so to continue, or to grow therein; yet, considering the mighty, and many enemies of our salvation, and the great stumbling-stones in our way, and with these, the heavy clog of our own corruption, which we draw after us: it will be and is found a matter of no small difficulty, not to be weary of well-doing, nor to faint, before we come to reap in due time, that, which we have formerly sown to the Spirit. Gal. vi.9. And this, the experience of all ages confirmeth;

in which there are few, which do the first works, and leave not their first love, Rev. ii.4,5: fewer that bring forth more fruit in old age, and are fat and green. Psa. xcii.14. And yet we know, that albeit of the laborers in the vineyard, who received each his penny, some entered sooner, and some later, and some not till the very last hour of the day, yet all continued their labor till the evening. Matt. xx.9,10. So for ourselves we must make account, that at what time soever any begins, only he that continues to the end, shall be saved. Mark xiii.43. And, indeed, it is a great honor to God, when a good man, notwithstanding all discouragements either from within or from without, perseveres in the course of goodness begun, and gives not over till he come at the goal, how tiring soever his way be [Gregory]. Such a one shows, "that the Lord is faithful, and that, there is no unrighteousness with him." Psa. xcii.15. To which purpose the saying of Polycarp is very remarkable; who, being provoked by the Proconsul to blaspheme Christ, answered; that he had served him now eighty and six years, and had never had hurt by him in anything, why then should he speak evil of him? [Eusebius] On the contrary, he that departs from the Lord in the course of godliness formerly held, greatly dishonors him, as the servant doth his master, in leaving him before his time be out. Such a one makes show, as if out of judgment and experience, he disliked goodness; and, therein, really accuseth god, as if he had found some evil in him, or at least, not that good, which he promised, and the other expected. And to that purpose, the Lord, in great indignation, expostulates with the Jews, and asks, "What iniquity they or their fathers had found in him, that they were gone from him after their vanities." Jer. ii.5.

It is dangerous in course of religion and godliness to fall forward by errors, preposterous zeal, or other misguidance; yet not so much so, as to fall backward by an unfaithful heart. The former may break his face thereby, and lose his comfort in a great measure both with God and men: but the latter is in danger, utterly to break the neck of his conscience, as old Eli brake his neck bodily, by falling backward from his seat, and died. Are there not many Eli's in all ages? And as the least declension from God is dangerous; so is total, desperate: neither will God ever forgive that sin, or give repentance to any so sinning, but hath utterly excluded every such a one out of the otherwise infinite bounds of his mercy in Christ.

The preaching of the word of God is the means to beget faith and grace; but for the nourishing, and increasing thereof, we must therewith join the observation in our places of "whatsoever Christ hath appointed his apostles to teach," Matt. xxviii.20: in the use whereof, as the sanctified means for the obtaining of that end, we shall keep ourselves in the fear of God, and not fall from our steadfastness; and withal, "grow in grace, and in the acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus," 2 Pet. iii.17; if not in bulk, yet in firmness; as when the body leaves growing in bigness, it knits better than before. Neither indeed can we be safe from being drawn away from God otherwise, than by continual drawing nearer unto him. For, our way to heaven is up a hill, and we drag a cart-load of our corruptions after us; which, except we keep going, will pull us backward, ere we be aware.

The Holy Ghost in those vehement exhortations of the faithful to perseverance, enforced with so many promises, and threatenings, both shows therein man's proneness, and danger, in himself, to fall away; and also affords the means, by which God will preserve his sanctified ones from apostasy [Austin]; using the same as evangelical conducts of grace for his working of that perseverance in them, which he requires of them, and that, rather by our being "apprehended of Christ," Phil. iii.12, as the apostle speaks, than by our apprehending him. As the father leading his weak child in a slippery way bids him hold him fast by his hand, lest he fall, which he also puts forth unto him, yea, wherewith he takes hold of the child, that so by communicating his strength with him, he may stand, and not fall. The Lord that saith unto his, "Seek ye my face," Psa. xxvii.8, and gives them a heart to answer, "Thy face, Lord, do we seek:" gives each of them also, when he warns them to stand fast, and not to fall away and the like, to answer effectually, Lord, "by these thy commandments thy servant is warned to stand fast and to beware, lest I fall away, as hypocrites do." Psa. xix.11. And, whensoever God either promiseth unto men, or purposeth in himself absolutely an event touching any his good work in or by them; he withal both purposes, and promises, and accordingly affords them both means convenient, and skill and will to use them; and, therewith, an answerable blessing upon them, for infallible success.

In regard of this grace of perseverance, the truly godly have an advantage above Adam in innocence. He received to himself, at the first, his portion of grace, and goodness from God, being made after his image, and full freedom, and power both to use, and increase it. But instead thereof, he soon misspent, and lost all, by transgression. God therefore, as a gracious, and wise Father, hath provided better against our misgovernment, and made Christ Jesus our Head, and Feoffer of trust for our state of grace, that he, "in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," Col. ii.9, might still furnish, and supply us, as we have need; lest we having all

put into our own hands, as Adam had, should misspend, and cast away all, as he did. And so the same Christ our Lord, and Head, partly, by the mediation and intercession with the Father; partly, by the continual supply of his Spirit assisting us in our weaknesses, and recovering us in our falls; and partly, by his Divine power restraining the enemies of our salvation, most faithfully preserves us in the grace of God; not suffering the living members of his body to be plucked from it; nor the habitation of his holy Spirit wholly, and for ever to be possessed by his, and his elect's enemy, Satan.

The Scriptures speak of men's falling from the grace of God, as they do of their receiving it. When the apostles entitle particular churches, or persons, saints, "sanctified in Christ, partakers of the heavenly calling, and such as in whom God will perfect the good work begun in them, until the day of Christ, as it is meet to speak and judge of them all," Rom. i.7; 1 Cor. i.1; Phil. i.6; Heb. iii.1; they do not so judge and speak in respect of the inward truth of the things, as certainly being in their hearts, which they neither did, nor could ordinarily know: for "God only knoweth the hearts of all the children of men: the things of a man no man knoweth, save the spirit of a man which is in him," 1 Kings viii.39; 1 Cor. ii.11; but according to the outward appearance, and profession made, in word and deed: so when they speak of the falling away of particular churches, or persons, from God; they are to be understood, as they mean; and mean, as they know: that is, according to the outward appearance, and profession which men formerly have made, and then do make; leaving to God, and men's selves, which only know them, the inward, and hidden things of the heart: which too many causelessly make show of; sometimes deceiving themselves, and sometimes others, and sometimes both, till the time of revelation of hidden things come. And, whereas, weak Christians might unhappily stumble at the revolt from faith and holiness formerly professed by many, as if there were not that stableness, satisfaction, and comfort in the gospel, and grace thereof, which it promiseth; the Lord, in great wisdom, and mercy, removes this stone of offence out of their way, by intimating plainly, that those apostates were never, truly and thoroughly, made partakers of the gospel's grace, from the former profession whereof they had unfaithfully declined. Thus the Holy Ghost teacheth, that the ground, what show soever it made, in which the seed sown was either withered by persecution, or choked by worldly care, Matt. xiii.21, 22, or pleasures, and which brought not forth fruit to the harvest, was never good; but either stony, or thorny ground: that they whose faith was overthrown, were not "vessels to honour, but to dishonour," 2 Tim. ii.20; nor truly built upon the steady foundation of God: nor of them who had the seal of his Spirit; nor were of his known ones: that those "who fell away, and crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh," were but formerly "as the earth which drinks in the rain, which comes oft upon it," Heb. xi.6, 7, and yet brings not forth herbs, but thorns and briers: that they, who "bring in damnable errors, and they who "follow their pernicious ways," 2 Pet. ii.1, both the one and other "departing from the holy commandment delivered unto them, and turning the grace of God into wantonness," were, at their best, but as dogs, though having for a time cast up their stomach, and vomited; and as "swine mashed from their mire;" and as Jude saith, "ungodly men of old ordained to that condemnation," Jude4, and crept in, to wit into the churches, unawares: and, to conclude, that they, which went out from the apostles and churches, by heresies, and profaneness, were not, to wit, truly, and indeed of them before. 1 John ii.18. Thus God's wisdom, and mercy provides a shield of faith against the fiery darts of men's hypocrisy and perfidiousness; wherewith otherwise, the tender hearts of weak Christians might be deeply wounded by Satan.

CHAPTER VII: OF RELIGION, AND THE DIFFERENCES AND DISPUTATIONS THEREABOUT.

Only men of all earthly creatures are capable of religion [Calvin]: which is, also, so natural unto all men, how barbarous soever, that, rather than any country, city, or family would want whereon to bestow their devotions, they would "worship they know not what," Acts xvii.23; John iv.22: yea, which is more, that which they do know, not only to be base and vile, as sticks and stones, but also hurtful, and evil [Cicero. Lactantius.]. As then religion, in the general, is natural; and false religion, of corrupt nature: so is true, and Christ religion by supernatural revelation. For how can that worship of God please him, which is not according to his will? "And who knoweth God's will but by revelation of his Spirit" 1 Cor. ii.11, 12. But vain men are ready to deem God like themselves, imagining, that the things which please them, please him as well. Hereupon the heathens have devised to themselves gods, and goddesses of theft, murder, and all manner of filthiness: and even Christians, in name, at least, because the kings and lords of the earth account themselves honoured by their subjects, when they entertain them with pompous shows, and pageants of witty device, are ready fondly to imagine, that their

witty, specially stately devices and fancies please the Lord himself, as they do, them: and, therein, deny unto him his two properties; of simplicity in the things; and power in appointing them [Tertullian]: but if we will give God his due in religion, we must have him both for the object, and appointer of our worship. The apostate Israelites of old, and antichristians since, are said to have "worshipped devils," 2 Chron. xi.15; Rev. ix.20; not for that they did at least, ordinarily, direct their worship unto devils; but, for that, at least, more commonly, they followed their suggestions, in the devised manner of worshipping, though even the true, God. As in directing our worship unto him alone, we honour, and acknowledge his majesty and fatherhood, as being "our Father in heaven," Matt. vi.9; so in receiving it from him as the only institutor, we honour, and acknowledge both his love in providing, and his wisdom in contriving, and his authority in commanding the manner of his service, and means of our salvation thereby.

This religion is the means of God's worship, and withal, of man's happiness [Morneus]: which two main ends, God in great wisdom and mercy hath joined together inseparably, that the desire of the latter might provoke to conscience of the former, and the exercise of the former effectually promote, and further the obtaining of the latter. And this, being the only way to happiness, ought to be common to all men, rude and skillful; base and honourable; high and low [Ficinus]. And so all Christians are one in Christ, and Christ one in, and unto them. Gal. iii.28; John xvii.21. For though the terrene, and worldly state of the persons, who are Christians, be very different; yet is their spiritual estate of Christianity all one. There is one Lord Christ, through whom, and one faith, by which they are justified, and that equally; one Spirit by which they are sanctified, though in different degrees; one calling of God begun, and perfected by the same gospel, and ordinances thereof. No man's highness of worldly estate can set him above the lowest part of it, or them: nor any's meanness keep him down from flying as high a pitch of Christianity, as any other. An afflicted outward state stands in need of religion to sustain it: a prosperous, to perfect it in eternal happiness, besides the moderating of it in the meanwhile. And, seeing our religion is to God alone; and only the manifestation of it to men; we ought to be alike grounded, in it, and resolved of it, and zealous for it; whether we enjoy the favour of the times, or the contrary.

All things requisite for the performance of religious exercises are not parts of religion; but some are of natural necessity; others for civil order, and comeliness. The former need neither be taught, nor commanded, being imposed by absolute necessity, which is the strongest lawn and most pressing master, that may be [Thales]. The other are such, as without which all exercises of religion would be confused, and unordered, and like the chaos which "God made in the beginning, void and without form, and whose face darkness covered." Gen. I.1,2. For these, the general rules of the Word, with common-sense and discretion, are sufficient. Notwithstanding, though things be not therefore comely, and orderly, because they are done of custom, or commanded by authority; but are therefore both used and commanded, lawfully, because they are comely, and orderly: yet if either custom commend, or authority command things that are such indeed, wise, godly, and peaceable men should hold themselves even therefore the more bound unto them.

Religion is the best thing, and the corruption of it the worst: neither hath greater mischief and villainy ever been found amongst men, Jews, Gentiles, or Christians, than that which hath marched under the flag of religion, either intended by the seduced, or pretended by hypocrites. The Jews in zeal of God, such as it was, persecuted Christ himself to the death: and Saul in a kind of zeal of the law, was no less than a "blasphemer, persecutor, and oppressor." 1 Tim. i.13. Pompey the Roman having erected that arcem omnium turpitudinum, would not call it the stage, or stews, as it was; but the Temple of Venus [Tertullian]. And what shall we think of the Spaniards' Romish zeal? Who, by their own bishop's relation in his first instance of Spanish cruelty, hanged upon one gallows thirteen innocent Indian women, in honour of Christ and of his twelve apostles [Glasse of Spanish Cruelty]. But God is not pleased with good intentions exercised in evil actions; much less either pleased, or deceived with the vizards of impiety, and inhumanity: but as he will repay unto the wicked according to their evil works of all kinds; so will he render double vengeance unto them, who under the livery of religion seek countenance for impiety and wickedness.

A man hath, in truth, so much religion, as he hath between the Lord and himself, in secret, and no more, what shows soever he makes before men: and makes sound proof of his religion both before God, and men, so far as he is forward and ready to every good work, especially to the works of mercy towards them that need. "Pure religion and undefiled before God the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep a man's self unspotted from the world." James i.27. There are many civil hypocrites, who, if they converse honestly, and kindly with men, presume of great acceptance from God, though they have little care to know his

will in his Word, and less to observe his precepts, and ordinances of worship. There are also religious hypocrites not a few, who because of a certain zeal which they have for and in the duties of the first table, repute themselves highly in God's favour, though they be far from that innocency toward men, specially from that goodness, and love indeed, which the Lord hath inseparably joined with a truly religious disposition. Such persons vainly imagine God to be like unto the most great men, who, if their followers be obsequious to them, in their persons, and zealous for them in the things, which more immediately concern their honours, and profits, do highly esteem of them; though their dealings with others, specially meaner men, be far from honest, or good. But God is not partial, as men are: nor regards that church, and chamber religion towards him, which is not accompanied in the house, and street, with loving kindness, and mercy and all goodness towards men. Such are also stuffed with self-love in their very service of God, and do but flatter him for their own advantage: "For if they love not," and that in truth and deed, "their brother whom they see, how can they love God whom they see not?" 1 John iv.20. Besides, they sacrilegiously divide the two tables of the law one from the other, making the two great commandments, which Christ saith, are like one to another, to be unlike in effect. In these, pharisaism lives, and faith is dead: who as they shame Christianity, and Christ in it, what in them lies; so shall their recompense from him be answerable at that day, when every man shall receive honour or shame, according to the works, especially or mercy, and goodness that way, which he hath done, or not done in the flesh.

The common saying, "As good never a whit, as never the better," is verified in the works of religion: which not being performed, as they ought, for substance, are accounted, as not done, in regard of God's acceptance, and the doer's present benefit. So the new "inhabitants of Samaria served not the Lord; and yet they served the Lord." 2 Kings xvii.33. So "he is not a Jew, who is one outwardly, neither that circumcision, which is outward," to wit only, "in the flesh." Rom. ii.28,29. So the carnal Corinthians in eating the Lord's supper, did not that which "was to eat the Lord's supper," 1 Cor. xi.20,21, to wit, with acceptance from God, and profit to themselves, for the present. I say, for the present: for by after repentance those very Corinthians might come to have and obtain the right use and end of the Lord's ordinance formerly abused by them, and unuseful to them: and so might Simon Magus, by repentance, of the baptism profanely, on his part, received at the first. The reason of this is, because the effect of the Word, and sacraments, and other ordinances of religion is neither natural, as of meat and drink, which must either nourish presently, or not at all: nor depends upon the worthiness of the minister, as the Donatists imagined; no, nor upon the present fitness of the receiver simply, though both minister and receiver ought to be worthy, and fit: but upon God's blessing of that which is his own, in his time, it may be many years after the receiving, unto his elect, and in mercy covering what was formerly amiss both in giver and receiver.

Besides them, who put on "forms of godliness," 2 Tim. iii.5, and religion only, as men put on their clothes, because to be naked of all religion would be both shameful, and in many places dangerous; and them, who for love of lucre and riches reign and dissemble in religion [Lactantius]; many of those who seriously mind it, make their choice amiss; as either led by custom of times, and places, in which they live; or by affection and admiration to and of some special persons; or traduced by some vehement passion of anger, fear, envy, or the like; or misled by some guileful appearance, without due examination. And having so done, they commonly set themselves earnestly to advance that faction into which they have once entered, and to depress all others, though oft without competent knowledge of one, or other. Wherein yet they miss, whichsoever is good, or bad; since either may be either, for aught they know. Notwithstanding, we owe this honour to the particular courses of religion which we have once embraced, or wherein we have been brought up, and received any good, that we leave it not lightly; nor further in any particular, than we needs must; nor at all, in the things, which God, in it, in true, and distinct consideration, hath blessed to our spiritual good. To be lightly moved in religion, is childish weakness: but to be stiff without reason, manly obstinacy: and better to be a child in weakness, than a man in perverse obstinateness. The former thinks too well of others, by whom he is too easily moved: the latter thinks too well of himself, despising other men, and God's gifts, and graces in them; as if "the word of God came either from him, or to him alone." 1 Cor. xiv.36. And this fault of the two, is both the worse, and more dangerous: the former may in time be more easily confirmed in the truth; as a child, in time, becomes a man: the other is seldom and hardly reclaimed, by reason of his hardness and obstinacy.

Disputations in religion are sometimes necessary, but always dangerous; drawing the best spirits into the head from the heart, and leaving it either empty of all, or too full of fleshly zeal and passion if extraordinary care be not taken still to supply, and fill it anew with pious affections towards God, and loving towards men. And this

the more, considering how the controversies in religion are generally carried with more heat, than of any other subject: for that, besides reason, art, credit, and persuasion of truth, and right, which warm men in other differences, they are in this inflamed, as it were, with zeal for God, and his service: for whom, and which, not to be fervent, seemeth to be derogatory to his, and its honour. We are therefore carefully to beware, and earnestly to pray, that we may in controversies of religion strive for God, and according unto God: seeing in them we both may easily, and do dangerously err, if we miss at all: and therewith, that we neither make our adversary's cause worse than it is; nor conceive a sinister opinion of his affections in it, without reason. In both which men seek dishonest and unconscionable advantages: and are sorry in effect, that they whom they oppose, are not worse than they are.

He that strives for error, strives for Satan against God: he that strives for victory, strives for himself against other men: but he that strives for truth against error, helps the Lord against God's and his own enemy, Satan, the father of lies; and his specially, if withal he handle God's cause according unto God. A man shows most knowledge and understanding in the matter of truth: but most grace in the manner of handling of it, with reverence, holiness, and modestly.

No faculty hath so many unskillful ones to meddle in it; as that of disputing in matter of religion. Which cometh to pass, either because men think it a shame for them not to have both knowledge in, and zeal for that subject: or because they make account in truth, that they venture nothing but words in the voyage, and so can have no great loss: or else, which, is common with ignorants, because they still presume they gain, with whom, or about whatsoever they meddle: whereas, if they had modesty to call things into consideration, and wisdom to discern of them aright, they would find themselves plain losers, where they think their gain greatest.

Divers men are effected diversely with the oppositions, and arguments this way brought against their tenets. Some through feebleness of heart are afflicted with them, as with a troop of enemies invading their possessions: others are lightly turned about, like weather-cocks, with every puff of new doctrine. The complain is just, and great of the vanity, and wantonness of men, and women, in finding, and following new fashions of apparel: but it were well, if this vanity and newfangledness, were to be seen only on peoples' backs, and that the complaint were not as just, and more grievous of the profane wantonness of many in taking up new forms of faith, and religion, specially in places of liberty, and where men may profess any religion, or none, if they will, without bodily danger. I have known divers, that have more lightly and licentiously changed their religion, and that in no small points, than a sober man would do the fashion of his coat: and who, in my conscience, if it might but have gained, or saved them twelve pence, would have held their former religion still. Others by oppositions are drawn into further search, and examination of things, Acts xvii.11: and this is commendable, where the matter is such, as we either understand not thoroughly, or may err in. Some again, though of weak understanding, no sooner hear an objection against anything, which they hold, but forthwith they fall upon it with an answer. And this they do oft out of a conceit that it is a point of wit in them, and credit to them, to say something to everything, though little to purpose to anything: in whom the Proverb is verified, to the contrary, "He that answereth a matter before he knows it, it is folly, and shame unto him." Prov. xviii.13. Others there are again, who trust most to the scorpion's sting, their venomous tongue, in disgracing, instead of refuting, both cause and person of their opposites, by all possible means: and these are for the most part such, as presume that the times, which they serve, and their credits with them, will countenance, and authorize against their underling adversaries the slanders, and calumnies which they either maliciously invent, or lightly receive, or uncharitably conceive against them: which therefore they spit freely abroad with black tongues as serpents do their poison, to blast, and corrupt whatsoever they light upon. These hot reproachers are often as cold disputers [Scaliger].

There want not also, who affect differences in religion with others, either in wantonness, and for ostentation of wit; or in affectation of singularity; or in envy at superiors; or in contempt of inferiors; or to gratify the mighty, by opposing such, specially of mean condition, as the other hate, and despise. But we should affect strife with none; but study, as far as can be, to accord with all; accounting it a benefit, when we can so do with any; and the contrary, across; and the same the greater, by how much their gifts, or graces, or places are greater, or the bond nearer between them, and us, whether natural, or civil, or religious. Lastly, there are to be found too many, who make either proud contempt, or bold obstinacy a buckler to ward all blows of arguments, that are, or can be brought against their preconceived opinions. We ought to be firmly persuaded in our hearts of the truth, and goodness of the religion, which we embrace in all things; yet as knowing ourselves to be men, whose property it is to err and to be deceived in many things; and accordingly both to converse with men in that modesty of mind,

as always to desire to learn something better, or further, by them, if it may be: as also to beg at God's hands the pardon of our errors, Psa. xix.12; and aberrations, which may be, and are secret in us, and we not aware thereof. Whosoever offers the word of God, and holy Scriptures for justification of his religion, deserves to be heard, and to have his cause examined for the very Word's sake, whose testimony he offers to produce: as in civil course, he who offers to bring for his cause witnesses honourable, and worthy of credit, will be admitted to plead it for his witnesses' sake, though not for his own.

No difference, or alienation in religion how great soever, either dissolves any natural, or civil bond of society; or abolisheth any the least, duty thereof. A king, husband, father, &c., though an heathen, idolater, atheist, or excommunicate, is as well, and as much a king, husband, or father, as if he were the best Christian living: and so both oweth, and hath owing unto him reciprocally the duties and offices of that state, in which he is set, by an inviolable right: which they that deny, are monsters amongst men, and enemies, to human societies.

Divisions amongst a few, though not in the greatest matters, are most observed, because first, it is expected that weak parties should be firmly united for their better defense. Secondly, a few, and their doings are remarkable for their fewness, as a handful of foreigners in a strange country. Thirdly, their differences are oft more vehement, partly for the greater zeal, spiritual or carnal, of the persons; and partly because their opposition is more immediate; whereas amongst many it will be hard, but some mediators will be found to moderate things [Bodinus]. And this is the reason, why the danger of civil tumults is greatest in such countries, as in which two religions only are in use. Lastly, all will be bold with them, and ready to proclaim their miscarriages to the full, and above truth.

The most count it the best and safest way in differences of religion without further question, to take the strongest part: that doing as the most do, they may have the fewest find fault with them. Such forget God who is strongest of all. But the best and safest way indeed, is to get true, and sound conscience of things certain, and without controversy. Such a person God will direct in his ways, so far, and certainly, as not to miss of the main end, life eternal; and therewith in mercy will pardon all other his human aberrations. "With mine whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments." Psa. cxix.10.

Men are for the most part minded for, or against toleration of diversity of religions, according to the conformity which they themselves hold, or hold not with the country, or kingdom, where they live. Protestants living in the countries of Papists commonly plead for toleration of religion: so do Papists that live where Protestants bear sway: though few of them, specially of the clergy, as they are called, would have the other tolerated, where the world goes on their side. The very same is to be observed in the ancient Fathers, in their times: of who, such as lived in the first three hundred years after Christ, and suffered with the churches, under heathen persecutors, pleaded against all violence for religion, true or false: affirming that it is of human right and natural liberty, for every man to worship what he thinketh God [Tertullian]: and that it is no property of religion to compel religion, which ought to be taken up freely; that no man is forced by the Christians against his will, seeing he that wants faith, and devotion, is unserviceable to God: and that God not being contentious, would not be worshipped of the unwilling [Lactantius]; whereas, on the contrary, the latter, having the emperors Christian, and on their side, incited, and pressed them to violent courses. But considering, that to tolerate is not to approve; and that the magistrates are kings, and lord over men properly, and directly, as they are their subjects, and not as they are Christ's; but that by accident, and as the same persons who are civilly their subjects, are spiritually Christ's and Christians; and lastly, considering, that neither God is pleased with unwilling worshippers, nor Christian societies bettered, nor the persons themselves neither, but the plain contrary in all three; the saying of the wise King of Poland [King Stephen] seemeth approvable, that it is one of the three things which God hath kept in his own hands, to urge the conscience this way, and to cause a man to profess a religion by working it first in his first.

If the order in Israel be objected; it may be answered, first, that the land was holy, as no land now is; that one nation separated from all other nations to be the Lord's peculiar people, as no nation now is; the kings types and figures of Christ, as no kings now are: and secondly, that none were, in truth, compelled to the Israelitish church and religion; but being of it, whether Israelites, or proselytes, were to be "cut off from the Lord's people, and destroyed out of hand for presumptuous sins," Numb. xv.30-36; Psa. ci.7,8; or working iniquity; or for "not serving God with all their heart and might," 2 Chron. xv.13. Kings by this course would come short of the number of subjects, in whose multitude their honour stands: and unto churches, few or none could possibly be added.

If it be further objected, that men may be by the magistrate constrained to the outward acts of justice, honesty, and the like, though destitute altogether of the inward virtues; it may be answered, that these serve properly, and immediately to preserve civil societies, of which magistrates are properly kings, and lords, and so do obtain their proper ends, if the very outward things be done, though never so unwillingly: but of religious actions the proper end is not civil society, nor is attainable but by faith, and devotion in the heart of the doers.

Lastly, to that of the Fathers, "that many who at first serve God by compulsion come after to serve him freely and willingly," [Austin] I answer, that neither good intents, nor events, which are casual, can justify unreasonable violence: and withal, that by this course of compulsion many become atheists, hypocrites, and familists: and being at first constrained to practice against conscience, lost all conscience afterwards. Bags and vessels overstrained break, and will never after hold anything. Yet do I not deny all compulsion to the hearing of God's word, as the means to work religion, and common to all of all sorts, good and bad; much less excuse civil disobedience palliated with religious shows, and pretenses; or condemn convenient restraint of public idolatry, so as this rule of reason holds its places, viz., that the bond between magistrate, and subject is essentially civil; but religious accidentally only, though eminently [Keckerman]. For conclusion of this matter, let the godly magistrate consider, that as there is no church-state and profession so truly Christian, and good, in which too many may not be found carried in their persons with a spirit plainly antichristian; so there is hardly any sect so antichristian or evil otherwise, in church profession, in which there are not divers truly, though weakly led, with the Spirit of Christ in their persons, and so true members of his mystical body. With whom to deal rigorously for some few aberrations of ignorance, or infirmity, were more to please Christ's enemy in the oppressing of the person, than Christ, in so repressing his failing in some particulars, specially if they be not fundamental.

As then the Christian magistrate hath his power of magistracy from God, which his Christianity serves to sanctify, and direct: so, undoubtedly, he is to use it for God, and his honour, and that in his true worship, in which he is specially honoured, and against the contrary; yet with these two cautions: First, That as the greater sins of other kinds, do not so violate and dissolve the marriage-bond, as adultery doth, by reason of its direct opposition thereagainst: so neither do idolatry, or heresy, how great sins soever in themselves, so outlaw a subject civilly, as do seditions, murders, adulteries, and the like directly violating, and disturbing civil societies. The second is, That no authority of man may bring into, or uphold in the Church either doctrine, or ordinance of religion, or person, which last is not lightly to be regarded, seeing the other two serve for it, unto which the Lord in his Word hath not first given testimony of approbation for that use: seeing magistrates are not governors against, nor besides, but under God, in their dominions.

CHAPTER VIII: OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

The holy Scriptures are that divine instrument, and means, by which we are taught to believe what we ought, touching God, and ourselves, and all creatures: and how to please God in all things, unto eternal life. I speak of believing things, seeing faith comes by hearing: for else, we know things touching God by that which we see, feel and discern, in and by his works. We are led to the knowledge of God in his power, wisdom, goodness, justice, and mercy, by his works both without, and within us; and whensoever God either doth, or suffers a thing to be done, though not so much as insinuated formerly in his Word, we then know it to be his will, that such a thing should be, as certainly, as if he had expressly revealed it before in the Scriptures. I speak of pleasing God in all things; first, because entire obedience, so far as human frailty will permit, is the immediate end, and use of the word of God; and the way, and means to salvation: secondly, to meet with that dangerous presumption of doing that, which is necessary to salvation, as many use to speak, though with affected ignorance of, and apparent disobedience to many of God's commandments. Who knoweth with how will God can, and doth save many, being faithful in learning what they can, and in observing what they know? Though much more be necessary to such as have means to know more. And thirdly because it is no child-like, but a bastardly disposition, to take care for serving God no further, though, alas, all be little enough for that, than to be sure of the Father's inheritance. The heart of a man is then assured before God, and hath a warrant from heaven against eternal confusion, when he can say, with good conscience, that he "hath respect to all God's commandments." Psa. cxix.6.

God would have his will written, that is, his Word to become Scripture, partly for more certainty of truth to

men, and to preserve it the better from being corrupted; as all make account, that things set down in black and white, as they speak, are most firm: partly, for accord, and unity of churches, and Christians in the same truth; who, if they differ so much, notwithstanding they use the same rule, what would they do, if their rules were different, or uncertain? and partly, for more community; seeing books and writings may both easily be dispersed whither the voice of teachers cannot come, and also be read in private by Christians, when they are apart from their teachers.

Neither all things which the prophets of God wrote, were written by Divine inspiration, but some of them humanly, as their human affairs, common to them with other men, required: neither was all wherein they were divinely inspired, brought into the public treasury of the church, or made part of the canonical Scriptures, which we call the Bible [Junius]; no more than all which they spake, was spoken by the Spirit; or all which they spake by the Spirit, written, John xx.31; xxi.25: but only so much, as the Lord in wisdom, and mercy, thought requisite to guide the church in faith and obedience, to the world's end: so as the Scriptures should neither be defective through brevity, nor burthensome by too great largeness, and prolixity. and thus to judge is more answerable both to God's providence in preserving the Scriptures from miscarrying; and to the Church's care, and faithfulness in keeping safe this heavenly treasure committed to her custody; than to say with some, that any of the books, or parts of the canonical Scriptures are lost.

It no more detracts from the authentic authority, or general use of some parts of the Holy Scriptures, that they were penned upon some special occasions, than of the sermons of Christ, the prophets, and apostles, that some of them were preached upon special occasions. And surely, it seems a strange conceit, that the authority of the writing should be the less, because the thing written was suggested by the Holy Ghost, and so penned, upon special occasion offered: as such Scriptures were.

the Scriptures are not only authentic in themselves, as having the Spirit of God for the author both of matter, and manner, and writing, 2 Pet. i.21; but do also, as they say, carry their authority in their mouths, binding both to credence, and obedience, all whomsoever, unto whom they come, and by what means soever. and if God "left not himself without witness," Acts xiv.17, in his works of creation, and providence; how much less in his written Word? wherein, without comparison, he reveals himself much more clearly, than the other way: which is therefore discernible by itself, as is the sun by its own beams, and light; and which, as one saith, he that studies to understand, shall be compelled to believe [Tertullian]. their assertion, therefore, who hold, and teach, that we are to receive the Scriptures for the churches' testimony, because usually, as others more truly and religiously speak, we receive them by its testimony [Whitaker], is in effect none other, than that we are to believe God for men's cause: whereas, on the contrary, if a man should find the book of the Holy Scriptures in the highway, or hidden under a stone; yet he were bound to learn, receive, believe, and obey them, and every part of them, in his place, though without, yea against the liking and approbation of all the men in the world: except God must not be God without men's liking [Tertullian]. And if the word preached by Christ, the prophets, and Apostles, in their time, whether to Jews, or Gentiles, were absolutely to be believed, and obeyed, by every one that hear it, without other, or further testimony; why not as well, and much, now, by all that read it written? "He that receives the testimony" of Christ for itself, whether exhibited in speech, or writing, "sets to his seal that God is true," John iii.33: he that receives it for the testimony of the Church sets to his seal, that men are true. But the child of God knows his Father's voice [Morneus].

The profit and power of the Scriptures, both for stay of faith, and rule of life, and comfort in all manner of afflictions, no tongue or pen is able so fully to express, as every true Christian finds, and feels, in his own experience. There is but one true happiness, life eternal; one giver it, God; one Mediator, Jesus Christ; and so but one means of imparting it, the word of God: by which, he, that is both author and finisher of all, both begins, and perfects all. "Blessed is the man, that hath his delight therein, and meditates in the same, day and night," Psa. i.1,2: that so he may learn the things upon earth, the knowledge whereof will fit him for heaven [Jerome].

When we avow the Scriptures' perfection, we exclude not from men common sense, and the light of nature, by which we are, both subjects capable of understanding them, and directed in sundry manners of doing the things commanded in them: yea, besides other human helps, we both acknowledge, and beg of God as most needful for their fruitful understanding, the light of his Holy Spirit: not only we account, and avow them as a most perfect rule neither crooked any way, nor short in anything requisite. This their sufficiency and perfection is not to be restrained to matters simply necessary to salvation: for who can say, how many, or few, and no more, nor

less, they are? But to matters necessary to obedience, that we may please God in all things, great or small; expressed, or intended, and to be gathered by proportion, and just consequence, 1 Thess. iv., 1. "Without faith we cannot please God," Heb. xi.6; and "Faith comes only by the word of God," Rom. x.17; which we must therefore make our guide in "all our ways." Prov. iii.6. And if we be to "give an account of every idle word," Matt. xiii.36, and so for every vain thought, or work, there is then a law of God for these smallest matters; for where no law is, there is no transgression; and where there is no transgression, or fault, there is no account to be given. But as philosophers say, that the least natural things are not sensible, by reason of their smallness; so may, and doth it too easily fall out, that we fail through want of skill or care in applying our rule of direction, both in smaller matters, and other of greater moment also. But this is not because the Scriptures are defective in directive; but we either blind in discerning, or negligent in searching, or both. And if the holy Scriptures' direction reach unto the whole course of our life, how much more of our religion, or worship of God? in which nothing is to be practiced, but that which is to be believed; nothing to be believed, but that which is to be taught; nothing to be taught, but according to the Scriptures. this being the first thing that we are to believe, that we must believe nothing, but according to them [Tertullian]. All things else are human; and human it is to err, and be deceived. the custom of the Church is but the custom of men; the sentence of the fathers but the opinion of men; the determinations of councils but the judgments of men [Whitaker]. To conclude, one only place of holy Scriptures rightly understood, and fitly applied, will have more power, and fasten deeper upon a truly good, and godly heart; than all the consenting authorities of men, and angels, though uttered with the tongue of men, and angels.

As the title set over the head of Christ crucified, was the same in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, so are the Scriptures the same, whether in the original, or other language into which they are faithfully translated. Yet, as the waters are most pure, and sweet in the fountain, so are all writings, Divine and human, in their original tongues; it being impossible, but some either change, or defect, or redundancy will be found in the translation, either by default of the translator, or of the tongue, into which it is made.

In a translator is required, specially, skill in words, and tongues; in an expositor, judgment in things. That translation is most exact, which agreeth best with the original, word for word, so far as the idiom, or propriety of the language will bear: so as for words, or phrases, in the original, proper or common; simple, or figurative; perspicuous, or doubtful; words and phrases of the same sort, proper or common, and so of the rest, be put, and retained in the version: lest the interpreter bring his own commentary for the Scripture text. On the contrary, the commentary is best, which shows most clearly the sense, scope, and meaning of the text, in what words soever. As a law-maker best knows the meaning of the law, and how it is to be expounded, so for the exposition of the holy Scriptures, the Spirit of god, as the author thereof is first and most to be consulted with, by faithful and earnest prayer, from a good conscience, that God may fulfill his promise made of "giving his Holy Spirit to them that ask it," Luke xi.13, and of "revealing his secrets to them that fear him." Psa. xxv.14. And so some special instruments of renewing the gospel's light in the former age, have professed, that they learned more this way by prayer, than by much study otherwise [Luther].

There is in Scripture but one proper, and immediate sense; others are rather collections from it, relations unto it, or illustrations of it, than immediate senses. The literal sense is to be followed, as being most natural, what may be, and not to be refused, if it may stand without danger, without blasphemy, and according to other Scriptures [Irenaeus]. and here it must be noted, that Christ, and his apostles in expounding Moses and the prophets, did not only infallibly express their conceptions and meanings, but the meaning of the Spirit speaking in them; and that, by reason of their more plentiful measure of the same Spirit and experience withal, in some particulars, as I conceive, further than the prophets themselves understood: albeit they always knew the immediate drift of the spirit and meaning of the things, which they spake, and were not as the Pythonists, or other the like instruments of the devil, uttering oracles which they themselves understood not.

The lawyers have a rule, and the same competent to the matter whereof they treat, that laws of favor are to be extended, as largely as may be: but odious laws, as they speak, as much straitened and confined within the narrowest bounds of interpretation. But all God's laws and instructions must, in honor of the lawgiver, be expounded in the largest sense that they can bear: that so they may reach s far, and bind as fast, as may be. This is the infiniteness of his wisdom challengeth, in directing us; of his authority in commanding us; of his mercy, in promising; and justice, in threatening: which, by so interpreting, and applying his Word, we acknowledge, and honor, as is meet. and as they are blame-worthy, who out of a scrupulous fear, lest they should add to the

Scriptures, allow them no further meaning, than the words express; so is their sin greater, and full of presumption, who shorten and straiten the Scriptures' instruction to that which is expressed in so many words, that they may make room thereby, for their own devices. A scripture commandeth, promiseth, or threateneth whatsoever is contained in it, though not expressed; and that is contained in it, which can truly and justly be gathered from it, though by never so many consequences, or inferences; though the fewer the less dangerous, by reason of our weakness of discourse.

Particular words and phrases, more obscure, are to be interpreted according to the scope and mind of the speaker, the Holy Ghost, in the place, which is, both in time, and excellency, before the thing spoken [Celsus], and that for which the Spirit speaketh as it doth in the place: neither is the scripture profitable, except the scope be first found [Chrysostom]. And to hang upon a word, phrase, or sentence in a text, without looking to the main drift, is, if any other, the character of an heretical disposition. With this, that other most necessary rule hath affinity; namely, that the words are to be understood according to the subject matter [Melancthon]: the words of law and gospel according to the different nature of law and gospel; the words of an history, historically; of a sacrament, sacramentally and mystically; and, accordingly, notes of universality, according to the extent of the matter, or person spoken of.

As we oft find out, and learn men's meaning by some of their company, and of such as are about them, which we could not learn of themselves, so may we gather the meaning of a scripture, otherwise hard to be understood, by marking the things which accompany it, and which are above and below, as the Jews used to speak, and Christians with them [Tertullian].

Like as the lamps in the golden candlestick did one help another's light; so doth one place of holy scripture, another's. And though a thing found in one place, if in one indeed, be so true, and bind as strongly, as if it were a thousand times written; yet so to insist upon any one place, in a difference, as to neglect others, is the highway to error, and to lose the right sense, by breaking the scripture's golden chain, whose links are all fastened together [Chrysostom]. And as one place must be expounded by another; so much the more brief and obscure by the more plain, and large, and not the contrary, and cross way: for that were not to lighten the darkness of a text, but to darken its light: according to that of the father: - The fewer must be understood according to the more; and one saying must rather be taken according to all, than against all [Tertullian].

Touching precepts affirmative, and negative, first, they are usually either kept, or broken together. He who doth not what he should do, commonly doth what he should not do; if a man be "drawn away" from God, he is easily "ensnared by his own lust," James i.14. On the contrary, he that doth his duty faithfully, hath as it were, a supersedeas from the Lord, against the temptations of sin, and Satan. the way not to "fulfill the lusts of the flesh is to walk in the Spirit." gal. v.16. Secondly, the received rule, that affirmative precepts bind always, but not to always, as negatives do, is true, being rightly understood. We are to take no time for doing evil, and but some time for the doing of the best good, to wit, as we have opportunity, and ability. Gal. vi.10. Thirdly, in the prohibition of an evil we must ever understand the command of the opposite virtue; and so on the contrary. He that saith expressly, "Thou shalt not kill," means also, as well, Thou shalt preserve thy neighbor's life. Lastly, there is both more virtue and more vice practiced in affirmatives, than in negatives. It is more good, to do good, than not to do evil: and more evil, to do evil, than not to do good; though both the tree that brings forth evil fruit, and that brings forth no fruit, shall be cut down, and cast into the fire.

The oppositions intended in Scriptures are diligently to be observed, upon mistaking whereof error followeth; upon neglect, maimed obedience. For example: the apostle in teaching that there is but "one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. viii. 4-6; doth not oppose the Father to the Son; nor the Son to the Father, for either is God, either Lord: but both to all, whether creatures, or idols. So where Christ bids his apostles "baptize them that believe," he doth not exclude their infants; but such as believe not the gospel being preached unto them. Matt. xxviii.19; Mark xvi. 16. Likewise, where Paul saith of the incestuous man, that he was "rebuked of many;" he opposeth not many to all, as some conceive, but to one, viz. himself. 2 Cor. ii.6.

Lastly, he that will expound the Scriptures, ought in honor of the graces of God bestowed upon other men, and in conscience of his own infirmity, with the holy use of other means, to join the reading and searching of the commentaries and expositions of such special instruments, as god in mercy hath raised up for the opening of them, and edifying the church thereby: remembering always, that "the word of God neither came from him, nor to him alone." 1 Cor. xiv.36. He that depends too much upon other men's judgment, makes as if the word of God came not to himself at all: he that neglects it, as if it came to him only. Of which two evils the latter is so

much the worse, as arrogancy in a man's self is more odious both to God, and men, than either slackness in examining, or dullness in discerning, or excessive fear of departing from the opinion, specially received, of others.

It is strange, and lamentable, that, in the great profession of the Scriptures made in our days, so many should be ignorant of the difference between the law, and the gospel, of which two heads the Scriptures consist: making the gospel nothing else, but a more favorable, and easy law, and thereby transforming grace into nature; a promise to be received, into a commandment to be fulfilled; and the offering of new life, even the life of Christ, into the exacting of old, and due debt only. Gal. ii.20. God, as an absolute Lord, gives his holy law, saying "Do this and live:" and therein properly exacts obedience, as a natural debt, of the reasonable creature, thereunto enabled by creation: but as a gracious Father publisheth the gospel, in it offering help to the miserable and helpless creature, and working withal, according to the election of grace, power, and will to receive the help, and hand offered. this if many considered, as they ought, they would not, as they do, plead the power of man's free will in spiritual things, against the free grace of God; nor exclude as some of them do, the infants of believers from the covenant, and baptism of the church: as though God could not show grace, because they cannot show free will to receive it.

The utmost ordinary means of revelation of God's will for man's salvation and happiness, is the gospel. When the law written in man's heart by creation was almost worn out, god gave it written in tables of stone. But life, and freedom from sin, and death, being "impossible to the law in that it was weak, through the flesh," Rom. viii.3; and all men by it, whether considered as written in tables of stone, or of the heart, by creation, "coming short of the glory of God," Rom. iii.23; it hath pleased the same God by the gospel of his Son Christ to provide a gracious remedy, that the sick to death, by the justice of the law might be cured; yea the dead revived, by the grace of the gospel, and mercy of God therein. And other remedy besides, and beyond this, for the obtaining of salvation God hath not revealed. He that fulfills not the righteousness of the law, violates God's justice: but remaining obstinate against the grace of the gospel also, he despises with God's justice, his mercy; and his authority in both. and what remains for such, but a fearful expectation of the work of his terrible power, of "the revelation of his wrath from heaven against all, specially such, ungodliness of men"? Rom. i.8. "For if the word" (of the law) "spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward: how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation" (of the gospel); "which, at first, began to be preached by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him?" Heb. ii.2,3.

CHAPTER IX: OF AUTHORITY AND REASON

Authority leads us to the author of a thing, and bids us rest in his word, whether for credence to his relation, or obedience to his commandment. Reason wills us to look to the thing itself, and to the arguments for or against it, taken either from common sense, or natural principles, and conclusions, or other undoubted grounds of truth, or goodness of matter. The ground in authority is, in a sort, personal; in reason, real. It is a kind of impeachment of authority, to examine the reasons of things: so is it a prejudice to reason's work to call authority to counsel, save only when God speaks; for then the authority justifies the reason; and reason bids receive the authority, and do all things commanded without reasonings. Phil. ii.14.

the authority and credit of him that relates a matter, whether man, or angel, yea or God himself, makes it not the truer in itself, but the more readily to be believed by them that hear it. The testimony of God in his Word, that in the beginning he made the world of nothing, and will judge men and angels at that day by Jesus Christ, is only therefore true in itself, because God indeed hath done the one, and will do the other; but it is therefore by us to be believed as true, because he so testifies in his Word.

Divine authority is to sway with us above all reason: yea reason teacheth, that God is both to be believed, and obeyed in the things for which man can see no reason. And hence it is, that the Lord hath so severely punished men's transgressing his laws of ceremonies, and divine institutions, called by the schoolmen, voluntary precepts; for that in commanding of them God's absolute authority most clearly appears, and man's pure obedience in observing them. 1. Sam. vi.19; 2 Sam. vi.6-8; 2 Chron. xxvi.18, 19. Human authority hath more or less weight, according to the worth of the person, or other circumstances; but as the monies of all men, high and low; good and bad, are alike; so are the reasons. The meanest man's reason, specially in matter of faith, and obedience to God, is to be preferred before all authority of all men. I say, specially of faith; yet not excluding

other subjects. For though I will and ought to do some things, simply because I am commanded; yet I will not therefore simply believe that anything is good in itself. And albeit I am bound to obey human authority in sundry things, for the commanding of which I know no reason, yea know there is no reason; yet know I reason for mine obedience, even the honor of authority, and preservation of peace. The thing commanded may be unjust, and evil in him that commands, and yet good in me, obeying his authority in it. For example: a matter of outward wrong to me commanded by the magistrate; in the doing whereof I sustain damage, but sin not.

God who made two great lights for the bodily eye, hath also made two lights for the eye of the mind; the one, the Scriptures, for her supernatural light; and the other reason, for her natural light. And indeed only those two are a man's own: and so is not the authority of other men. The scriptures are as well mine, as any other man's; and so is reason as far as I can attain to it. But the authority of others is not mine, but theirs: which when I use, I borrow, and lay to pawn unto them, whom I cannot satisfy, or secure by the other means, which are mine own. Who would borrow of others that hath enough of his own to satisfy as well?

God, who, though he be absolute Lord, so often annexeth reasons to his precepts, teacheth even the most powerful and mighty upon the earth, in their governments, to prefer reason before authority. And the man that would not rather rule men by reason, yea, beasts, if they were capable thereof, than by violent authority, is himself inhuman, and beast-like.

The authority of God's Word and testimony is always the same, as being grounded upon his unchangeable verity; but the credit of men's judgments is less, or more according to variety of circumstances. Men deserve most credit in the faculty wherein they have been most exercised; for none can judge so well of the craft, as the craftsman [Anacharsis]. So, more likely it is, that a man wise, learned, and studious in the Scriptures, especially, if withal, he be such a one, as unto whom God hath promised, in ordinary course, as unto one that fears him, to reveal his secrets, should find the truth, than one flighty, illiterate, and of more shallow meditations. In former ages the devil hath so far prevailed, as that men in superstitious reverence, have, as it were, pinned their faith and religion upon the sleeves of the Church's authority, and clergy's learning; putting out, or winking with, their own eyes, that their guides might lead them: and this blindfold devotion is yet affected by too many. But withal, there want not, specially in places of liberty, whose minds Satan hath so far possessed with the contrary delusion, as they think it half popery, so much as to seek counsel and direction at men of learning and knowledge; lest, forsooth, they should be deceived by them. This suspicion hath been, and is, too much occasioned by the abuse of learning to covetousness, and ambition in the learned: but is taken and held up by the other, partly by unbelief, whilst they more fear the devil's subtlety in deceiving them by learned men, especially being in any measure conscionable, than they trust to the blessing of God upon his own gifts in them for their information; partly, from conceitedness in themselves, as if they were indeed very popes, and exempted from danger of erring; and partly, through partial affection to their preconceived opinions, of which they are as loath to hear any ill, as fond parents are to hear ill of their children, though there be never so much cause, lest thereby they should be brought out of love with them. But as we are more to desire, and endeavor that we ourselves may walk in the ways of God, than others; so should we rather desire and more endeavor, as we have occasion, to converse with men of knowledge, and such as may inform us, than with them that know less than ourselves, and do depend upon us for information. And to conclude; as learning makes the good better, and the bad worse: so is it more likely, that a man should be bettered by it, than not; and that knowing what concerns him, he will be the more ashamed of the contrary [Comenius].

It is also more probable, that many, specially wise, and godly, should find the truth, than one, as many eyes see more than one: whereupon it was that the very apostles in some cases of practice sought or took the advice of others; which help, our dullness makes much more necessary for us. Acts xxi.24-26.

Into this account we must also bring the advantage of ages and times in which men live: and so more credit in matters controverted between Rome and us, is to be given to the churches, and fathers of that first age after Christ, than of the latter, when the mystery of iniquity, rising by degrees, had gotten too great, both height and breadth.

Besides, the occasions offered have their weight in these balances. Austin is observed, by the occasion of the error of Pelagius, to have examined more diligently, and more exactly discerned, and in presser [more precise] terms to have propounded the truth, in the points of predestination, and free will, than others, his ancients. Many are ignorant, yea mistake, specially in smaller matters, not properly because they want either skill, or will to find out the truth in them, but occasion only pressing them to examine things received by tradition, or done of

custom without ground of reason.

With these also we must join the consideration of such advantages, as the latter times have of the former, whose helpful labors they enjoy: by which those which follow them, though in themselves meaner than they, are enabled to discern of many things, better than the other that went before them; as a dwarf set upon the shoulders of a giant can see further than he.

Lastly, it is more likely, that of two, in any measure alike otherwise, he who suffers affliction for conscience of God, should have the truth, than he that gets worldly benefit by his course in religion; specially if he have not in a great measure learned to deny himself, and this world: it being their guise to dissemble herein, who love lucre, and riches: as too many do [Lactantius].

The credit commending a testimony to others cannot be greater than is the authority in itself of him that gives it; nor his authority greater than his person. The person, then, being but a man, the authority can be but human, and so the faith but human, which it can challenge. The custom of the Church is but the custom of men: the sentence of the fathers but the opinion of men: the determination of councils but the judgments of men [Whitaker], what men soever. And so, if all the men in the world, not immediately directed, as were extraordinary prophets, and apostles, in whom the Spirit spake, and testified by them, should consent in one, as they, notwithstanding their multitude, were but men, though many, so was their testimony but human, though of many men; neither could it challenge any other than human assent unto it: and not that, neither absolutely, either in matters of discourse of reason, wherein it is possible that men should deceive themselves; or of relation from others, by whom they may be deceived. We are therefore to beware, that we neither wrong ourselves by credulity; nor others by unjust suspicion. To receive without examination men's sayings, is to make of men, God: to reject them lightly, is to make of men, devils [P. Martyr]; or fools, at the best. The latter hath pride and uncharitableness for the ground: the former either argues men to be simple, which cannot; or idle, which will not; or presumptuous, which think they need not; or superstitious, which dare not judge; or, which is worst of all the rest, desirous in a kind of humble hypocrisy to shelter an evil conscience before God under the shadow of great men's authority.

To press immoderately men's authority in Divine things, is to wrong God's, which alone is authentic; and whose will, and it alone, and all it, so far as is fit for us to know it, we know more certainly to be contained, and preserved, without corruption, in the Scriptures, than any father's opinion in the books which go under his name. This also wrongs men's faith, and reason, captivating them by prejudice; and rather offering a hand to lead the blind, than a light for the help of him that hath eyes to see with. I have known some, who, if they light upon a peremptory author, and bold asserter of things, were ready to be still of the same opinion with the book which they last read, their weaker judgment being overborne, rather by the strength of other men's asserverations, than reasons. Lastly, this engenders endless contentions: as is to be seen in some learned men's writings, in which there is more ado about the meaning of such or such a place in a father, than were enough to determine the whole controversy by the Scriptures and good reason.

These things notwithstanding, there is both a lawful and convenient use of human testimony, even in divine things; as first, for the convincing of such thereby, as regard it too much, and God's word too little. Thus Paul amongst heathens, even in his very sermons, alleged heathenish poets, and philosophers; and we in our writings rightly allege fathers, and councils against papists, and others, who more regard the sayings of an ancient father, or canon of a council, than the written word of the Ancient of days. They are twice overcome, who are beaten with their own weapons, in which they trust. Secondly, it induceth a moral probability, though no absolute necessity of truth; and though we see not the truth by other men's eyes, but by our own, yet may we be something help up in the arms of their testimony to see it the better, and so be helped, as Zaccheus was, by the tree, into which he climbed, to see Christ. So the apostles in penning some parts of Holy Scripture, upon occasion of differences in the churches, and opposition to their apostolical authority, took in, for the better passage with men, of God's undoubted truth, the concurring testimony, even of ordinary Christians: though both the decrees and epistles were penned by infallible and immediate direction of the Holy Ghost, as well, and as much, as any other parts of canonical Scriptures. Acts xv.23,29; Gal. i.2. Thirdly, citation of human authority helps to wipe away the aspersion of schism, and singularity, when we can show that our assertions and practices have agreement with such as are in account in the churches. lastly, it commends both a man's modesty, and diligence, when he inquires after, and withal, his cause, in the eyes of men, when he appears to know the judgments of others in the things he handles; as it is, on the other side, an imputation to him that knows them no; and that even where it is otherwise, no benefit, to know them.

The authority of him that prescribeth, or commandeth, within his limits, is the same, whether the matter be great, or small. God is God, in the smallest things, which he requires; and man but man, in his deepest charges. The prophets, and apostles in their writings are extraordinary, and pastors and teachers, ordinary ministers; and neither are either more or less in any part of their ministry, for the instruction of the churches. So likewise all true reasons are of the same force in themselves, to confirm that for which they are brought: neither is any one stronger than other, but only more evident. The best but proves of itself the things to be so; and the meanest, if found, doth as much.

CHAPTER X: OF FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE : REASON, AND SENSE

Faith, in general, is a firm assent upon knowledge to an affirmation, for the credit or authority of him that affirmeth a thing, whether God, or angel, or man [Ursinus]. To some things we assent by sense, and natural light: to some for certain proof of reason: but the assent of faith rests upon the fidelity of the speaker, and not upon the sense or reason of the thing, how agreeable to either soever it be. Yet, so as the more reasonable the thing related is, the more readily we believe it to be true. The thing believed, faith apprehends primarily, as a matter of truth, and, therein, hath its seat in the understanding. Divine faith assents to the revealed will of God, for the authority and truth of God, which cannot deceive. That faith, or act of faith by which we are justified is a due assent to, and application of the promises of the gospel, as made, and appertaining to us in particular: the general promise upon condition of application duly, and rightly made, being as much for certainty, as either extraordinary revelation, or particular nomination of person. This application of God's promises in Christ hath evermore affiance necessarily, and immediately joined with it. For, being by the Spirit of God, and word of the gospel, persuaded of God's love in Christ, we cannot but trust unto him, rest, and repose ourselves upon him, and expect accordingly from him, all good. But as we must lay hold of the stay or prop before we can rest upon it, so much faith go before affiance in order of causes, and we lay hold of God's love before we can repose ourselves upon it.

"Hope is the expectation of good things promised [Scaliger], having faith for its foundation." Heb. xi.1. These two, faith and hope, have many the same objects, yet neither all, nor any in the same respect. We believe things past, present, and to come: but hope for things to come only. We believe both promises, and threatenings; both rewards, and punishments, in the order set by God: but hope only for things desirable. And for the very same things in themselves believed, and hoped for, as for example, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting, we believe them as present in God's promises, which faith applies unto us; but hope for them as absent, and to come in performance, unto which hope carrieth us.

"Faith begets hope," Rom. v.4,5; for, by believing the forgiveness of our sins, and God's promises, for the present, we are encouraged to expect, and hope for all future good. And hope, again, as a good child, helps to relieve its father, faith, in time of need: whereupon the apostle saith of the faithful, that "if they had hope only in this life, they were of all men the most miserable." 1 Cor. xv.19. For what availeth it a man in misery to believe eternal life, if he had not hope in time to obtain it, and therewith freedom and redemption from distress? But we have therefore comfort in believing, because we have hope of enjoying in due time.

Love is the affection of union in regard of the loving; and of well-wishing, in regard of the creature loved [Scaliger]. And Divine love is the affection of union with god in his grace and glory, in which man's happiness consists; and with the creature, according unto God. Faith is the root, and love the sap spreading forth itself, for the fruits of good works, throughout all the branches of our lives: faith the beginning, and love the end of our conversation [Ignatius]. "By faith we live the life of the Son of God," Gal. ii.20, and receive all good from him, by love we are moved, and persuaded, to use what we have to the good of men, and praise of God [Cyril]. And whereas faith makes a man some great thing, richer than the richest, and lord of the whole world [Luther], love makes him a "servant unto all men," 1 Cor. ix.10, in humbling, and applying himself unto them, in all lawful things, for their good. Now, albeit love have these two prerogatives; first, that it persuades most effectually, and immediately, to the use, and employment of all the good things which we have received from God, to the benefit of others; and secondly, that, whereas faith and hope are determined formally in this life, and ended in sight in the life to come, love abideth there also, 1 Cor. xii.12; and that, in these two respects the apostle ascribes an excellency, and chiefness to love above the other: yet herein faith hath this singular pre-eminence, that whereas by love we, and what we are, become God's; and men's for God: by faith, not only all other things,

but even God himself becomes ours for all-sufficient good unto us: as he saith, "I am thy God all-sufficient." Gen. xvii.1. By it, the will and word of God is ours for our instruction, and direction; his righteousness ours, for our justification; his Spirit for our sanctification; his power for our protection; and his glory for our happiness in the fruition thereof.

This faith in Christ is a gift supernatural, not only in regard of nature corrupted, but even created [Perkins]; which, therefore, is not so properly repaired in men by grace, as are some other virtues, but, after a sort, new built from the ground; as directing to that attribute in God primarily for its object, whereof Adam in innocence had no need; which is, mercy through Christ, against the misery of sin, and punishment. Unto this faith most precious promises are made, and most excellent things affirmed of it: and that, not only for the excellence of the grace in itself, which yet is great, and greatly honoreth God; in his truth, which it believeth; in his power, as able; and love, as willing to bestow all good things upon us : but specially for an attractive, and applying faculty which it hath above other virtues, to make God ours, and all creatures with him, according unto god, as is aforesaid. To believe in Christ is to receive him, and the promises touching him. And hereupon it is said of that cloud of witnesses, that "by faith they quenched the violence of fire, stopped the mouths of lions, put to flight the armies of aliens," &x. John I,12; Heb. xi.1; xii.1. The reason whereof seems to be, for that, as by justifying faith they applied the righteousness of God, to salvation; so by the faith of miracles, they apprehended, and applied the infinite power of God, to the producing of those supernatural effects.

The strength of true Christian faith, the devil knows to his cost; as that, by which he, the prince, with his whole army, the world, hath been so often foiled, and overcome. Eph. ii.2; 1 John v.19. For, being by faith persuaded, that in doing, or suffering according to the will of God, we please him, and are under his protection, and blessing, we steadfastly persevere in well-doing, and patiently endure all things for his name's sake: whereupon he, especially in the day of their distress, assaults the faith of the godly, that that might fail Luke xxii.32; as knowing that if the root of faith be shaken loose, the fruit of good works will wither. Faith, therefore, must as a welcome passenger be well carried, and conveyed through the sea of temptations in the vessel of a "good conscience," 1 Tim. i.5, that it suffer not shipwreck by the leaks of an evil; directed by the chart of God's word, and promises rightly understood, that it run not a wrong course; and having ever in a readiness the sure and steadfast anchor of hope against a stress; and continually gathering into the outspread sails of a heart enlarged by prayer, and meditation, the sweet and prosperous gusts of God's Holy Spirit, to drive it to the desired haven. This faith, if it be not grounded upon God's word, is fancy: if it receive not the same word in every part, but where it lists, it is sauciness: if it work not as well, yea more, in an afflicted state, as in a prosperous, it is nothing but fleshly presumption: if it be not fruitful in all good works, as we have opportunity, and are able, it is dead; and will in the end, like the faith of the devils, afford only matter of trembling. James ii.19. Lastly, it must be firm, and not ambiguous, or going by peradventures; else it is not faith, but opinion [Bernard].

Yet are we not here to imagine an idea of faith, free, in this infirmity of our flesh, from doubting [Chemnitius]. The tree may stand, and grow also, though shaken, and bended with the wind: so may faith hold its both standing, and life, notwithstanding such doubtings, as the flesh, ever lusting against the spirit, mingleth with it. Against which weakness and imperfection of our faith we have this firm comfort, that we are not saved for, no, nor by the perfection of the instrument, which faith is, but of the object, Christ, which it apprehendeth, and so may with a true, though palsy hand of faith receive, and keep both Christ, and all his benefits [Perkins]. This weakness and disease of faith we must not commend, as Papists do; nor nourish like secure persons; but cure, with all diligence, by the holy and diligent use of the ministrations sanctified of God, and given by Christ, "for the perfecting of the saints, and edifying of the body, till we attain in the unity of faith, and acknowledgment of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, according to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," Eph. ix.12,13. Also, we must nourish faith by frequent meditations of God's love, and promises in Christ, and of the gracious effects of them; and must, as the prophet and apostle teach us, "live by it," Habak. ii.4; Heb. x.38: both doing in faith and assurance of acceptance at God's hands, what we do, not only in the works of his worship, but, in those also of our conversation with men; and putting ourselves in all our ways, under his protection, and that specially in the time of distress, or danger; that as the bodily hand gets, and gathers strength by being diligently used in works competent, so may also the spiritual hand do, which faith is.

Now, as for our successful "wrestling against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickednesses in high places," Eph. vi.12, we must put on, amongst other parcels of the armor of God, the shield of faith; so must we not forget the helmet of salvation, hope, whose strength is great to bear off all blows of temptation, and

that with cheerfulness. For what burdens of afflictions, and temptations will not he cheerfully undergo, that expects, undoubtedly, their speedy ending in endless happiness? Alexander the Great meaning to invade Asia, and giving away his riches aforehand, being asked, what he would reserve for himself, answered, Hope [Quintus Curtius]. But what is the shadow to the substance? He hoped for the kingdom of Persia, we, of heaven. And what if his hope stretched itself to the monarchy of the whole world? It was but to this world; wherein also it was frustrated, and perished with him. But "the anchor of our hope is cast within the veil." Heb. vi.19, and extendeth to the world to come; being also firm, and steadfast, and which cannot be disappointed, nor shall have other end than in being perfected in the end of all, the full fruition, and eternal possession of happiness with God. "Were it not for hope, the heart would break: but we having this hope, faint now, but hold fast the possession thereof without wavering; yea even glory in afflictions under the hope of the glory of God." Heb. x.23; Rom. v.3.

Lastly, touching love; as it is the affection of union, so it makes, after a sort, the loving and loved, one: such being the force thereof, as that, he that loveth suffereth a kind of conversion into that which he loveth, and by frequent meditation of it, uniteth it with his understanding, and affection [Scaliger]. Thus, to love God is to become godly, and to have the mind, after a sort, deified, "being made partakers of the divine nature," 1 Pet. I,4, in its effects: to love the world is to become a worldling; and so of the rest. Thus, in the parable of the tares, the children of the kingdom are called good seed, Matt. xiii.24, and wheat, as growing, and becoming wheat of the wheat, or seed sown in them, as the wheat ear groweth of the wheat corn: as on the contrary, ungodly men are said to "have eyes full of adultery," 2 Pet. ii.12, and the like; and not only to be sinful, but "sin, unrighteousness, darkness, and Belial," 2 Cor. vi.15; as being even metamorphosed and transformed into the evils which they love, and delight in. O! how happy is that man, who by the sweet feeling of "the love of God shed abroad into his heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given him" Rom. v.5, is thereby, as by the most strong cords of heaven, drawn effectually, and with all the heart, to love God again, who hath loved him first; and so becomes one with him, and rests upon him, for all good, and happiness.

For this our love to God, there is required, not only the positive affection of the heart aspiring unto union with God, upon knowledge of him [Zanchius], as the chiefest good, both in himself, and to us in Christ, and a contentation in him so known and obtained; but withal, that we exercise, prove, and approve, that, our love to him, in our love to such good persons, and things, as unto which he hath imparted some sparks of his goodness; especially to his good children, and good word, and ordinances. He cannot love him that begetteth, saith the Apostle, 1 John v.1; iv.7-10, who loveth not him, and that in deed and truth, who is begotten, in truth of affection, and in deed of action, for his comfort; and this with greater bent of both, as the graces of God are more eminent in him. Neither loves he God, that loves not his word, and that, both in affection of heart, and effect of ready obedience to all his commandments. Psal. cxix.6; John xiv.15. We must take heed of a shadowish love of goodness and piety only, in the abstract; and must love it in the concrete, where both the person, and good in him, are visible; in whom hypocrites, for the most part, hate and persecute it. He but pretends to others, the love of goodness, or imagines it in himself, that loves not good men for it. Lastly, "he that loves not his brother whom he sees, how can he love God whom he sees not?" 1 John iv.20. Not, but that there is matter of love infinitely more than in any, or all men; but because for the loving of God, we want the advantage of sense, and motive of compassion, by which our love to our distressed brethren is helped.

This "love is the fulfilling of the law," Rom. xiii.10; the love of God being the greatest commandment; and the love of our neighbor like unto it. It is also that to which the gospel in the end leads us: by which gospel, or "new covenant," Heb. xiii.8, God writes his laws in the mind and heart of his: and so perfects the one in the other. And so natural to Christians is this brotherly love, as that the apostle makes account he needs not write to the churches, to teach them that which God taught them so many ways. 1 Thess. iv.9. By this "we know ourselves to be raised from death to life," 1 John iii.14, by it all others know us to be Christ's disciples, if we love one another. John viii.35. "See," said the heathens, pointing at the Christians, "how they love one another?" [Tertullian] and See, said the Christians of them, how they hate one another. Oh that heathens could not now say of Christians, as they sometimes said of them!

If we were perfect in this love, we needed no other law to rule us, either in the duties towards God, or our neighbors, no more than do the angels in heaven, and souls of the faithful men departed, who by the law of love alone, do live both most perfect, and most happy lies. and, indeed, to love as we ought, is a very happy thing, wherein we resemble God, and the angels: as by the contrary, we complice [are accomplices with] with the

devil, and wicked men, who lie "in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another." Titus iii.3. And, howsoever naturally we desire rather to be beloved, than to love; yet is it incomparably a more both excellent and blessed thing to love, than to be beloved; as it is "to give rather than to receive." Acts xx.35.

Besides, love is the lodestone of love: and the most ready, and compendious way to be beloved of others is to love them first. They taking knowledge thereof, will be effectually drawn to answerable good-will, if they be not harder than iron, and such as have cast off the chains and bonds of common humanity: for even "publicans and sinners love those that love them." Matt. v.46. yea, admit they love of them never come to their knowledge, yet will God by the invisible hand of his providence, bend their hearts, by mutual affection unto thee, at least, so far as is good for thee: and wherein they are inflexible, and defective, he will make supply out of the abundance of his love, and goodness; that so it may be verified which is written; "with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again." Luke vi.38. To conclude this point: let the grace of God herein specially triumph over our corruption: that, whereas, by nature, we would be loved of them whom we hate, by grace we may "love them which hate us." Matt. v.44. And this is a great work of grace indeed; and yet most necessary for all Christ's disciples. We must not be like the Pharisees who instead of enlarging their own affections, straitened the law of loving their neighbors, unto such as loved them, or dwelt within a certain compass of them; but we must account all our neighbors that need pity or help from us: and our Christian neighbors, and brethren also, if the Lord have received them, though they be neither minded in all things as we are; nor towards us as we are towards them.

Lastly, as faith is to rule love, that it prove not lust; and hope, that it prove not presumption: so also must it, reason and sense in all their operations, which it no way abolisheth, but orders, and sanctifies. Luke x.27. And as in nature, the denominations from the predominant quality, so is it in our course of life. To live by reason is to live the life of a man; to live by sense is to live the life of a beast: but to "live by faith is to live the life of the Son of God," Gal. ii.20, and to be, in its effects, "partakers of the divine nature," 1 Pet. i.4; and that, not only in the reasonable, but in the sensitive faculties also. For these three, faith, reason, and sense, being all God's works in a man, cannot be contrary, in their right use, one to another: neither can anything be true in one, which is false in another: neither doth, or can any one of them destroy another, but use, order, and perfect it: reason, sense; and faith, both sense and reason. For "faith comes by hearing," Rom. x.17, at the first, and is nourished and increased both by hearing, and seeing, and by the benefit of all other senses afterwards. Neither can it possibly either be begot, or nourished, or increased, but by the discourse of reason ordered and sanctified by the Spirit of God. Which Spirit's work is so effectual, as it makes even the meanest powers of nature created in a man to serve effectually for the furthering of the highest works of supernatural grace. Sweet is the harmony of all the powers and parts both of the soul and body of a sanctified person!

Reason is that wherein man goes before all other earthly creatures [Seneca] and comes after God only, and the angels in heaven. For whereas God and nature hath furnished other creatures, some with horns, some with hoofs, other with other instruments, and weapons both defensive and offensive; man is left naked, and destitute of all those, but may comfort himself in that one endowment of reason, and providence, whereby he is enabled to govern them all [Plutarch]. Now, who would not strive to excel other men in that, wherein men excel all other creatures? How much more, in that, to which few men attain, true faith and the life thereof?

CHAPTER XI: OF ATHEISM AND IDOLATRY

Some are Atheists in opinion; others in affection; but many more in conversation of life. There are but few of the first coat, and which can so wholly blot out the reminders of God's image written by creation in their hearts, as to leave them altogether empty, and devoid of the knowledge, conscience and reverence of a divine Majesty; and which come to conclude roundly in their hearts, that there is no God. Yet, some, without doubt, in time, and by degrees, proceed from Atheism in conversation, to Atheism in affection; and from Atheism in affection, to Atheism in opinion and judgment. Men civilly honest, seldom or never become Atheists in persuasion; but lewd and flagitious persons do; who being pursued by the fury of an accusing conscience for heinous evils, wish, and no marvel, that there were no Judge in heaven to condemn them: and so come at last to be persuaded in themselves of that, which they gladly would have true; and are justly left of God to such horrible delusion, that so sinning without fear, they may perish without remedy. And this is the reason, why there are more Atheists in opinion, in our days, than of old; even because so many are more bent upon mischief: and living wickedly in

this world, bear themselves in hand, and so get to believe, that there is no justice in the world to come [Morneus]. Another reason is the proportion of wit to which our age is come, above the former. In regard hereof it is, that Atheism, though dissembled, and concealed by the same ungracious wit, which begets it, is a thousand times more to be feared in the land, than Papism. Men have too much wit to become Papists, in any generality: and just enough to fit them for Atheists, if God's powerful hand restrains them not. The very simple dare not become Atheists, but are more in danger to prove superstitious, and to "believe everything," Prob. xiv.15: the very understanding hardly can but have, by sound reason and sad thoughts, will they, nill they, some acknowledgment of a Divine Majesty forced upon them: but persons of frothy wit and vicious life, are fitly tempered for the impression of Atheism for the devil.

Atheism is incomparably worse, and more odious, than idolatry; as it is more intolerable in a state, or kingdom, to enterprize the overthrow of all kingly power and sovereignty, than to detract how much soever, from the lawful king's, or magistrate's due honor, and to give it to a stranger. Besides, whereas idolaters, and superstitious persons, having in them some reverence of a divine power, are thereby both restrained from many mischiefs, and provoked to many good actions: the Atheist wanting both this divine restraint and motive, both runs riot in wickedness and villainy, and is barren of all good things; neither doing good, nor forbearing evil, further than for mere fear, or shame of men.

Atheists used to be very confident in their assertions, as the orator observes in Velleius [Cicero]; partly, lest they should seem unto others to doubt, or fear, that there is a god, who will punish their impieties; and partly to "encourage themselves in their wickedness," Psa. lxiv.5, as fearing lest they should be drawn into some conscience and awe of God's majesty. It is oft true in this case amongst others, that the most cowards are the greatest boasters.

Idolatry either makes that to be God, which is not; or God to be that, which he is not. It is exercised either in intending Divine worship, so known to be, to that which is not god; or in intending a devised worship to the true God; wherein men make a will of God, which is not, and so a God willing, which is not: or else in an act of worship in itself, though neither professed nor judged such by him that performs it. Rom. i.23; Acts xvii.24; Exod. xxxii.4; 2 Chron. xxxiii.3-7. Such men's actions reprove both their intention in heart and profession in word, and cannot be excused by either from idolatrous. This sin in God's people is usually compared by the Holy Ghost to the whoredom of a wife; and God's anger at it to the husband's jealousy, in that case. and as adultery most directly impeacheth the marriage bond, and so procures the bill of divorce: so doth idolatry, the church's covenant with the Lord, and provokes to sequestration from him. Yet herein two rules must be held. The former, that not only special idolatry, but even all, or any other wickedness with profane obstinacy adjoined, separates from God. Secondly, that all sin whatsoever is founded upon a kind of idolatry. In sins of omission we acknowledge not God, for our God, as we ought, in doing what he commands: in sins of commission we make some other thing our God' as our riches, if we trust to them, as to God; or our belly, if for it we do what God forbids the doing of. Col. iii.5; Phil. iii.19.

CHAPTER XII: OF HERESY AND SCHISM

It is an ancient, and received saying, that heresy ariseth from want of faith, and schism from want of love: which also hath its truth, being rightly understood. Yet if we mark, we shall find the Scriptures to speak something otherwise of both the one, and other, than men commonly understand. We usually call obstinate error in the foundation, heresy, 1 Cor. xi.19; Gal. v.20; Titus iii.10; but the Scriptures many times seem rather to place it in the perverseness of the will and affections, whether the matter be great, or small, than in the error of the judgment: the word also □ □ □ □ □ □ □ signifying any election, or choice of will which a man makes; or sect which he followeth, whether good, or bad; whether in matters of greater, or smaller moment. Besides, men are often accounted heretics, with greater sin, through want of charity, in the judges; than in the judged, through defect of faith. Of old, some have been branded for heretics, for holding antipodes; others for holding the original of the soul by traduction; others for thinking that Mary the mother of Christ had other children by her husband Joseph: the first being a certain truth; and the second a philosophical doubt; and the third, though an error, yet neither against foundation nor post of the scripture's building. As there are certain elements and foundations of the oracles of God, and of Christian faith, which must first be laid, and upon which other truths are to be built, Heb. xi.1; so much not the foundation be confounded with the walls, or roof; nor errors lightly to

be made fundamental, or unavoidably damnable. Yea, who can say with how little, and imperfect faith in Christ, both for degree and parts, God both can, and doth save the sincere in heart? Whose salvation depends not upon the perfection of the instrument, faith; but of the object, Christ. As, on the contrary, there are some vulgar, and common errors, though less severely censured, which are apparently damnable; as by name, for a man to believe, and expect mercy from God, and salvation by Christ, though going on in affected ignorance of, or profane disobedience to God's commandments.

And for schism; the Scriptures note it as sometimes made from the church, but most commonly in it. From it, by the ten tribes sequestering themselves from Judah and Jerusalem, 1 Kings xii.16, the only place where the Lord had promised to dwell by his solemn church presence; and after Christ, by certain of the Hebrews forsaking the assemblies of the Christians. Heb. x.25. The former was from the only true instituted and ministerial church in the world, which was then one individual and not many, as now, and that by idolatry. The latter, from all Christian churches, and persons by total defection from Christ himself. The other schisms mentioned were made in the church, either through the carnal lusts, bearing too great sway, of envy, strife, and uncharitableness, 1 Cor. iii.2, 3, 12, 25, whilst the stronger despised the weaker, and the weaker judged the stronger; or by heresy, and profaneness of manners; of which the apostles Peter, Judge, and John speak. Jude xix; 2 Pet. ii.1; 1 John ii.16.

That, which is commonly called schism, ariseth, if it be affected, from the conceit of faith, and want of love; but may fall out, upon simple error of judgment, or scrupulosity of conscience; by occasion whereof a person may sequester himself, either in, or from, some particular church in some inferior courses of religion, from them, towards whom he yet bears much more true, and hearty Christian affection, than the most of them do, who unite with them therein.

And if, only an uncharitable heart make an uncharitable person before God, and a proud heart, a proud person; then he, who upon due examination and certain knowledge of his heart, finds and feels the same truly disposed to union with all Christians, so far as possibly he can see it lawful; though, through error or frailty, he may step aside into some by-path, that way: yet, hath that person a supersedeas from the Lord in his bosom, securing him from being attached for a schismatical person and so found in the court of heaven; what blame soever he may bear from men upon earth, or correction from God, for his failing, upon infirmity, therein.

No man can endure to be withdrawn from, nor easily dissented from, by another, in his way of religion; in which, above all other things, he makes account, that he himself draws nearest unto God. Therefore to do this causelessly, for not the separation but the cause makes the schismatic [Tertullian], though out of error or scrupulosity, is evil; more, to do it out of wantonness of mind or lust to contend, or affectation of singularity: most of all, to do it out of proud contempt or cruel revenge against others.

CHAPTER XIII: OF TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD

Truth is either natural or moral. Natural truth stands first in the conveniency and agreement of the notions of the mind with the thing conceived [Scaliger]; and secondly, of the means of manifesting it (especially, speech) with the thing to be manifested. Moral truth stands in the conveniency and agreement of a person with himself; namely of his heart with his tongue, and speech. The same consideration is to be had of truth contrary, in its kind; which is falsehood. Whereupon also it comes, that a man may sin, and speak falsely, not only in speaking that which he knows or may know to be false, for what end soever he speak it, yea, though it be, that he may not deceive [Austin]; but also in speaking that which is true, in itself, if he know it not, that he might or so as he may deceive by it.

All truth, by whomsoever spoken, is of God [Ambrose]; and of his Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, in some its manner and degree of working. John xv.26. Whereupon it followeth, that nothing true in right reason, and sound philosophy is, or can be false in divinity. The truth in the inferior faculty is subordinate to that in the superior, in all things, and comes short of it in many things; but can in nothing be contrary unto it, seeing God, and his Spirit's work, cannot be contrary to himself. I add, though the truth be uttered by the devil himself, yet is it originally of God. John xiii.44. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of himself; but when he speaks the truth, he speaks of God; who so far useth or rather abuseth him, as to utter, and profess that which he hateth.

We ought to reverence excellent men, but the truth more, as Dionysius said of Nepos [Eusebius]; and Aristotle of Plato [Aristotle], and Socrates. And good reason, seeing a main cause of our reverencing of men is their

knowledge, and profession of the truth. No prescription, say the lawyers, lies against the king: say we, with the Father, against the truth [Tertullian]: which, by the verdict of a great king himself, and his nobles with him, Ezra iv.19, is greater than the king; no space of time, no patronage of person, no privilege of place; from which, blind or simple custom, commonly, getting footing and growing into use by succession, is brought to cope with truth itself; and that, the most violently, where the persons are the most brutish, and godless. But our Lord Christ called himself truth, not custom: neither is falsehood, error or heresy convinced by novelty, but by truth. This truth is always the same whilst the God of truth is in heaven, what entertainment soever it find with men, upon earth: it is always praiseworthy, though no man praise it [Cicero]; and hath no reason, or just cause to be ashamed, though it often goes with a scratched face. They that fight against it are like the floods beating upon the strong rocks, which are so much the more miserably dashed in pieces, by how much they are the more violently carried. Though fire and sword assault it, yet will it not be killed, or die: and though by violence it be buried quick, yet will it rise again; and if not before, yet when all flesh shall rise again; and when truth, which was first, and before falsehood and error, shall be last, and abide for ever.

We must love, and attain to the knowledge of the truth in ourselves, first; lest we be clouds without rain, promising that to others, which we ourselves want; and must in our places, afterwards make manifestation and profession of it; and not be like the grave, insatiable in receiving in and barren in returning anything back, but must be always ready, as we see hope of doing good, to propagate it; like the philosopher who being found fault with for disputing with all that he met with, wished that the brute beasts also could understand him, that he might impart something even to them; yea in our kind, like God himself, that "gives wisdom to all that asks it of him," James i.5, and to Christ the Lord, that word of God, and true light, "which enlightens every one that comes into the world," John i.9: and sometimes, even, when we see no hope of doing good, if duty bind us, though hope fail us; that so the non-proficients may have cause rather to complain of themselves, for not learning, than of us, for not manifesting the truth unto them [Austin]. And, albeit, all truth is not to be spoken at all times: "A fool uttereth all his mind; but a wise man keeps it in for afterwards," Prov. xxix.11, yet nothing not true at any time, or for any cause. He that hath but a right philosophical spirit, and is but morally honest, would rather suffer many deaths, than call a pin, a point, or speak the least things against his understanding or persuasion.

A man in pleading for the truth may show his judgment and understanding best, in the matter; but his grace and godliness, in the manner, when he handles a good cause well, and the Lord's cause after the Lord's manner. Some times men pretend God's truth, and zeal for it, when indeed they make their pleas for truth serve only for hackneys, for their lusts to ride on whither they would have them: sometimes men seriously intend truth, and yet mingle both with their good intention, and, it may be, true assertion also, such their personal corruptions, and distempers, as Christ loseth more by their inordinateness that way, than he gains, both by their sound knowledge and fervent zeal of and for his truth.

The most account a lie more shameful, than sinful: and therefore make it a matter of great disgrace, to take the lie, especially in the hearing of others; and yet make it no matter of conscience to make the lie before God, and his angles. Ah, foolish people, thus to honor yourselves, and other vile men, your likes, more than God himself, and the angels with him; and withal, base in your pride, who will rather bear the lie at your own mouth, than at another's! When a man speaks against his knowledge, his own heart tells his tongue it lieth; which to put up quietly, argues both a graceless and an abject spirit. Whereas, both grace and true courage also may be shown in bearing the lie at another's mouth, by overcoming such indignation and anger rising thereat, as is harder to conquer than a city.

"The devil is the father of lies," John viii.44, which whilst they, in the womb of whose heart he begets them, impute to other and better causes moving them thereunto; they are, but like harlots, who for their credit's sake, father their bastards upon honest men. Many things even good, may occasion lying, as all good, may do all evil, but nothing can bring it forth, and cause it, save the womb of our own corrupt heart impregnated by the devil. No if, both by the law of God and light of nature, it be an abominable confusion, for "a woman to lie down before a beast," Lev. xviii.23, what is it for man or woman to prostitute themselves to Satan for the gendering of so misshapen a monster, as a lie is? And very rightly is a lie called monstrous, considering both the devil's kinds, of which it comes, and also the disproportion in it, often between the speech, and the thing spoken; and always between the tongue, and heart of the speaker. Neither doth the goodness of the meaning, though never so good, excuse the evil of the doing, when, as a lie, is told. He that tells a lie for God, is an acceptor of persons,

and God will surely reprove him, saith Job. Job. xiii.6. And no marvel. "Since his own heart condemns him, God which is greater than his heart, and knoweth all things, will condemn him much more," 1 John iii.20; Rom. iii.7. And if a lie told, that through it the truth of God may more abound to his glory, procure just condemnation; what may they expect that use to lie for meaner, though good ends. He that tells a lie for a good end, puts the devil into God's service, which neither his truth needs, nor his holiness will endure; but he that tells a lie for an evil purpose, as the most to do cover preceding evils, which they are more ashamed to confess, than to practice, helps therein the devil in his own business. But "whosoever loves, and makes a lie, hath no right to the tree of life, nor shall enter the gates into the holy city, but shall remain without, with dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters," Rev. xxii.14, 15: we see with whom the Lord ranks liars, what reckoning soever the world makes of them, or they of themselves.

He that tells one lie is, not only, the more prone to tell another, and so a third, which is common to all evil doers, but, for the most part, necessitated so to do for the covering of the former; as beggars cover one patch with another; and that, a lesser with a greater, and often a simple lie with a false oath, as was Peter's case. Besides, he that is once taken in a manifest lie will hardly escape suspicion when he speaks the truth, that I may not say, with one, that he deserves not to be trusted, no, not in that wherein he desire you would not trust him. Neither does he wrong himself along, for aftertime, but others also, who speak the truth [Plautus]. By some lying, others when they speak truly, are not credited [Bernard]: especially such as have any conformity with them in other things; that is oft seen in effect, which is said of the host, that being once deceived by one that held his hat before his eyes, when he gave thanks, at meat, would never trust any afterwards that used that fashion.

CHAPTER XIV: OF KNOWLEDGE AND IGNORANCE

The first line of the repaired image of God in man, and that by which he is first united to God, is sound knowledge; the second, is the sincere love of the heart, Col. iii.10: which draw with them in the third place, the other affections and senses of soul and body [Zanchius]. As the wagon is guided by the wagoner, and he by his eye: so is the body by the soul, and it, by the eye of understanding and knowledge. "If the eye be single, the whole body will be full of light." Matt. vi.22.

To believe a thing further than we know it, is indeed impossible; to love it, lightness; to hate it, injustice; seeing it may deserve the contrary, for aught we know [Tertullian].

He that knows not in his measure, what he ought to know, especially in the matters of God, is but a beast, amongst men: he that knows what is simply needful and no more, is a man, amongst men: but he who knows, according to the helps vouchsafed him of God, what may well be known, and so far, as to direct himself and others aright, is as a god, amongst men. And to this purpose the Lord tells Moses, that he "should be to his brother Aaron, instead of God." Exod. iv.16. Such bear the lively image of God's wisdom.

The knowledge even of things evil is good, and the greater the better, so as it be neither experimental, nor with approbation, nor have other infections accessory joined with it. The apostle knew Satan's devices better than the Corinthians did, 2 Cor. ii.11: and God, only wise, and good, only knows all the both good and evil of men and angels. Prov. xv.3. And so pleasing a thing is knowledge to reasonable creatures, not immeasurably degenerated, as "the light is pleasant to him that hath eyes to behold it," Eccles. xi.7, that not only they who strive to attain unto it by likely means; but even many, who hold a course tending to all ignorance, and error, do desire it, as a natural good: and if not much the thing itself, yet the opinion of it, hating the imputation of ignorance, as a matter vile, and reproachful. By; how much the more monstrous are many, and grown out of kind; who make reckoning, that it concerns not them to get, or have any more knowledge, than is simply necessary for the maintaining of a poor barren and half-brutish life?

How many, especially of the meaner sort, to let pass men's secure, yea affected ignorance, in Divine things, would think it half curiosity in themselves or others of their rank, to know the east from the west; or what the reason is of the sun's setting, and rising again every day, though they see the thing continually before their eyes? The punishment of Nebuchadnezzar is upon such people, who had an ox's heart in a man's body. Dan. iv.25-33.

Of them that seriously desire, and carefully use means to obtain knowledge, the ends are very different. Some desire to know that they might know, which is curiosity: some that they might be known, and that is vanity:

some only to make profit of their knowledge, and that is covetousness: some, on the other side, to edify, and better themselves, and this is true wisdom: and some withal, to do good to others, which is godly charity [Bernard].

The means to get knowledge, specially divine; are, First to love it: "If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding: If thou seekest her, as silver, and searchest for her, as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." Prov. iii.3,4. The second is the knowledge of our ignorance: it being an effect of Christ's coming, "that they might see not" to wit, in the conscience of their own blindness, "might see; and that they which see, might be made blind." John ix.39. To which join that of the philosopher, that many more would attain to knowledge, and wisdom, if so many did not think, that they had already attained to it [Seneca]. A third is the fear of God, to which he hath made the promise of revelation of his secrets, and to "teach such the way which they shall choose," Psa. xxv. : who will also set themselves the most carefully to learn it. A fourth is prayer, by which this wisdom and knowledge, as with a strong hand, is fetched from heaven. James i.5. A fifth is the reading and meditating upon, specially, the Divine Scriptures, and withal, other approved authors. For, as the affections are most moved by hearing, so the judgment is best informed by reading. The last means is the company and society of wise and understanding men: whereupon it was, that the Queen of Sheba pronounced the servants of Solomon happy, which continually stood before him to hear his wisdom. They who profit not in knowledge and wisdom by conversing with wise men, are unworthy of their company; and worthy to keep, or keep with, oxen and asses.

Besides the forementioned means of getting knowledge, there is a mediocrity, and meanness of outward estate not a little advantageable to this purpose; which if it be too low, and depressed, keeps down the disposition ingenuous, and apt to great things; as his emblem imports, who holds a wing in the one hand, but hath the other clogged with a great stone [Alciatus]. On the other side, a state great and prosperous, usually lifts up men above the love of knowledge, and learning; making them arrogant in themselves, and fastidious of the labor and industry requisite for the getting of understanding; and often endangers the very quenching of that spark of natural desire, to become wise, which God hath kindled in all men's breasts, in bodily and beastly sensualities. Gen. iii.6. Hereupon it was, that Plato judged the Cyrenians by reason of their prosperous estate, incapable of any good information and constitution of a commonwealth by good laws [Plutarch]. "Man is in honor, and understandeth not; he is like the beasts that perish," Psa. xlix.12,20: and not understanding, he perisheth like the beasts, and worse. Few of great state in the world, are humanly; fewer, divinely wise.

"The knowing to do good, and the not doing it, is sin," James iv.17: not because it is known, but because it is not practised: as meat undigested hurts the body, not because it is taken into the stomach, but because it is not, by concoction, turned into good nourishment [Bernard].

Papists call ignorance the mother of devotion; and so make reckoning, that, if they, the multitude especially, be ignorant enough, they are devout enough. But the philosopher, though a heathen [Socrates], who thought all sin to come of ignorance, shot nearer the mark, than those left-handed Christians. And in truth, where the reasonable faculties of understanding and will come to work; the will therefore wills, or nills a thing, because it is judged good or bad in the particular, by the practical understanding: whose office it is to direct the will in its choice. For example. Peter though knowing and judging it, in thesi, and in the general, better to confess Christ, than to deny him; yet, being in the high priest's hall, and in the midst of his enemies thought it, in that particular place and case and state of things, better to deny his Master, than to confess him: better I mean, not in regard of that good, which we call honest, and virtuous, but profitable, and commodious, for his present peace. He neither would nor could have chosen the denying of him, but as a good apparent, and in show.

Ignorance is not always blameworthy, but then only, when we are ignorant of that which we should know. Yea, not only some ignorance, but, which is more, even some error is, in a sort, commendable: as when we judge of men, whose hearts we know not, by the outward appearances which they make, though they be inwardly, and in truth, nothing less. So Philip charitably and Christianly judged Simon Magus a true believer, and accordingly baptized him; though in truth, he then was, and soon after appeared to be, "in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity." Acts viii.13. In some other cases, ignorance, though it justify not wholly, yet excuses a failing in part; and that more or less, as the thing whereof we are ignorant, either is more or less necessary to be known of us; or can be known more or less easily: and thus :the servant that knows not his master's will, and commits things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with fewer." Luke xii.48. On the contrary, there is an ignorance, which both shows, and makes the ignorant culpable of greater judgment. And that is either affected or inflicted. Affected,

when a man either of purpose shuts his eyes, lest he should take knowledge of the sin which he loves, and is loath to forsake; or purposely neglects the use of the means of attaining to knowledge; or doth the things, upon which ignorance cannot but follow; as in making himself drunken [Zanchius]: or fills the eyes of the mind with the dust of willful prejudice and partiality. Inflicted, when God to recompense former disobedience, "gives men up to a mind void of judgment," Rom. i.28, in the things discernible by the very light of nature. Thus not to know, nor do the will of our master, deserves double stripes.

CHAPTER XV: OF SIMPLICITY AND CRAFTINESS

Simple persons are prone to suspect, that all wise men are crafty: and crafty mates, to despise all honest men, as simple and silly. The simpleness of the former makes them suspicious, and the naughtiness of the latter causeth them to measure other men's shoes by their own last; and to conceit, that none are honest, but for want of wit to deceive. But both experience and reason teach, that craftiness and deceit argue men to be conscious of their own imbecility [Seneca. Bodinus] and weakness, one way or other; which makes them, hare-like, to trust to the double and turn, rather than to the right-on course. And so, many of shallow wits, improving thoroughly their skill to deceive, prove their craftsmasters that way; showing that craft and fraudulency stand more in the wills, than wits of men. I add, that as David by seeming beside himself, deceived Achish, 1 Sam. xxi.13,14: so many make advantage of their simpleness, to deceive the more easily. For appearing simple, they are unsuspected and though they be taken something tardy, yet if the matter be not very foul, men are ready, in compassion of their weakness, rather to ascribe it to their want of wit, than of honesty.

And, as this of simple appearance is one, so are there other singular engines of deceit; specially if they fall into the hands of such, as know how to use them. The first is the show and appearance of honesty, especially of religion: and therefore the preamble of the whorish woman, for the inveigling of the simple youth, was that she had her "peace-offerings upon her, and had paid her vows." Prov. vii.10. And indeed, what good heart would suspect him of unfaithfulness with men, that seems entire with God, and to walk under the conscience of his presence, and judgment? A second, is flattery, by which even wise men are made fools and led as it were, by the lip. By this the devil brought our first parents in Paradise, into a fool's paradise, by bearing them in hand, that in following his counsel, they were in a way to "become as gods." Gen. iii.5. A third, is the mingling of some truth with falsehood, and matter of deceit, as hucksters do their wares good with bad, that so impostures may not be discerned by being viewed alone [Irenaeus]. The last is to keep touch in smaller things, that, thereby, men may take their opportunity with more both ease and advantage to deceive in greater; as is said of Fabius Maximus [Livius].

The safest way not to be deceived by others, specially to our spiritual prejudice, is not to deceive ourselves; which till we do, no other can deceive us. Hence is it, that God in his Word so often warns us, that we be not deceived and that we deceive not ourselves and our own souls. But and if we either put out our own eyes with our finger, through passion or prejudice, or willingly wink at dangers, which we might foresee; who will pity us, if we fall into the ditch of deceit which others dig for us?

Whilst crafty men deceive others, they themselves, though they little consider it, are most deceived by Satan, whose instruments they are, fitted for his hand, and purposes. And what avails it the ravenous bird to devour that, which belongs not to her, if therewith, she herself be taken by the leg in the fowler's snare? Besides, even in respect of men, howsoever such wily-beguiles may for a time, if they carry close, amongst other advantages, get the opinion of prudent and politic persons, and be accounted the more wise, by how much they have the more skill to deceive [Petrarch]; yet if their craftiness come to be found out and appear, they become often a prey to all, and always a scorn to the most simple; like the wily fox who being once caught, hath his skin plucked over his ears, wherewith every fool will have his cap furred, as a worthy lord was wont to say [Lord Willoughby]. Such are heirs apparent to Ahithophel's comfort and reward. 2 Sam. xvii.23.

His rule was peremptory that said, a wise man will not deceive, nor cannot be deceived [Seneca]: so was his profession both of wisdom and honesty loud, who chose this motto, Fallere vel falli res odiosa mihi: and though usually it be worse to deceive, than to be deceived, though Austin and who not, met with many that would deceive, but never with any that would be deceived [Austin], as a sin is worse than a cross: yet whereas to be deceived is always either a cross, or a sin, or both; a man may, in some case, and manner deceive without either; as did Athanasius the President Lucius [Eusebius], who pursuing him, and approaching near the boat, wherein

he was, asked for Athanasius, and was answered by him, whom he knew by name, but not by face, that Athanasius was hard before him, and that if he made haste, he might presently overtake him: who thus escaped, deceiving his Arian persecutor, by speaking nothing but the truth, and that both wisely and with good conscience.

CHAPTER XVI: OF WISDOM AND FOLLY

Some have been found not only contented with, but glorying in the name of irreligious and dishonest: but hardly ever any were willing to bear the note of foolish or unwise. And even of them, in whom is found some true love of virtue and goodness, how few are there, that either indeed do or would be thought to do anything, in favor thereof, which might, in the least degree, impeach the credit of their wisdom, in the eyes of the partial world? So fain would all be counted, though few in truth be, wise. The main reason of this seems to be, that whereas the want of wisdom imports impotency and inability; irreligion and dishonesty are by election and free choice. The pride of men, if God's grace correct it not, makes them more impatient of a want either inward, or outward, arguing them to be weak and impotent; than of a grosser vice in either, upon their own free election and choice of will. And hence it is, that many boast of things done by them for some particular advantage, which they know to be evil, and unlawful.

It is the first, and a great point of wisdom to know wherein true wisdom stands: specially, seeing that the thing, which God calls wisdom, and which the world calls wisdom, are as different, as heaven and earth; yea as heaven and hell. That cannot but be best, which God so valueth. It is known from the world's wisdom, by first, its object: secondly, the properties which attend it: thirdly, the school where it is learnt: fourthly, the end to which it tends. The object is Christ primarily, who "of God is made unto us wisdom," 1 Cor. i.30; and in whom are hidden all the treasures thereof, which the gospel, the "wisdom of God," Col. ii.3, openeth unto us. He that knows Christ aright in the gospel, knows both God and man, and the most gracious and glorious effects of both united in one. Secondly, "the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without jangling and without hypocrisy." James iii.17. The other is clean contrarily qualified: thick and muddy with lusts, and monstrously compounded, arrogant, self-willing and self-loving, inexorable, quarrelsome, crafty, and cruel. Thirdly, the wisdom of God is learnt in the school of Christ, and upon the book of Holy Scriptures: the other hath so many masters, as there are corrupt either lusts within a man, or customs in the world. Lastly, the wisdom of God teacheth to provide surely for the spiritual and eternal state, though with prejudice to the bodily, and temporal: the other bids, make sure work for the flesh, and pinch not it, though the spiritual man speed hardly by it. He that will be wise to God, must be a fool to the world: which yet makes him not a fool in worldly affairs, but skillful how to order them aright, both for the spiritual life and natural also, as far as it is subordinate unto it.

The high-way to wisdom Divine or human is to observe and consider the reasons and causes of things. He that believes a thing because God affirms it, shows faith; he that does it because God commands it, obedience: but he that joins with these the reasons of the doctrine or exhortation in the word, gets into his heart the props of wisdom against the storms of temptation both of unbelief and disobedience. So in human affairs, he that minds or remembers things to be thus or thus, gets skill in the things: but he that observes and learns the reasons and causes why they come so to pass, or are so done, he takes the right course to become wise in the matter, of what kind soever.

A wise man is the same, though his outward state be changeable, yea changed from a prosperous to an afflicted or the contrary way: else he but hits right at a venture, when he doth well in either of both. His condition is rather happily fitted to him, as the hour once a day comes to the hand of the clock that stands always still, than he to it, by true wisdom [Plutarch]. A wise man will wish the more prosperous state, but fear the more afflicted, and use that which falls and his wisdom in it. The sailor, who wants skill, may miss his course, or drown his ship in a fair wind; but he needs most skill in a tempest: so is the wisdom of a man most seen in the right guiding of himself and his affairs in a stress of trouble and affliction. I have seen it in experience, that many, specially women, and women-like men; who have showed forth much goodness in a quiet and prosperous state of things, if any great storm of trial have happened to have overtaken them, have, through the want of wisdom's chart, and compass, lost all, and not only been altogether uncomfortable, but above measure, burdensome both to others, and themselves. The apostle by the work of the wisdom of God "know both how to be abased, and

how to abound." Phil. iv.12.

He that is not wise for himself first, cannot be wise for another, either in bodily or spiritual things; though he may do him good in both. But that is rather by occasion or in humor, than upon ground of true wisdom. God and nature, which teach every man to love himself most; and his neighbor, truly and heartily, as himself; teach him withal, to use his best wit and skill, for the promoting of his own welfare. By love of himself, I do not mean that ravenous self-love, which eats up all "love of God," 2 Tim. iii.2, and of other men, save for a man's self: but that affection of created nature, inclining every man to procure his own true welfare, to his power, every way. The former is rather hatred of a man's self in effect, Prov. xxix., whatsoever the positive affection be; but now, the question is, what this, himself, means. Himself, is not his worldly riches, nor honor nor any the like appurtenance; but his soul and body in a convenient state and constitution to perform good duties, and to obtain true happiness. He that is wise for this himself, is wise to God and for other men's true good. But for that other common, and commonly called self-love, in which men foolishly mistake, by taking that for themselves, which is not: the best that can be wished to such, is, that they have little wit and less authority: and that specially considering the deepest wisdom of such vermin is, not to care, how much and in how great things they harm others, so they may benefit themselves never so little, in comparison; like the thief, that to get the gold ring, would eat off the finger upon which it stuck close.

If the wealthiest life were the best, wisdom were not so much to be desired; considering how many mere Nabals, and rich fools the world hath. And if the merriest life were the best, it were better to be a fool, than wise. The eagle continually gnaws the heart of Prometheus: and in much wisdom, is much grief; so as "he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow," Eccl. i.18, saith the wise man, out of his own experience: whereas, on the contrary, natural fools, and many artificial fools also, almost always laugh and are merry; as having neither grace to mourn for sin, nor wit to be much troubled with crosses. But for all that, "wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness," Eccl. ii.13; yea for that, if there were nothing else: seeing" by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better," Eccl. vii.3; whereas "the laughter of fools is like the crackling of thorns under a pot."

There is in truth no greater recreation in the world, than to converse with wise men. Yet many cannot make themselves merry, without a fool: though Solomon amongst all the vain delights, which he could devise, or procure, got not a fool to make him merry with [Cartwright]. Such companions of fools might for the most part save that charge, and say that, in earnest, which a wise man said for fashion : when at any time I would be merry with a fool, I laugh at myself [Seneca].

Solomon in his Proverbs uses to call good and godly men, wise; and wicked persons, fools: partly because there is folly and madness too, in all wickedness; partly because the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, as both making men careful to learn their duties, and having a promise of "direction in the way that they shall choose," Psa. xxv.4, 5,9: and partly to free true piety and goodness from the reproach of folly, Acts xvii.32, and simpleness cast upon them by worldly-wise men, 1 Cor.i.18: who, as the heathen-wise counted the doctrine of the gospel foolishness, so do these worldly-wise judge all true conscience of it, and obedience unto it to arise from want of wit, and superstitious simplicity. But say men what they will, the gospel is the wisdom of God; and the obedience of it, the wisdom of God's people in his sight, and in all theirs, that judge aright: which to neglect, and true happiness in it, is the madness of folly.

We say of some that they have good wits, if wise men had them in keeping. But as wooden daggers are fitter for some, than those of iron and steel; so a blunt wit is indeed fittest for him, who wants discretion and wisdom how to use it: without which the sharp wit is as dangerous, as is the sharp knife in a child's hand, or dagger at a fool's back. And as sharp wits without wisdom are dangerous, so are they pernicious without grace: serving to make men both more incorrigible, and more inexcusable, and fitter instruments of the devil, for mischief: even as the fat soil unordered brings forth greatest plenty of thorns and weeds. "The serpent was more subtle than any best of the field," Gen. iii.1: and of him before the rest the devil made choice to deceive by: who accordingly so well fitted his turn as the first, as ever since he hath well liked, and much used such subtle and serpent-like instruments for mischievous purposes. But the serpent, who was more subtle than other beasts, was also cursed by the Lord above all other beasts; and so are those serpent-like men; for how much better were it, if they had been born idiots, and natural fools, than to abuse God's good gifts of natural wit, to the dishonor of the giver as they do!

CHAPTER XVII: OF DISCRETION

Discretion is a skill enabling a man to improve himself in all his affairs and whatsoever he is, or hath, to best advantage, according to variable circumstances and occasions. Sapience, or wisdom stands in bare contemplation of things excellent gathered from principles and conclusions: prudence and discretion are for practice: which if we will distinguish; the latter, discretion, is to be restrained to things fit or unfit. This discretion is neither wit, nor wisdom, nor learning, nor any art liberal or illiberal; but that which, shows how to govern them all conveniently and every other thing with them: like Iphicrates, who was neither legionary soldier, nor archer, nor targeter, but one that could rule, and use all these [Plutarch].

And of such use is this discretion, in the whole course of our life in regard of the infinite variety of circumstances, according to which particulars are performed conveniently, or inconveniently; as that we may daily observe men of lesser means for the world, as riches, trading and skill in faculties, and yet doing well in it, yea better by discreet managing their little; than others, wanting this discretion, with far greater helps and measure of means otherwise. Yea, even in Divine matters, some of less knowledge, zeal, diligence, and other general graces, by the benefit of this particular virtue, are found more serviceable to God and profitable to men, than others wanting it, though far exceeding them in the former. Discretion is to be preferred before wit or art or learning; and only comes after goodness in worth.

As the serpent-like generation, specially where truth and honesty go with a scratched face and are in disgrace of the times, esteems men square and upright in their courses, for witless and silly: so much the more shallow-headed take heed, that they censure not discreet carriage, and handling of things, for crafty and dishonest; considering that other men may do that in good and honest discretion, which they, by defect thereof, could not do but in evil conscience. The same honesty and sincerity may continue in a man, though in discretion applying himself diversely to divers occasions: as the hand remains the same, whether closed into a fist or extended abroad [Seneca], or bended this or that way, as occasion serves.

Of all enemies this virtue hath none greater than pride; which deprives men, able otherwise, of much, and fools of all use of discretion: as making them either rash, by which they do not, or so presumptuous in themselves, as they will not restrain and humble their understanding to due consideration of circumstances of conveniency; in the ordering whereof discretion stands. And hence it is, that proud persons above others, fall into many things uncomely and inconvenient. On the contrary, "God guides the humble," Psa. xxv.9, in this way of discretion, amongst others. Lastly, as the "discerning of spirits" is one of "the gifts of God's Spirit," 1 Cor. xii.7-11; so are we by prayer to beg at his hands this grace, that we may be enabled to discern both of persons and "things which differ," Phil. i.10, so far as concerns us in our places: without which we go but by peradventures, and may do more harm than good, even when we both mean well, and do the thing which is good in itself, if unseasonably.

CHAPTER XVIII: OF EXPERIENCE

Only God is not taught by experience, to whose knowledge all things are present, at all times, and before all times. But there is no creature so perfect in wisdom and knowledge, but may learn something for time present and to come, by times past. The day following, saith one, is scholar to that which went before [Seneca]. And the virtue, saith another, which nature denies, experience, brings to wise men [Politian]. So as though it be the mistress of fools, who will learn no wisdom but that which is beaten into them with rods through a torn skin: yet are the wisest taught many things by it, and so become of commendable, admirable: as Antigonus being asked, who was the best captain in his time, answered, Pyrrhus, if he grew old [Plutarch]. And even experience teacheth, that there are many particulars, and those tending both to our natural and spiritual state, which neither our own wit, art, study, or conscience, nor the information, counsel, or example of others can teach us; which yet we learn by this dull mistress experience.

This, if it be ripe, and but joined with any indifferent capacity and diligence, to compare together events past, and present occurrences, will afford better help for direction, in doubtful cases, than any other ordinary rules: as a man can better in the dark find the way, to which he hath been used, than another that never went it can do, by the best instructions and directions that can be given him. And it seems to have been one end why God gave our great grandfathers in the first age of the world, so long life, that by experience, and observation they might learn

the skill, and art of sundry courses, specially of the stars [Josephus]: the knowledge whereof otherwise, without miracle, would hardly, if at all, have been attained to. I conclude upon the premises, that men of experience, with which wit, and sometimes authority without wit, is still at jar, are not lightly to be gainsaid or neglected in their faculty: seeing experience is gotten by sense, which easily errs not in its proper object; whereas the discourse of reason is very subject to swerve in inferring and concluding of things. Yet hath this plodding guide, experience, this danger in it, that it leads men on in the beaten way to which it hath been used, without due consideration of such variable circumstances, as fall in, and make cases past and present, though alike in general nature, yet in particular application and consideration very unlike: of which differences wit and art make men more able to discern.

Though all knowledge be good in itself, as tending to perfect the understanding, yet the getting of it is not always good; as when it is gotten by experience of punishment, specially of sin, as our first parents got the knowledge of evil both ways, to their and our cost, in eating the forbidden fruit [Austin]. A man may buy gold, so may he experimental knowledge, too dear. Solomon seeking by experience to try the "delights of all things under heaven," Eccl. i.2, and being too bold in wading in that stream, that he might know the depth of it, fell in, and without God's special helping hand, had been drowned therein for ever. Woeful then is the experience, which is gotten by sin, and misery, our own, or other men's either: like that of Hexophilus the physician, that butchered six hundred men, that he might search into man's bodily nature: destroying man, that he might know him [Tertullian].

The servants of God are sometimes so pressed with the sense of present temptations, as that their special comfort ariseth from the recourse they have to the "experience of the days of old, and years of antiquity," Psa. lxxvii.7,8: considering that God casts not off for ever, nor forgets to be favorable to his any more. So some in age, and under temptations, have received more comfort from their former experience, though of a weaker measure, of grace, in their childhood, than they could of a greater, in their riper years.

CHAPTER XIX: OF EXAMPLES

The rules in some sciences, especially speculative, and for truth only, are grounded upon examples, and gathered by wise observation, and induction of particulars: but so are not Divine and moral rules. Neither is anything to be reputed good and just in itself, and so exemplary to us, because such and such men have done it: but they have done it, if doing their duty therein, because it is good, just, and lawful: and so are unto us examples of faith, patience, mercy, and the like, as they in their particular courses expressed these, and the like virtues; and not otherwise. Only he, that can do nothing but good, is our absolute example in things which concern us.

Particular facts commended in Holy Scripture are general examples, and bind to imitation, when either the same thing is elsewhere commanded in general; or where either the ground, or drift, or equity of the thing in general [Greenham]. And thus the very both miraculous and meritorious works of Christ, though in their particular nature, causes, and ends inimitable, are so far forth our examples, and to be followed by us, as the holy virtues of faith, patience, and obedience towards God, and of love, and compassion towards men shine forth in them. Moral examples serve first for confirmation, and commendation unto others of the truth and goodness contained in precepts, and are therefore called by some the pledges of rules [Plato]. Secondly, for direction in particulars agreeable unto precepts, but not expressed in them. Thirdly, to tole [To invite, or draw by allurement] men on in obedience active, or passive; for even lazy travelers will hold out with good company, which beat the path before them. And this help examples specially afford, by taking away the excuse of frailty, that we are ready to make, against the obedience, which yet we confess, and are convinced that we owe [Calvin]. Now the precedents and examples of godly men, as of "Abraham the father of the faithful in believing under hope against hope," Rom. iv.18; and of Job in keeping patience in extremity of trials, and the like, are as a "cloud of witnesses," James v.11, going before us, as did "the pillar of cloud," Heb. xii.1, before the Israelites in the wilderness to show them the way: and do testify against our withdrawing hearts, that other frail men, as we are, by the power of the same grace of God, whereof we are made partakers, have performed due obedience unto God, in such and greater trials than ours are. So that as in the precepts we have the Word of God, and his will in it to direct us, so in those patterns of godliness we have his work, and as it were his visible hand reached down from heaven to lead us in the way, which by his Word we are appointed to walk in. By which if we profit not, we take the name of our God in vain both in his word and works, in which he makes himself known for our

good.

He who makes another his ensample, really acknowledgeth both the want and the desire of that perfection in himself, which he imitates in the other. And so Parmeno in his, how artificial soever, imitating of the grunting of a sow, aimed at but a swinish perfection [Plutarch]. The like is to be said of children's playing of bulls and bears and horses. To which purpose tendeth the saying of a great lord, that women's imitation of men, as their perfection, in apparel, gesture and the like, might better be borne, than men's effeminate and degenerate imitation of women [Lord Willoughby]. Which also the practice of Lycurgus confirmed in training up maids in manly exercises, and making them thereby, after a sort, masculine; whereas usually by riot and wantonness, men are transformed into women, and made feminine [Plutarch].

Many think themselves good enough, if there be any worse than they. But we should not strive with the worst, but with the best rather; making apace, and as fast as we can, after them, though we come never so far behind them, in wisdom and goodness: as the apostle exhorts the Corinthians to "be followers of him, as he was of Christ." 1 Cor. xi.1. Yea, further, as Eupompus would imitate nature and no workman in painting [Ibid]: so neither should we stint our endeavors and desires absolutely at the degree of goodness, to which any mere man is come before us: but should aim at the very perfection, which the law of God requires. Men in shooting aim at the white, though sometimes they miss the butt. Only "the law of God," Psa. xix., which only is perfect, must be made by us the absolute rule of our life and ways.

As landmarks are set up by the sea-shore not only to teach men which way to take, but sometimes also which to leave: so are sundry examples even of good men propounded in Holy Scripture not for imitation, but for warning. And a very preposterous course it is to follow good men, wherein they do evil: which they that use, are like unto apes and dotterels, that are aptest to imitate men in their mops and mows [In making mouths] and unseemly gestures. And if it were folly in the Persians to esteem such men the fairest, as had hooked noses, because Cyrus their kind had such a one [Plutarch]; it is mere madness in Christians to deem vices, virtues; and errors, truth, or either the one or other to be embraced, through superstitious admiration of some men's persons, in which they are found. But as the "Egyptians following the Israelites with the dark part of the cloud towards them, were drowned in the sea," Exod. xiv.23, which the other passed through safely, so they who follow good men in their failings, and not in their virtues, shall surely be punished, when the other escape. Notwithstanding, although examples of others great and ancient cannot make sins to be no sins; yet doth it something lessen their blame, who are misled by such guides; as it was in the polygamy of the patriarchs [Beza]; and both hath been, and is in other the like traditional evils.

Some pretend the examples of good men in their failings for the excuse of the evils, which they themselves have a mind to do and would do, though none ever had done them before them or should do them after them: others, are indeed misled by their aberrations. In both the devil shows himself his crafts-master. And hardly can he more improve evil, than when he so works, that a good or great man's virtues, which he cannot abolish, should countenance and commend his vices to others. By how much therefore the more any person excelleth in knowledge, wisdom, virtue, or authority; by so much the carefuller must he be, that he furnish not from thence the enemy of God's glory, and man's salvation, with weapons of advantage for evil, from whence the special means of his overthrow therein, are to be taken, as, by God's appointment, they are, from great, and good men. And if anything possibly could, surely this would make the very saints in heaven sorrowful for their failings upon earth, that others having by their example, or other provocations, been drawn to evil, whereof they never repenting, as the principals did, do for the same suffer the eternal wrath of God, which they by true repentance have escaped.

Examples of superiors are strong cords to draw on others, either to good or evil: in which regard, it is rightly said, that great men have no small either virtues or vices: with which that of Austin consorts, the joy for the great is great, if they be good, because it is not for them alone [Austin]. So on the contrary, when Peter "dissembled for fear of them of the circumcision; not only the other Jews dissembled likewise with him, but Barnabas also was carried away with that their dissimulation." Gal. ii.11. How good were it for inferiors, that superiors minded this, as they ought! How much better for themselves! That they might be warned to take heed, that they increase not the guilt, and extent of their personal sins by making them exemplary. He that having many standing under him, falls from aloft, may easily bruise others besides himself, with his fall. And if the blind do lead the blind, both "fall into the ditch," Matt. xv.14; yet the guide falls under; and so is pressed, besides his own, with the other's burden, that falls after and upon him. As, on the contrary, he that furthers

others by his holy example, in virtue and godliness, hath his part in their goodness also both in the eyes of God and men.

CHAPTER XX: OF COUNSEL

Counsel, by which we consider wisely, whether, what, and how things are to be done, for profitable ends [Keckerman], is a sacred thing [Menander]; and withal so necessary to be taken not only with God, and a man's self, but with others also; as that Solomon, though peerless in wisdom, yet had his counselors about him.

"Without counsel people perish," 1 Kings xii.6, and purposes are disappointed; but in the multitude of counselors there is both safety, and stability. Prov. xi.14; xii.15, 20. It is God's peculiar to be all-sufficient in himself whether for wisdom, or otherwise. No one man but stands in need of another; and if for little else, yet for counsel.

He that gives counsel to another, therein stands in the place of God, Isa. ix.6, who is the Counselor, and whose "Mine," counsel is and sound wisdom. Prov. viii.14. This, he that gives advice, must well weigh, that he neither dishonor the wisdom and goodness of God, whose place for the dispensing of these attributes, he sustains therein; nor wrong him, by whom he is so far honored, as to be sought to, as God's mouth. And so must he also that takes counsel; that he may neither seek it at fools, which none but fools will do; nor at godless persons, specially in matter of conscience, which he that doth, desires to deceive himself, and to mock with God. Now of all counselors, in whom any wisdom and goodness is to be found, the peremptory and bold are most dangerous, whose custom is to put men upon extremities, happily fitting their own venturesome disposition, but often above the strain, and strength of their friends or reach of reason either. Whereas counselors, specially in more difficult and dangerous cases, should both very sensibly apprehend the difficulty and danger of the thing in deliberation; and withal be careful, that they spur not on their friends whom they advise, above their pace, lest they tire them by preposterous enforcements, and put them upon such difficulties, as they are not fit to struggle with. Wariness is best in advice; and boldness in execution.

Dead men, to wit, in their books, were accounted by King Alphonsus, for the best counselors [Panormita]. And indeed so are they in regard of one of the best properties of a good counselor, which is sincerity, and impartialness. A virtue rare, specially in inferiors, who too oft look asquint in their counsel: as either casting how to advantage themselves in counseling others, or in following the direction of Ahab's messengers to Micaiah, by speaking that which is good to, rather than for, the king. 1 Kings. xxii.13. Which latter calamity befalls great men not only by base perfidiousness of flatterers, but often by a just judgment of God punishing them with their own desires, and so ordering, that they that seek shall find such as may rather deceive them by flattery, than trouble them with the truth. Yet in these dead counselors, books, there is wanting a lively, and likely discerning of such particular circumstances, as must be observed, and gathered by present discourse, that men counsel not at adventure; which no books can sufficiently provide for. In books we best learn general grounds of direction; but that skill is imperfect, and must have joined with it a large and piercing discourse of the counselor's mind, who by comparing together things past and present, with due respect to singular circumstances incident, is able probably to gather things to come; in which the life of counsel consists.

Some will eloquently propound, and earnestly persuade to good and profitable courses in general; but in the meanwhile, give no direction, how or by what particular means to prosecute them, for the attaining to the desired end. Such counselors are like him that is earnest in persuading with a traveler to hold the right way to the place, where he would be; but shows him not which it is, and what are the marks of it: or to him, who trims the lamp diligently, and sets it to burn, but pours no oil into it [Plutarch]. As we understand even most necessary things in vain, except we love them: so blind love, which alone in effect, the bellows of loud, but windy persuasion kindles in the breasts of many, avails nothing, where knowledge guides us not in our way [Erasmus]. The fewest of them that ask good counsel, do mean indeed to follow it. Some ask counsel only in good manners, and to make show of respect to friends. Jer. xlii.2-6; Ezek. xiv.4-7. Others for a color, that they did nothing, but having first hear, what such, and such, it may be, wise and godly, could say about it. And not a few, though they pretend to ask, yet indeed intend rather to give counsel; that is, to have the courses allowed by others, which they themselves affect. A man may have divers ends, in requiring the advice of others, and all of them honest, and lawful; provided he always keep his heart free to receive either information, or confirmation, or reformation from others, upon good ground.

Three sorts of men, though standing most in need of counsel, are many of them most incapable of it. First, they in great prosperity; secondly, they in extreme affliction; and thirdly, such as are weak and simple. They of the first sort are, for the most part, high-minded, and lifted up in themselves, Nabal-like, above the good counsel of other men, presuming, that they are able enough to direct themselves. 1 Sam. xxv.10,11. They second, are commonly either obdurate, or melted in their misery; like wax, either too hard to receive, or too soft to retain, any impression; as the "Israelites for anguish of spirit, hearkened not unto Moses," Exod. xi.9, the messenger of their deliverance. The third, are partly incapable of advice, through simpleness; and partly suspicious, either lest they should be circumvented by their friends close minding their own ends, or else thought weak, and too simple to govern, and manage their own affairs : by which prejudice it comes to pass, many times, that they become willful and heady; because they would not be thought simple and unable to direct themselves.

It is a rule, wherein many wise men have agreed, that it is more available for the commonwealth to have an evil prince and good counselors, than a prince good and virtuous, with corrupt counselors about him; for that, it is more like, that one should be bettered by many, than many be corrupted by one. But the mischief is, that such as are naught themselves will make choice usually of such counselors as themselves are, rather to flatter, than better them: as contrariwise, the good, commonly, will choose such, as may further them in goodness.

When a thing very inconvenient and absurd is propounded to us, it is not best, awlways, to manifest any great dislike, though we both have it in ourselves, and our reasons for it, never so present: except either urgent necessity press a sudden and violent stop of the matter; or that we have to do with him, whom we know we can oversway, by our reasons, and authority: lest by that course our friend take occasion to withdraw himself, and to conceal his affairs from us, and so to steal misery closely, and it may be, suddenly also, if he be bent upon his course, for fear that our importunity should bring hindrance to his purpose. But it is best, at first, to put off the thing, and to provoke to further consideration, and so to gain time, with some small manifestation of dislike for the present; thereby, as it wer, pointing, and making way for our after mor behement dissuasions. By which course we shall have our friend" both ear and heart more open to receive advice from us; as conceiving, that we neither are forward to cross his design, nor carried again him or if, in passion, contempt, or unadvisedness.

CHAPTER XXI: OF THOUGHTS

Men say, Thoughts are free, and pay no tribute: and this is true being understood of men's custom-houses, where they cannot be searched, but as they betray themselves by some outward sign, either word, or work. But so much the more watchful we had need to be in ourselves, over those close commodities, lest we willingly feed a filthy, though secret sink within us; which, in time, will shame us before men, as it stinks in the meanwhile, where it is, in the nostrils of God, and men, for it. Besides, if we do evil in word, or deed, men may help us, either by contrary examples, or friendly reproofs, or hateful upbraidings, or just punishments: but against sinful and unsanctified thoughts we have no help but from God alone, and ourselves, by his grace, to whom alone they are known.

Every thought of evil is not an evil thought, but only such as to which we adjoin either consent of will, or, at least, delight of affection. For besides the thoughts of, or about evil, which are either in pure speculation, or natural consideration of the thing, or with averseness of affection from the matter thought on; there are thoughts merely by suggestion from Satan, who being a spirit, and having such affinity of nature with our spirits and souls, can unite, himself, in his suggestions, with our imagination, after a manner by us inconceivable; and offer unto us thoughts of great evil, which yet we may, by grace, so resist, as that they are to be accounted his sin, and our cross only, who are constrained to bear such temptations; as we are compelled oftentimes to hear, and bear the ill counsel of wicked men, his instruments, with sin in them, and grief in ourselves, but without our sin, if we in no way hearken unto them: yea with commendation, both in the one, and other, in the victory of faith which we obtain over them. Indeed we are too ready to receive such suggestions; as tinder is to take fire; specially being subtilly fitted by Satan to our special inclinations, and occasions: and so must be more careful either to prevent them by nourishing in ourselves an abhorring of them; or to quench them if they arise, by the stream of holy meditations running in our hearts.

They, whose words and deeds are faulty and evil, and yet plead their good hearts towards God, are like malefactors, who, being convinced of theft, or the like naughtiness, by plain evidence, to their faces, do appeal to the testimony of such persons for their purgation, as they know cannot be found. If the hearts of such men

could be seen of others, as their works, and words are, they would appear worse then they: as they do to God who seeth them. There is no evil in the mouth, or hand, which was not in the heart first, Matt. xv.19, as the stream in the fountain : neither can the flesh be corrupted, except the mind be corrupt first [Ambrose]. Men judge of our thoughts by our words, and actions: but God of our words and works by our thoughts; accounting the thing whether good, or evil, as done in his sight, if once it be resolved on in the purpose of the heart. Thus "Abraham offered up Isaac by faith," Heb. xi.17; and Judas did that which he meant to do, John xiii.27. And as God judgeth of us, and of our doings; so ought we to do ourselves. "The thoughts of the righteous are righteous." Prov. xii.5. And by these, good and evil men are best and truliest differenced one from another [Cartwright]" whereas all outward works lie common; and are many of them oft exercised equally by good, and bad. No outward works are so good, but hypocrites have done them, as times: and few, or none so evil, but some godly have at some times, by temptation, fallen into them. But how alike soever the outward faces of such sinful actions be; the difference is great in the heart of the doer, and is so seen of God to be at the very time of the doing; and by after and better fruits in their time, so manifested unto man afterwards, so have been at that time, when in the outward evil act no such difference could appear. But our only comfortable course, and that by which our hearts are assured before the Lord, is, to provide, that in them may run constantly so strong a stream of holy purposes, and settled thoughts, as may both overbear the contrary current of our flesh, and lusts; and also carry with it our outward man to all good and godly practices.

CHAPTER XXII: OF SPEECH AND SILENCE

Man is endowed above beasts; especially with reason, and with speech to utter it: without which, his reason, how deep, and profound soever, were little more profitable unto others, nor many times to himself neither, than a spring hidden in the ground. Hence the tongue is called the index of the mind: and as by the index we know what is in the book; so do we by the speech what is conceived in the heart. " out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." Matt.xii.34. And so ready is the passage from the heart to the tongue, as that what is conceived in the one is usually brought forth by the other: neither doth any outward thing so soon betray a man, as his words. Though Jacob brought his brother Esau's hands, and neck, and meat, and sauce, and smell, to his father Isaac, Gen. xxviii.22, yet could he not bring his tongue and voice; and though a man put upon his hands the gloves of dissimulation, and the shoes upon his feet, and mask his face never so cunningly; yet can he hardly so tip his tongue, but, in a short time, a wise man will discover him, and discern whether he be good, or bad; specially whether he be wise, or simple. Great is the affinity between the heart and mouth: and so the second Person is Trinity is not called the work, but the word of God. John i.1; Rev. xix.13.

Solomon in his Proverbs, xv.4, compares the speech of a wise, and righteous man to a tree of life, and to a fountain of life, and to many other pleasant, and profitable things; which must teach both them that speak to preserve pure that fountain, and to prune, dig about, and manure, with all diligence, that tree, that it may bring forth fruit to the hearers [Cartwright]: and so must it teach them that hear, not to neglect that benefit, but to admit, and receive the words of truth and wisdom, as seed, by which they also may conceive, and bring forth good fruit [Plutarch].

"A word spoken in due season is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Prov. xv.23. And so a wise man must provide, that his words be not only gold for their worth, but also framed to silver-like opportunity: there being a time when nothing, a time when something, but no time when all things, are to be spoken [Hugo Grotius].

That which is generally spoken of a blessed man, that he is "like a tree that brings forth his fruit in due season," Psa. i.3, may specially be applied to the apples of the tongue, and fruit of the lips. For the bringing forth of which, he that can observe and take a due season, shall as effectually promote his purpose, as he that takes his pull at the bell rising. "A fool will utter all his mind," Prov. xxix.11, and is ready to burst, if he speak not whatsoever he thinks: but a wise man will keep a word for afterward [Seneca]: and will neither run before, nor neglect, but follow opportunity. Want of wisdom makes men, commonly, too forward in speaking, and over-much wisdom too backward. As the bird often flies away, whilst the fowler still seeks to get nearer, and hearer her: so doth golden opportunity many times, whilst we wait too long for better, and fitter passage for our speech. It is better then to take a reasonable good opportunity presenting itself, than to adventure the loss of all, by waiting still for a better.

He that takes up the time, specially wise and godly men being in the company, with unprofitable, how much more, with ungodly, speech, besides the account which "he must give to God for every vain word," Matt. xii.36,

that is, for every word not some way or other, profitable; greatly wrongs the whole company, in hindering the speaking and hearing of better things by his vanities; which are like ill humors filling the stomach, and taking from it both appetite of, and benefit by better meat. Let not thy speech, saith one, be vain, but such as serves either to counsel, or to persuade, or to comfort, or to direct [Ibid.]; and the apostle, more divinely, "Let no corrupt communication come out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Eph. iv.29. He that doth this, is God's minister, in his place; and hath his part in the honorable praises of that wise king, "into whose lips grace was poured." Psa. xlv.2.

"He that can rule his tongue, considering how unruly an evil that little member is, is able also to bridle the whole body," James iii.2, and is a perfect, and entire man, and he to whom no Christian duty is impossible. This he that cannot do, though he seem religious, both to himself, and others, deceives both; and "his religion is in vain." James i.26. If this rule were well minded, and rightly applied, either more would bridle their tongues, or fewer seem religious to themselves, and others, than do.

Many affect speaking in an imperious and commanding accent. Some out of familiar boldness with friends; but such may easily be more bold than welcome, if they have not both good knowledge of, and interest in their so commanded friends. Men write to friends, "yours to command," and offer their service: but they that will take all, either in substance, or ceremony, which their friends offer, will weary them in time. Some fools also affect masterfulness in speech, specially with underlings. And of them I have known some so swollen in the mouth, as they have thought, that if they gave their servant a better name, than sirrah, or boy, they lost their authority.

There are also which love to snarl, and use surly and currish speech, especially towards inferiors, or equals either. It is pity such are not over some great men's dogs, to order, and govern them. Such become unsociable, and burdensome, and abuse the singular benefit of God, and nature, the tongue, and speech, bestowed on men for the mutual intercourse of their reasonable conceptions, and preservation of human society. On the contrary, besides other benefits, there is nothing, by which men may at so cheap a rate purchase good-will, especially at their hands, who are of a lower rank than themselves, as by kind, and respectful language [Suetonius]: which made Titus Vespasian say, as he also proved the good of it by experience, gaining the opinion, and name of the darling of mankind, that "a price should never send away any petitioner discontented." And albeit, as the saying is, "fair words make fools glad;" yet so do they wise men also. Good language joined with real performance, is as a pleasant sauce to wholesome meat. Without performance, where ability is wanting, it ought to be as acceptable, though it stand us not in so good stead, as if the thing we desire were done for us: and in that case we should account of good words, as Diogenes did of his wortles [whortleberries], which were for sauce to other meat, and for meat, when he had no other. And even where men fail us in that, which both they are able to perform, and we have reason to look they should; better we receive from them good words, than otherwise: seeing they carry with them some appearance of respect to him, to whom they are used; whereas, the contrary cast withal contempt upon his person; which is more grievous to most men, than a moderate disappointment in their suit.

Words are like clothes, used first for necessity, after for convenient ornament, and, lastly, for wantonness. Neither do harlots more strive to inveigle fools by wanton tricking, and trimmng themselves: than do fawning orators, and word-wise men, to allure vain hearers, and readers, who, as one saith, had rather be strewed with flowers, than fed with fruits by curious and affected forms of speech. Such deserve, though they oft get a better, the reward of the harper, whom Dionysius pleased with hope whilst he pleased him with singing: and there an end of both [Plutarch]. And truly I know few things by which men are either more puffed up in themselves, as Theodoret taxeth Chrysostom, or purchase from others with less desert, greater opinion of excellency, than by curious and affected eloquence, whether in pompous, or plausible speech, without weight of matter [Theodoret]. This is vanity in all subjects, and in Divine matters, profaneness: and so the truly learned apostle professeth, that his "preaching was not with persuasible words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and power; that the Church's faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." 1 Cor. ii.4. He that, without sound information of judgment going before, is either by eloquence, or earnestness persuaded to the liking of any course; will, if he meet with an opposite orator more eloquent and vehement than the former, be as lightly dissuaded from it, and persuaded to the contrary. As a woman over curiously trimmed, is to be suspected; so is a speech. And indeed he that goes about by eloquence, without firm ground of reason, to persuade, goes about to deceive; and he that suffers himself so to be persuaded, is willing to be deceived. I may, and will do something for importunity of speech, but if I like any thing the better, I follow passion, and not

reason.

He is rightly eloquent, who observing decorum, and tempering his style according to his person, can speak fitly, fully, and eloquently of all things [Cicero]; temperately of mean things, and weightily of matters of importance [Morneus]; and not he that can magnify his mouth above measure, and the weight of the matter; and draw Hercules' hose upon a child's leg [Agesilaus]; which the wise king counted no matter of commendation. And besides affectation, in which men strain the strings of their eloquence, to make persons or things as good or bad; or as great or small, not as they are, but as the speaker can; I have known some by an abused benefit of nature, and art, so impotently eloquent, as they could hardly speak in praise or dispraise of person, or thing, without doubling, and trebling upon them superlative synonyms of honor, or disgrace. Such orators would make notable market-folk, in crying up their own wares, which they meant to sell, and in making other men', which they would buy, double naught. Prov. xx.14.

Both length, and shortness of speech may be used commendably, in their time; as mariners sometimes sail with larger-spread, and sometimes with narrower-gathered sails. But as some are large in speech out of abundance of matter, and upon due consideration: so the most multiply words, either from weakness, or vanity. Wise men suspect, and examine their words ere they suffer them to pass from them, and so speak the more sparingly: but fools pour out their by talents, without fear, or wit. Besides, wise men speak to purpose, and so have but something to say: the other speak everything of everything, and thereupon take liberty to use long wanderings. Lastly, they think to make up that in number, or repetition of words, which is wanting in weight. But above all other motives, some better, some worse, too many love to hear themselves speak; and imagining vainly, that they please others, because they please themselves, make long orations, when a little were too much. Some excuse their tediousness, saying, that they cannot speak shorter; wherein they both say untruly, and shame themselves also: for it is all one, as if they said, that they have unbridled tongues, and inordinate passions setting them a-work. I have been many times drawn so dry, that I could not well speak any longer, for want of matter; but I ever could speak as short as I would.

Some have said, that "hurt never comes by silence," Numb. xxx.4-8; but they may as well say, that good never comes by speech; for where it is good to speak, it is ill to be silent. Besides, he that holds his tongue, in a matter that concerns him, is accounted, as consenting. Indeed less hurt comes by silence, than by speech; and so doth less good. Some are silent in weakness, and want either of wit to conceive what to speak; or of courage to utter what they conceive; or of utterance, where the other defects are not. They of the first sort are not desperately foolish, seeing they are sensible of their own want; which is half the way to mending it: there being "more hop of such a fool, than of a man wise in his own conceit," Prov. xxvi.23, that is, thinking himself wiser than he is. Besides, such have the wit to cover their folly; and "a fool whilst he holds his tongue, is accounted wise," Prov. xvii.228: whereas "a babbling fool proclaims his foolishness," Prov. xii.23. For the second, though it be a misery for a man to be compelled to keep silence, when he would speak [Seneca]; and that the prison be strait, where the very tongue is tied, yet he wants not all wit, who can for fear of danger hold his tongue, and not make "his lips the snare of his soul." Prov. xviii.7. Some again are silent in strength of wisdom, and others of passion. As deep streams are most still; so are many, of deepest judgment, through vehement intention of mind upon weighty or doubtful matters; whereas the shallower are louder, and more forth-putting. And here the testimony which Spintharus gave of Epaminondas hath place, that he met with no man in his days, that knew more, and spoke less [Plutarch]. Again, in some, vehemence of passion and affection dams up the passage of speech. The grief is moderate which utters itself; that which is extreme is silent [Seneca]. So Absalom hating his brother Ammon to the death, "spake neither good nor evil to him." 2 Sam. xiii.22. Lastly, there are who can bridle their tongue in discretion, and know, not only how to take the time to speak, but also the time to keep silence, Eccl. iii.7: which surely is no small commendation in a wise, and able person. And this the philosopher knew well, who, when all the rest of his fellows, being each to present the king with some notable sentence, or other, were forward to utter every one his ware, desired of the king's messenger, that it might be certified in his name, that he had skill to hold his peace, when others were forward to speak.

CHAPTER XXIII: OF BOOKS AND WRITINGS

Writing is the speech of the absent : and even he that gives a writing unto the hand of another, to be read by him, thereby, after a sort sequesters his person from him, and desires to speak with him being absent, and that,

to his advantage, if his personal presence and speech may endanger either contempt, or offense. The Lord God, in providing, that the books of Holy Scriptures should be written, effectually commended the writing and reading of other books touching all subjects, and sciences lawful, and lawfully handled. For though the difference be ever to be held between Divine and human writings, so as the former may worthily challenge absolute credence, and obedience, as breathing out only truth, and godliness; whereas the other are not only to be learned, but judged also : yet even in human writings, the truth in its kind, is taught commonly both more fully, and more simply, and more piously, than by speech. For howsoever the lively voice more pierce the heart, and be apter to move affection, and that to the receiving of truth and goodness, not only by love and liking, but by faith also, and assent, "for faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God," Rom. x.17: yet men seldom take either the pains, or time to lay down things in speech, which they do for public writings: neither can any possibly either have the opportunity to hear the title of that which he may read for information, or take the time for the full understanding of things remarkable spoken, which in private reading he may do. Besides, men are commonly in their writings both freer from passion in themselves, and from partial respect of others, than in their speeches. And hence it comes to be said of dead men, that they are the best counselors: to wit, in their books, wherein they are freest from affection one way, or other. Lastly, though the father sound some in his time, who because Christ had said, "Thou shalt not swear," thought they might do that in writing, which they might not do in speech [Tertullian]; and confirm idolatry with their hand, so they professed it not with their tongue: yet it is usually found otherwise; and that men are, or would seem to be more religious in writing, than in speech. Who ever shall find a black-mouthed blasphemer cursing, and swearing in his books? Though in daily speech, he scarce utter ten words without oath, or execration. Yea, are there not many, who by the gloss of piety, cunningly set upon their writings published to the world, steal the opinion of piety, and virtue from strangers, and those that know them not whose ordinary conversation in word and deed to them that are acquainted therewith, proclaims them no better than very atheists and epicures? I add, even touching conferences, and disputations of purpose appointed, and used for light of truth; that though they may be, and are singularly profitable for that purpose, to a modest, and tractable disposition, which will as well hear, as speak, and be as ready to learn truth or others, as to teach it them: yet to men of more unquiet and stiff spirits, the reading of books is a course far more convenient for information for that therein, will not be the provocation to inordinate anger and passion, which in speech often falls in. Besides, he who comes to dispute, comes specially to show the truth to others: but he that comes to read an author, comes specially to learn something from him, for the most part.

Great care is to be taken, and circumspection used in writing of books; not only, though specially, for conscience of God; but also because the author therein exposeth himself to the censure of all men, and those not only then living, but also to be born, when he is dead and rotten. "Literae scriptae manent." And under their censure he comes, whether he be wise or foolish; learned or ignorant; of sound or of corrupt judgment: and in part therewith, whether of virtuous or vicious disposition. He that commits anything to writing gives men a bill of his manners [Seneca]: which every one that reads may put in suit against him, if there be cause, in the court of his own heart, and neighbor's ear.

Some, through extreme diligence are devourers of books, and of infinite reading; in whom, if there be found any answerableness in memory to retain, judgment to dispose, and wit accordingly to improve things read: such persons prove singular. But this is rare by reason of the different temper of the brain requisite for such furniture. Some, are of great reading, but of so slippery memory, as they are like water conduits, which what they continually receive in at one end, they let out as fast at the other. Some, again, are mere indexes, serving for nothing but to show, where, and in what authors, things are to be found; by benefit of their strong memory. There are also of those great bookmen, that know better than most other men's judgments, than their own, in matters of controversy, through injudiciousness, or irresolution; and if they come to settle upon any, rather opinion, than persuasion, it is commonly according to the last book which they read. It is best for ordinary capacities to travel in some few books, though by occasion they may step into many), and the same picked by good advice, of impartial and experienced men; and those thoroughly to digest, and discourse upon; as it is best for weak stomachs to eat of few, and wholesome dishes: which may also be done for further use, extensions, and application, than the author himself conceived, or at least, expressed. And though Lucilius wished, that his books might be read neither of men very learned, nor altogether unlearned; lest the one should understand nothing, and the other more than he intended: yet indeed he reads a book ill, that understands not something

more either in, or, at least, by it, than the author himself did in penning it.

As the maladies of the minds of many have been cured by reading of books; so have the diseases of the bodies of some, and those such as wanted no other medicines; if we may believe histories: as of Alphonsus, King of Spain, reading of Livy; and of Ferdinand, King of Sicily, by reading of Quintus Curtius. The cure is both more common, and more excellent, which the reading of the Holy Scriptures afford.

CHAPTER XXIV: OF GOOD INTENTIONS

A good meaning no more sufficeth to make a good action, than a fair mark doth to make a good shot, by an unskillful archer. This hath been fully verified in the Jews, who out of no less good end, than the zeal of God and desire, such as it was, to do him pleasing service, persecuted Christ and his disciples to the death. What intention could be better, or action worse? We must not therefore take the sanctuary of fools by good meanings, without knowledge: but first setting our faces towards heaven by meaning well, must further so far honor God, and humble ourselves to him, as to resign our whole man also into his hands, to be guided by him in the way thither: joining our prayers with his, who had less need to fear stepping aside that way, than we, and yet said "With mine whole heart have I sought thee; O let me not wander from thy commandments." Psa. cxix.10.

And yet albeit a good end alone sufficeth not; yet there is nothing either good, or tolerable without it, no, not though it have never so good success [Austin]. Although the good meaning excuse not wholly, yet the evil wholly condemns [Bernard]. This good intention and end is the first, and last in every lawful action. It is the first, and that which sets the agent a-work to do what he doth, whether working reasonably, or naturally. It is the last, and so the best, and that at which he aims, as the perfection of his work.

And this, where it is found God so much regardeth, as he sometimes prevents an evil action in him, in whom he sees a good intention: as is to be seen in Abimelech, king of Gerar, whom God kept from sinning against him, and suffered not to touch Sarah, Abraham's wife, because he had taken her into his house, in the integrity of his heart. Gen. xx.3-6. Sometimes also God rewards the good purpose, yea though he refuse the work intended, as incompetent, for some special cause; as in David, when he would have built the Lord an house. 2 Sam xii.23. Always, he that means well, yea though the work be evil, which he doth, makes the devil, after a sort, serve God in it. He that doth that, which is good in itself for an evil end, makes God serve Satan: he that doth that, which is evil for a good end, makes Satan therein, though not warrantably, serve God; as the means serve the end. And considering how little truly good doing there is amongst men, in comparison; it were well there were more good meaning, yea though it were without knowledge. By which both fewer mischiefs would be done, and they that are done would therein be less heinous. We measure things, saith one, and it is true, in a respect, by the ends of goodness; and so better miss, and we shall miss less, in the means, than in the end [Bodinus]. He who hath the mark in his eye, and aims at it, will hardly miss so much, as he that takes a wrong mark to shoot at. And for true goodness; he who gets this general grace, to have his heart indeed, and seriously bent upon the course of piety towards God, and innocency towards men, the Lord will not so far suffer to err in his way, as to miss of heaven in the end, notwithstanding his particular aberration of human frailty; which God will cover under the veil of his rich mercy, by the person's sincere faith, and general repentance.

CHAPTER XXV: OF MEANS

Means are so called of the middle place which they hold, between the efficient and final causes; serving the one for the furthering and achieving of the other. And so, all creatures, whether persons, or things, come under this account, in respect of him, from whom and for whom all things are.

God is able without means to do whatsoever work of power he doth, or can do by them: and the reason is plain, for that he both creates, and provides the means; and also gives the blessing upon them, by which they are available. Neither, if we mind it, hath the Lord ever done greater works than those, which the hand of his power hath wrought either immediately; or, by means, very weak, and feeble; which being improved by God's omnipotency have produced wonderful effects. Thus God and frogs could plague Pharaoh and all Egypt. Exod. viii.6,7,14. So can the Holy Ghost and simple preaching make men wise unto salvation. 1 Cor. i.18-21.

God often useth means very weak and base, not because he wants better; but, partly, for his own glory; as first for the glory of his goodness, that being so mighty, and excellent in majesty, he will vouchsafe to employ them:

and, secondly, of his greatness, in bringing to pass what he will by them, as he told Gideon "the people were too many for him to save Israel by." Judg. vii.2-7. When men make wars they get the powerfulest helps they can, therein betraying their own weakness [Philo Judaeus]: whereas God, on the contrary, wanting no man's help, oftentimes makes choice of weak means, as needing none. Partly, the Lord doth this for the means themselves, that they which God so far honors, specially for good to men, should not be despised: and partly, for others; that none should be overmuch affected with, or to them.

To trust to means is idolatry: to abuse them, want of wisdom, or of conscience, or both: to neglect them, either desperateness, when a man is without hope of good by them; or presumptuous tempting of God, when he expects good without them; or sloth, when he will not trouble himself with them. With all which, unthankfulness to the Lord is joined, who provides them as helps against our infirmities: and, therewith, profane sauciness also, if with the contempt of the means which we have, we long after such as we have not; as did the Israelites in the wilderness, in loathing manna, and lusting after flesh, Numb. xi.4,5,6: and the Jews in despising Christ's miracles upon earth, and desiring to see a sign from heaven of him. Matt. xvi.1-4. We must then, as one saith, mingle our own sweat with faith to make a sweet odor withal to God. For though his power be not bound to means, yet his will binds us to such, as he in mercy affordeth; partly, as helps of our faith, which need such glasses wherein to see God's helping hand; and partly, to exercise our obedience; and partly, to stir up our diligence. And this we must do the rather, for that when God purposeth good to, or by a man either, he commonly provides him means accordingly; which when opportunity serves, he expecteth he should use, in good conscience, for attaining to the good unto which they, as it were, lead him; which to neglect is to disobey a kind of real calling from God. In the careful use of natural means we show most wisdom, and that we are not like beasts without understanding: and of supernatural means, prayer, and the like, the most grace: and that we are not as men which know not God.

A man must be sure in his most careful use of means always to bear in mind the end for which he useth them; that he be not like the messenger, who so minds his way, as he forgets his errand; to sever the means, and end to which they lead ordinally, is vanity, in all courses: in Divine matters, mere madness. He that sinneth without repentance, looks to escape hell, separates the ends from the means: he that without faith and obedience looks for heaven, separates the means from the end which he aims at. Both would pervert God's word, and work of providence.

CHAPTER XXVI: OF LABOR, AND IDLENESS

God, who would have our first father, even in innocency, and being lord of the whole world, to labor, though without pain or wearisomeness, in dressing the garden; and when he had sinned, to eat his bread with the sweat of his brows, Gen. ii.8-15; iii.19, would have none of his sinful posterity lead their life in idleness; no, nor without exercising themselves diligently in some lawful calling, or other. I say diligently; for as poor men play for recreation, now and then; so do rich men work. But that sufficeth not. For God who hath in the natural body appointed unto every member its office, and function, which it is constantly to exercise; would have no member in any society, or body of men ordinarily unemployed. Neither doth that man, how great or rich soever, keep a good conscience before God, who makes labor but an accessory, and not a principal, and that which takes up his ordinary time. Man is born to sore labor, in body, or mind, as the spark to fly upward. Job. v.7. In heaven is only rest without labor: in hell, restless pain and torment; and as sin makes the earth, which is between both, liker to hell, than heaven; so God for sin hath given to the sons of man sore travail to afflict them upon earth. Eccl. i.18. And that in His most wise and gracious providence, considering the mischiefs that come by idleness: as, the weakening of the endowments of nature; whereas labor brings strength to the body, and vigor to the mind [Plutarch]; yea the consumption of grace, as rust consumes the iron for want of using [Ringelberd]: yea, whereas idleness brings bodily poverty like an armed man, Prov. vi.11: it brings not only spiritual poverty in graces with it, but withal, a legion of vices, like so many armed devils; puffing up the flesh with pride, and making the heart Satan's anvil, who is commonly least idle, when men are most, whereon to forge a thousand vanities, and sinful lusts, as having a fit opportunity to persuade men to do evil, when he finds them doing nothing [Jerome]; that so they, who will not sweat on earth [H. Smith], either with the labor of the hand, or heart, though King Alphonsus said that God and nature had given kings hands as well as other men, might sweat in hell [Bernard]: and that if they will not bear their part in the pains of men, they might partake in the

pains of the devils [Seneca]. Whereas, on the contrary, if we do that which is good, and well done, though with labor, and painfulness; the labor is soon over, and good, whereas the goodness and reward thereof remain behind [Musonius].

Proud folk despise labor, and them that use it: and so it would be thought by many, far meaner than Joseph's brethren, a disgraceful question to be asked, as they were by Pharaoh; "Of what occupation they were?" Gen. xlvii.3. And this difference I have observed, for the matter in hand, that whereas in plentiful countries, such as our own, it is half a shame to labor: in such others, wherein art and industry must supply nature's defects, as in the country where I have last lived, it is a shame for a man not to work, and exercise himself in some one or other lawful vocation. And, in truth, there is more comfort to a good man in that which he gets, or saves by his labor, and providence, and God's blessing thereupon, than in that which comes to him any other way. For he considers it not only as a fruit of God's love, but withal, as a reward of his obedience unto God's commandment of labor and travail to be undergone in this world of the children of men. It is a "blessing upon every one that feareth the Lord, and walks in his ways, that he shall eat the labor of his hands." Psa. cxxviii.2. And, he that without his own labor either of body or mind, eats the labor of other men's hands only, and lives by their sweat, is but like unto lice, and such other vermin. Let every godly Christian, in his place, say with Christ, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work." John ix.4. *Longa quiescendi tempora fata dabunt.*

It is a great blessing, when God gives a man grace and wisdom to take pains about things first lawful, and secondly profitable. The diligent in evil are but like the devil, who compasseth the earth, Job. i.7, and that "like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." 1 Pet. v.8. Such do best, when they do least [Seneca]. The life of others is inquieta inertia, busying, and oftentimes troubling both themselves, and others, with things altogether unprofitable; like the kings of Egypt in building their pyramids, to the misspending of their own money, and the people's labor. I have known divers, that with the title of the study, and pains taken by them, had it been rightly improved, and to profitable uses, might have benefited both themselves, and others far more, than they have done, with all their diligence, and that with good meaning also.

Labor spent upon things eternal must not be counted lost, or too much: seeing temporal things of any worth are not usually obtained without it. And surely, if heaven and happiness could be had with so little pains and trouble, as the world reckons; it were strange, if they were worth the having. And yet how many might obtain the pearl of Christ promised with less pains, than they take for earthly and transitory things, which yet oftentimes they are disappointed of! [Jerome] yes, I add, than many take for hell, which their wickedness brings upon them unavoidably! "Labor not for the meat which perisheth: but for that meat, which endureth unto eternal life," John vi.27, saith Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER XXVII: OF CALLINGS

The effectual calling of a Christian is that by which the Lord first differenceth actually, and in the person himself, the elect from the reprobate: and by which the called approacheth, and draweth nigh unto god that calleth him: and that takes away his son, which separated between the Lord, and him, both by justifying, and sanctifying him.

This general calling of a Christian is incomparably more excellent, and honorable, than any particular calling and state whatsoever. By it we are "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things," Eph. i.3, both for grace, and glory. It alone is properly a holy calling, 1 Cor. xii.20-24, hallowing all other callings: which also are so far lawful, and lawfully used, as they further it, and not otherwise. If the excellency of it were well weighed, and rightly prized, no man honored therewith should be thought worthy to be despised for any other meanness, nor without it to be envied for any other excellency how glorious soever in the world's eye.

These two main privileges of God's providence the elect before their effectual calling are made partakers of, above others. The former that into what other, or howsoever otherwise grievous sins they fall, yet they are kept by the power of the Lord, from sinning against the Holy Ghost, of which there is no forgiveness. And this the apostle insinuates, where he testifies of himself, that before his calling by grace, he "was a blasphemer, and persecutor; but doing it of ignorance, in unbelief, he obtained mercy," Tim. i.13; which if he had done of malicious knowledge, he could not possibly have done. The second privilege is, that, though such a man may fall into great dangers, so as there is oft but a step between him and death, yet still God will rescue, and keep

him alive, till he be effectually called to the participation of his grace in Christ: witness the jailer in Philippi. Acts xvi.27. God calls a man actually in time, as he hath chosen him in his eternal decree; that is, as he hath purposed to call, and save him in due time. And if there be a particular, and effectual calling of some above others, then was there undoubtedly a particular election, or purpose from eternity in God so to do: except we will say, that God doth that in time, which he did not from eternity purpose to do. And if the Lord work no otherwise in calling of any to the grace of Christ, than by outward means, and motives, so leaving them as some say, to the freedom of their will to determine itself by choosing, or refusing the grace offered in the gospel; then are many wicked men, so living and dying, more bound to the Lord for his work of grace towards them, than are divers his holy and faithful servants. The reason is, because many of the former have been made partakers of the outward means, and motives of grace, in preaching of the gospel, godly examples, and education, in far greater measure, and more ample, and excellent, than many of the latter have been. Neither are the true servants of God, by this doctrine, to go so far in humble thankfulness to God, as did the proud Pharisee in the gospel; who thanked God, that he was not like the publican, and other sinners. Luke xviii.11. For whatsoever else they have cause to thank God for; by these men's gospel, they have cause to thank themselves, and not God, that they are not like other men, who have been made partakers of as great, and ample outward means, and provocations of grace, as they have been.

A lawful calling is necessary for every lawful work: the general calling of a Christian, before we can perform any Christian work aright: and so a particular calling to this or that state of life, before we perform the works thereof. The inward calling is requisite, in regard of God, who knows the inwards of the man, and with what heart and affection he undertakes any state or action: so is the outward also, because God is the God of order. Also, when a man knows himself to be orderly called to a condition of life, he both sets himself more cheerfully and roundly to the works thereof, wherein he is assured he serves God's providence by his order, and appointment; and with faith expects a blessing from God upon his endeavors in that course of life, in which his hand hath set him; and, withal, bears with comfort the crosses befalling him therein; as we see in David, whose shield of comfort against all darts of danger was, that God had selected him unto himself, and anointed him his king upon Zion, the mountain of his holiness. Psa. ii.6; iii.4.

Little account is made by many of a lawful outward calling: whereas indeed it is that alone, by which all states, save those that are natural, and so are subject neither to election nor change, are both constituted and continued. For what makes him, who yesterday was none, today to be a magistrate in the commonwealth, minister in the church, steward in the family, or any other officer or member in any orderly society, but an orderly outward calling by them who have lawful authority to confer that state upon him? This being neglected opens a gap to all confusion in all states. The gifts of a man enable him to his office; his grace sanctifies both the gifts and office to the person; his inward calling persuades his heart to undertake the outward in desire to glorify God, and in love to men; his execution of it in the works thereof presuppose it, and testify his faithfulness in it: but only the outward orderly calling confers the outward state and condition of life [Calvin].

Ability for a man's calling is greatly to be desired for many reasons. For, first, it is a thing well-pleasing in God's sight, especially in the most serviceable courses of life; as we may see in Solomon, who being called to the state of a king, desired above all other things, kingly endowments, and therein pleased God greatly. 1 Kings iii.9. Secondly, he whom God calls to a place, or sets over a business, he enables accordingly; as he did the same Solomon, being set over a people many in number, as the sand by the sea shore, with wisdom, and largeness of heart, as the sand by the sea shore, 1 Kings iv.29. Thirdly, it is great ease to a man, when he is master of his place, and course, and able to play with it: otherwise, if he be compelled to strive continually with it, it will both make his life burdensome, and force him at some time, or other, to let fall the works thereof, as unable to wield it. Yet if such a one be willing, and able to bear it out, it is a good way for him to grow to great perfection, by daily improving his ability to the full: as Milo, by using to bear a calf every day, proved able to bear him, when he was grown an ox. Fourthly, it is an honor to a man to be excellent in his faculty, yea though it be means in itself. and so men excelling in mean trades, or callings are more regarded, than those who are mean in more excellent faculties. One saith truly, that even ploughmen and shepherds being excellent are applauded [Pindarus]. Lastly, the unskilfulness of the artisan dishonors the art itself, how excellent soever in the eyes of many: although in reason it should not so be, seeing that the more excellent any profession is, it finds the fewer, whose worth can answer its excellence [Erasmus].

Although callings most useful, and necessary, are most despised by proud folks; both because they are ordinary

and common; and followed by mean and ordinary persons: yet it stands with a good conscience to provide, that our course of life be such, as in which we benefit human societies. And an uncomfortable thing it is to him, that hath any either fear of God, or love to men, to spend his days, and labor in such a course, as by which more hurt than good comes to the world.

It is a good and godly course for a person diligently to read, and seriously to meditate upon such places of Holy Scripture, as concern his, or her special calling: as, for the magistrate diligently to read Deut. i.16, &c., the minister 1 Tim. iii.; and so for husband and wife, father and child, master and servant, and the rest; that by so doing we may both more fully learn, and better remember, and conscionably practice the particular duties, in which God would have us exercise our general Christian graces.

CHAPTER XXVIII: OF THE USE AND ABUSE OF THINGS

We are said to enjoy God alone, and to use the creatures [Austin]; because, we are not to rest in them, but in God only, to whom we are to be helped by them. And of the things which we use, some of them we must use, as though we used them not, 1 Cor. vii.21: others, as though we used them. The world, and all things serving for this life, we ought to use with a kind of indifferency, and without setting the affections of our hearts upon it, or them, how busy soever our hands be about them: spiritual good things, on the contrary, and which concern our eternal happiness, we ought to use, as using them indeed, with all earnest bent of affection upon them; and as not suffering ourselves, at any hand, to be disappointed of the fruit of them.

"God," saith the wise man, "hath made everything beautiful in his time," Eccl. iii.11: and indeed every thing is good for something: I mean everything that God hath made; for there are many vain and lewd devices of men, which are truly good for nothing, as, on the other side, nothing is good for everything. And, hereupon, Prometheus told the satyr, when he would have kissed the fire, upon his first seeing it, that if he did so, it would burn his lips, as not being for that use, but to minister heat, and light [Plutarch]. Some things always bear, as it were, their use on their backs, and cause also the right use of other things, where they are found; as the sanctifying graces of God's Spirit, which yet some use more fully, and faithfully, than others; and this is also a grace of God: whereas all other things have their good in their using, and not in their owning. And a great point of wisdom, and advantage for good it is to apply things to their right use, and end, whether great or small. He that can do this spiritually, is happy, though he have received but one pound, for others' five, or ten. As on the other side, how many were, though not happy, yet less miserable, if they altogether wanted the wit, learning, riches, and authority, which they want grace to use, according to the will of the giver?

A man hath that, most and best, whereof he hath the lawful use. And hereupon a follower of a great lord was wont to say, that he had, in effect, as much as his lord; though he were owner of little or nothing: considering how he had the use of his gardens, and galleries, to walk in; heard his music, with as many ears as he did; hunted with him in his parks; and ate and drank of the same that he did, though a little after him; and so for the most other delights, which his lord enjoyed. And, in truth, what great difference is there, save in the proud and covetous mind of a man, whether he himself, or another be owner of the good things, whereof he with him, hath the lawful use and benefit?

Distinction must be put between the things themselves, and their casual and personal abuses: otherwise, the natures of the things can neither be rightly conceived of, nor expressed [Chemnitius]. Neither doth the abuse of good things so take away, or make forfeiture of the use, as that the counsel of Lycurgus is to be followed, who would have the vines cut down, because men were sometimes drunken with the grapes [Plutarch]. Yet may the abuse of a thing be so common, and notorious; and the use so small, or needless; as better want the small use, than be in continual danger of the great abuse of it.

The best things abused become the worst, both naturally, and morally, by reason of a greater force in them than in other things, which we must not therefore superstitiously disavow, or cease to account the best, as they are; but we must, thereby, be warned to use them the more warily, that we may enjoy their full goodness, and not prejudice them by abuse: otherwise, we shall be liable to the curse of a greater than Aristippus, who wished a plague upon those wantons, who by their abusing it, had defamed a sweet ointment, wherein he took delight [Laertius].

All evil stands in the abuse of good [Tertullian]. And good things are abused commonly, either when they are unmeasurably used; as it is said of wine, that the first cup quenches thirst, the second procures cheerfulness, the

third drunkenness, and the fourth madness: or by applying them unaptly, or to wrong ends, or persons; as when one offers light to the blind, or speech to him that is deaf; or wisdom to a brutish man [Cyprian]; or as when cowards fight with their tongues, and swash-bucklers dispute with their swords: or in regard of their supernatural use, when we refer not all to the glory of God, and our own, and others' eternal good, and welfare; which are the utmost ends of all things.

CHAPTER XXIX: OF RICHES AND POVERTY

It is the first degree of riches to have what is necessary; the next to have what is enough [Seneca]. And, indeed, he is a rich man, who wants no outward means, wherewith to maintain himself, and his, plentifully, in that state of life in which God hath set him, whether high, or low: and he poor, on the contrary, to whom that proportion is wanting. And, hence, it comes to pass, that there are poor kings and rich cobblers; poor landlords and rich tenants: as there are warm days in winter and cold in summer; respecting the season of the year.

Besides, if a person have the possession, and not the use of riches, and be sick of that disease which Solomon saw, and experience of all ages confirms to be common among men; namely of a man, to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honor, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul, of all that he desireth: and yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, Eccl. vi.2; I would not call him, but rather his chests and storehouses rich; seeing, he as well wants that which he hath, in regard of its use and end, as that which he hath not [Jerome].

A friend of mine in the University was wont to tell me merrily and wittily, that surely there was something in this money, more and better, than he and I saw; seeing such a great, wise, and learned man, whom he would name, loved it so well; and such another, as wise and learned as he, as well as he; and so a third, and a fourth. He knew well enough, it was not any good in it, which we saw not; but lust, and filthy covetousness in them, whose learning and wisdom should have taught them to despise and hate such base-mindedness. And in truth, if in any other thing, baseness of mind is seen in the love of money, and so they are justly contemned in the eyes of others, that are enamored of it. Some do make their belly their God, Phil. iii.19; and those are men of an abject spirit: others their riches, for covetousness is idolatry, Eph. v.5; and that in a special work of devotion, by trusting to them, which no man doth to his belly: yet is the covetous, of the two, the more vile, and serves the baser god: for the life, and belly, for which food is, are better than food; and yet food for the belly is the best part of riches, and that of which alone Adam in innocency stood need. If men were not above measure infatuated with sensuality, they, who know inward good things, would not affect outward, inordinately. That fools and idiots, that know no better things, should love money, is not strange: for oxen love grass; and swine draff; and every creature naturally the best things which it knows: but that wise and learned men, and they who know the good things of the mind, specially the good things of God in his Word, should so dote upon it, is most vile, and monstrous. Some love money for itself, and for the bare possession of it, and because they delight to tell their pence: but that is the case of few of learning, or wisdom. But as moles by digging in the earth raise up hills; so do they hope to climb up by this baseness; as being set a work, this way, by ambition, for the most part, which too often breeds in the breasts of men rarely endowed; as the canker doth in sweet flowers. For such men esteeming themselves worthy of account in the world for their excellency: and perceiving riches the readiest way to procure it, or make way for it, they lay hold thereof with both hands: and being seduced with the love of money for that end, do for the getting and keeping of it, pierce themselves through with many sorrows. 1 Tim. vi.10.

"The blessing of the Lord maketh rich," Prov. x.22. If wealth come by inheritance; it is God's blessing that a man is born of rich friends, and not of beggars: if by means of free gift; it is his blessing, that hath made them able and willing to do us good: if goods be gotten by industry, providence, and skill; it is God's blessing that both gives the faculty, and the use of it, and the success unto it. And as riches are in themselves God's blessings, so are we to desire them of him, and to use lawful diligence to get them: for the comfortable course of our natural, and civil state: for though we are to be able to bear poverty, if God send it, yet should we rather desire riches; as a man, though he can go afoot, yet will rather choose to ride [Seneca]. Secondly, to free us from such temptations unto sin, as poverty puts many upon. Prov. xxx.8,9. Thirdly, that they may minister unto us and ours, more plentiful matter of exercising virtue and goodness [Ibid.], especially of mercy towards the poor, and them in need. God could, if he would, either have made men's state more equal, or have given every one sufficient of his own: but he hath rather chosen to make some rich, and some poor, that one might stand in

need of another, and help another, Deut. xv.7,11; that so he might try the mercy and goodness of them that are able, in supplying the wants of the rest. And the richer sort that make not this account, know not wherefore God hath given them their goods; and are as poor in grace, as rich in the world.

Both poverty and riches, if they be in any extremity, have their temptations, and those not small: in which regard Agur prays to God to give him neither of both, but to feed him with food convenient for him. Prov. xxx.8,9. And, in truth, the middle state is freest from the greatest danger either of sin, or misery, in the world: as Icarus's father told him that the middle way was safest for his waxen wings, neither to be moistened with the water, nor molten with the heat of the sun [Ibid.]. And of the two states, the wise man insinuates in that his prayer to the Lord, that the temptations of riches are the more dangerous. Poverty may drive a man to steal, or deal unjustly with others; and after to lie, or, it may be, and, as the Holy Ghost insinuates, by swearing to "take the name of God in vain," to cover it: but if a man be rich, and full, he is in danger to deny God, and to say in pride, and contempt of him in effect, as Pharaoh did, "who is the Lord?" For hardly doth anything cause the mind to swell more with pride, than riches; both by reason of the ease and plenty of worldly good things, which they bring with them: as also of the credit, which rich men, or their purses, have in the world; and both those specially, if they have gotten their wealth by their own art, or industry. He that is proud in a poor estate, would in a rich, be intolerable before men, as he is, in the meanwhile, abominable in God's sight: he that is humble in a prosperous, is a good scholar of Christ, and hath taken out a hard lesson, which the apostle would have Timothy to charge the rich withal; which is, that they should "not be high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches," 1 Tim. vi.17. From rich men's pride in themselves ariseth, commonly, contempt of others, specially of the poor. I have known Nabals, who, in my conscience, have thought, that all that were not rich, were fools, notwithstanding any eminency in them of gifts, or graces. But thus to mock, or despise the poor, is to "reproach God that made him so" Prov. xvii.5: and besides, if the person be wise and godly, as he may well be, for any bar that his poverty puts against him; it is withal, to despise the image of God's wisdom and goodness in him. Eccl. ix.16. But for us; considering how the truly wise, by the Spirit of God, pronounceth that "the poor who walketh in his uprightness, is better than he that is perverse in his way though rich," Prov. xxviii.6; as also, that "a poor and wise child is better than an old and foolish king," Eccl. iv.13; we should have that strength of faith against sense, and carnal reason, as, in all resolvedness, to prefer an honest, or wise poor man before a rich Nabal. Besides, though still the "rich man be," and will be "wise in his own eyes; yet the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out," Prov. xxviii.11: and by searching often finds, that little wit, being employed wholly thereabout, and less grace, serves to get wealth with. a poor and plain person seeing a Dives ruffle in silks, and glitter in gold, and silver, is half ready to worship him, as a petty god, many times: but after finds by his speech, and other carriage, by which a fool and wise man are differenced, that if he had so done, he had but worshipped a golden calf.

God sends poverty upon men to humble them, both in the want of bodily comforts, and, specially, in regard of the contempt, which it ever casts upon men in the world's eye. And blessed indeed are they, who by poverty, and other worldly crosses, are humbled so as to become "poor in spirit," Matt. v.3: not being of those, of whom the complaint is, that they are humiliati, not humiles. As if a rich man be humble, he is not of the rich of the world [Cassander]: so if a poor man be proud, he is not of the Lord's poor, and blessed ones [Bernard]. Some are of opinion, that none but rich folks can be proud. But the pride of many, as was said of Diogenes, may be seen through their rags. And who ever saw any prouder, than some such worms, as in whom no others could discern anything outward or inward, saving the devil, that should make them so? God in his good and wise providence many times sends poverty, and other calamities upon such, to restrain them; whose overswellings of pride, if they enjoyed a prosperous state, would make them both odious and troublesome to all societies.

There be some, who out of a kind of natural diligence, patience, parsimony, and contentment with mean things, seem so fitted for a poor and mean state, as they if they were ever pressed with want, they would ever be good, and virtuous; but being rich and wealthy, are either base-minded, or arrogant, in the eyes of all men. There are also, who, by their kind and courteous disposition, seem so fitted for prosperity, and plenty, that if they ever enjoyed it, they would be no meanly good people; and yet falling into a poor and needy condition, they appear not only impatient, but unconscionable also. But the truth is, that howsoever some be fitter for the one estate than the other, and so carry it better to the world; yet he that is not, in his measure, fit for either, is indeed fit for neither. The apostle had learned, and so must all good Christians with him, "both to be full, and to be hungry; both to abound, and to suffer need." Phil. iv.12. He that is "not faithful in a little, would not be faithful in a

great deal," Luke xvi.8-10; and so, for the contrary. He that is impatient, or unhoneſt in poverty, would be and is wanton, or arrogant, or otherwise faulty, though, more cloſely, in abundance: neither is any broken with an afflicted ſtate, ſave he who is too much inveigled with a prosperous [Austin]. He again, whoſe courſe is either too high, or too low, in plenty, would never keep a mean in want.

The over-valuation of riches drives divers men to divers, yea, contrary appearances : ſome to "make themſelves rich, though they have nothing:" and others, "to make ſhow of poverty, though they have all abundance," Prov. xiii.7. The former ſo much eſteem of riches, and think them ſo much eſteemed of by others, as that, if they ſeem not to the world to have them, their life is a death unto them: and therefore they will be ſure to make a fair outside, and appear rich, though they be nothing leſs. The other eſteeming themſelves happy in having, and keeping them; conceal and ſpare that their treaſure, what they can; leſt by having it known, they ſhould be occaſioned, one way or other, to diminish it. Both are injurious to God, to other men, and to themſelves. To God, in belying him; the former, as if he had given them that which he hath not: the latter, as not having given them that which he hath [Cartwright]. To others; the former, in getting into their hands the riches, which they cannot ſatisfy for; or credit, which they deſerve not : the latter by withholding both from God and men their due. To themſelves ; the former, in frustrating the occaſion of humiliation, unto which the Lord by poverty calls them, James i.9,10: the latter, by preventing, or quenching the provocations unto thankfulneſs to God for his plenty beſtowed upon them, beſides other comfortable effects thereof.

The apoſtle points at ſome Chriſtians, ſo called, that "will be rich," 1 Tim. vi.9, even, whether God will, or no; and ſay he what he will, and almoſt do he what he can, to hinder it, they will be rich, if it may be, keeping faith and good conſcience in outward profeſſion; if that will not be, they will be rich without them; and rather loſe their own ſouls than not gain the world. Matt. xvi.16. But "woe be unto them; for they run greedily after the error of Balaam," Jude 11; and will have God alſo run with them, otherwiſe, he is not for their company.

CHAPTER XXX: OF SOBRIETY

"The grace of God," in Chriſt, and his goſpel, "which hath appeared, teacheth us as well to live ſoberly, as juſtly, and godly in the world." Titus ii.12. And he that is not ſober in himſelf, uſing, and deſiring moderately, the good things of this natural life, as meat, drink, apparel, ſleep, paſtime, credit, and the reſt; will neither conſerve righteouſly with men, nor piously with God. He that takes more to himſelf, than is due to him, cannot give either God or men their due.

Nature is content with few, and ſmall things: for though the belly will be craving, yet it is no exacting creditor; but will be ſatisfied with a ſmall proportion [Boethius]: which to preſs with ſuperfluities, makes things either unpleaſant, or hurtful [Seneca]. It is reaſonable to deal with, if we give it but what we owe, and not what we can [Patricius]. In reproof of gluttony and exceſs, one ſaith, "that the throat hath killed more than the ſword." And I think it may be truly ſaid, that how hard ſoever it have gone with many in the world, at times; that more have received hurt by eating too much, than too little. And though many be of mind, that by devouring a great deal, they ſhall make their bodies the ſtronger, and live the longer; yet is there reaſon to think that were not men provoked by company, and ſenſual objects; or miſled by inordinate appetite; or miſwonted by cuſtom; even half the meat and drink which the moſt uſe, would afford as long, and ſtrong a ſtate of body, and bodily health, as they do enjoy. Moderate diet, ſaith one, is good both for the ſoul and body [Jerome]: and ſo is it for the eſtate alſo, and the contrary, pernicious; God both ſaying, and ordering, "that he that loveth wine and oil ſhall not be rich." Prov. xi.17. He, eſpecially, if he be a poor man, and of ſmall means, "that will this world's goods win, muſt at his belly begin."

It is a baſe, and beaſtly thing, for a man to give himſelf to eating and drinking, or to either of them: neither are ſuch to be reckoned, ſaith one, among men but beaſts [Seneca]. But for a man to be ſo inordinate, as to hurt either his body or mind by exceſs, as a riotous youth delivers over to old age a feeble body [Cicero], and more feeble mind, and deſtitute, for the moſt parts, both of wiſdom and grace, is to follow the baſeſt of beaſts and to become ſwinish: few other beaſts ſave ſwine will over-eat themſelves. Neither is it any ſufficient excuſe for him that hath plenty to be exceſſive; more than for the cook that had made the meat overſalt, to ſay, that he had a ſtore of ſalt by him. Neither yet excuſeth it, that by cuſtom ſome are able, as they ſay, to bear their drink, and not be overcome by it. For, albeit drunkenneſs in this be very odious, that whereas other ſins deprive perſons of God's image, it deprives them of man's; leaving them the uſe neither of reaſon, nor ſpeech, in which two things

man differs specially from beasts; no nor of sense, and motion accordingly, wherein beasts excel stocks and stones; but so blockifies them, for the present, that neither hand, nor foot, can do their office [Terence]: yet the Lord by the prophet denounceth a woe not only against them that are overcome by drink, which may befall some by a very little, through natural weakness of brain, but against them, who can overcome it, being "mighty by drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink." Isa. v.22.

Considering that "meat, and so for other bodily good things, makes us not the more acceptable before God," 1 Cor. xiii.8; and that "God will destroy both the belly (in that use) and meat," 1 Cor. vi.13; it should teach us, in the meanwhile, moderately to use all things for the belly, and natural life. But if, besides these considerations, we weigh with ourselves, how unworthy our sins make us of the least comfort by any of God's creatures; specially, if with these things concerning ourselves, we weigh how many in the world, and those of the Lord's faithful servants, stand in need of meat, drink, &c., for their natural necessity; if there be in us either fear of God, or love of men, it will work in us a great conscience not to mispend anything vainly, or riotously, wherewith we might comfort the hearts of them that need it. And they who in this case will not be warned by Moses, and the prophets, nor by Christ and the apostles neither; shall with the glutton feel the torment of the flame of hell, Luke xvi.24, for their excess in themselves, and unmercifulness towards other.

The special use of wine, and strong drink is, that "the heavy of heart, and ready to perish might drink, and forget his poverty, and misery," Prov. xxxi.6,7. But the abuse is more common than the use; by which the strong and stout take the greatest part therein; drinking many times, till they forget both God, and themselves; whilst the other languish in want and sorrow.

Christ and his apostles often join in their exhortations sobriety, and watchfulness together. Matt. xxiv.42; Luke xii.39. For drunkenness, and gluttony make men fitter for sleeping, than watching. 1 Thes. v.6,7. And so doth all excess in bodily things draw with it carnal security, and security, destruction. We are, therefore, to be sober in the desire and use of all earthly things, that we may watch: and to watch, that we may escape the danger of spiritual enemies, which watch for our destruction.

"When thou sittest to eat with a ruler," saith the wise man, "consider diligently what is before thee, and put thy knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to thine appetite." Prov. xxiii.1. They that eat with rulers, or where there is a variety of delicates, are apt enough to consider diligently what is before them; but it is for the most part, not to restrain their appetite, as it should be; but rather to provoke it. But a wise man will consider of his temptations, to escape the danger of them: a fool to provoke himself to swallow them the more greedily, as the fish doth the bait with the hook under it.

He only is not overtaken with unlawful things, who inureth himself, at times, to abstain from many things lawful [Gregory]. He that will go as near the ditch as he can, will at some time, or other, fall in: so he who will take all the liberty that possibly he may lawfully, cannot but fall into many unlawful things [Austin].

Thereupon, Austin's mother would not allow the young maids committed to her government, to drink as much water as they would: lest afterwards, becoming wives, and having plenty, they should use excess in wine.

CHAPTER XXXI: OF LIBERALITY AND ITS CONTRARIES

Liberality teacheth us to bestow our worldly goods, when, upon whom, and as we ought [Aristotle], in obedience unto God, and for men's good. This is to be done without hope of requital from them; as not being a mercenary virtue [Lactantius], but that wherein a man looks to his duty to others, and not to profit from them [Cicero]. Else it is not liberality rightly performed, but a bargain well made. Neither is that to be accounted liberality, which is done for vain glory; seeing the work is named from the affection [Ambrose]. Least of all that, when men give to some, that they may take from others [Cicero]. This is rather thievery upon condition. Many account themselves, and are by others accounted not only liberal, but even bounteous, because they give great gifts: whereas, if we consider the persons on whom, and the ends for which they so pour out themselves, and their money (and other men's also, oftentimes); we shall see that in truth they deserve no more the name of liberal, than those prodigals do, who bestow their goods upon harlots, for the satisfying of their lusts. For as that is not a benefit which wants the best part of it, namely, to be given in judgment, so neither is that liberality, which wants that part, but the casting away of a man's goods [Seneca].

This virtue exercised in great states and gifts, is called bounty, and a kingly virtue, but may preserve the due respect of their liberality in the smallest matters, and by the poorest persons, if it be constant: which rather

teacheth to give a little to many, than much to few [Ibid.] This was verified in "the churches of Macedonia, towards the poor saints in Jerusalem; whose deep poverty abounded unto their rich liberality." 2 Cor. xiii.1,2. The same is confirmed, by our Savior's testimony of the poor widow's contribution of two mites, that she gave, therein, more than all the rich men. Mark vii.42,43. None can give more, and therein be more liberal, than he that leaves himself little or nothing [Ambrose]. On the contrary, none can spare more, and therein be more covetous, than he, that will not do the little which he can do, and his neighbor stands in need of. It is the dangerous error of poor men, that only the rich are covetous, or liberal. They may be, and oft are, as very misers, and odiously covetous in their penny; as the other in their pound. So may they be as liberal. "Every one," saith Solomon, "is a friend to a man of gifts," Prov. xix.6: which have in them, saith another, a kind of secret force to draw the minds of men, as the lodestone draweth iron [Cartwright]: and that, not only of them that desire to use the liberality of others; but of such also, as neither need, nor would use the same. Look, what liberality loseth a man in his purse, it gets him in a better place, not only in heaven, but in earth also; and the best place there, the hearts of men, and their loving affection. On the contrary, covetous men are contemned, and hated, not only of them, whom they wrong by unjust getting, or keeping; but by all others that know them, though all dare not so manifest. Their credit with others, and comfort in themselves, is only in their purses. It is a question amongst learned men, whether of the two extremes of liberality; prodigality in the excess, or covetousness in the defect, is worse: but something the less needful to be determined, considering how often they meet together in the same person, and beget either the other. Many "lust, and desire to have," and sometimes obtain, that they may consume upon their pleasures, James iv.2: like unto kites, and gledes, and other ravenous birds, who are ever watching and catching for prey, and yet remain ever carrion-lean, converting the greatest part of their nourishment into long feathers. As some desire riches that they may have them, so a great part of the covetousness reigning in the world, is to maintain prodigal expenses: that look what covetousness hath gathered together, riot may lash out and consume [Gregory]. For men, as well as women, being with child of riot, and excess in diet, apparel, and other worldly vanities, long for riches, and great gettings, to nourish and maintain their lusts, without which they are in danger to cast their calf. On the other side, they who escape best with prodigality, are driven to repair their too great lavishness in one thing, by to great niggardliness in another. But as it was said of Catiline, that he was prodigal of his own, and covetous of other men's [Sallust]; so the greatest mispenders, for the most part, are constrained to be as great misgetters, to feed one vice by another. Hence some borrow without means, or meaning to pay again; circumvent others, if they have more cunning than they; oppress them, if they have more power; and some are driven to plain thievery, violent or secret. Yet if we will compare together these two naughts, we shall find covetousness, the worse of the twain. For, first, it is the "root of all evil," 1 Tim. vi.10: for that there is no evil fruit but will grow of it. Judas sold Christ for it: and many thousand daily sell their bodies and souls to sin, and hell for it; and would sell Christ, if he were in their hands: whereas wise men, and lawyers count the prodigal rather vain, or at the worst, but half mad, and not capable of governing his own goods, than mischievous. Secondly, covetousness is by the apostle called "idolatry," Col. iii.5, not in the common condition of all sins, in which men either in affection, or effect, esteem of transitory vanities above God, and despise him, in comparison of them; but, especially, for that they put more confidence in their riches, for their safety, and welfare, than they do in God's providence; and by them promise themselves all abundance of happiness. This madness befalls not the but half-mad prodigals. Thirdly, the covetous doth good to none, nor to himself neither, many times; wanting as well the things he hath, as the things he hath not [Seneca]; "God not giving him power to eat of, and use his riches." Eccl. iv.8. Whereas, the prodigal doth good to many, though not well. Fourthly, covetousness is a base, and beggarlike vice: prodigality a worshipful, honorable, and kingly sin. Fifthly, poverty, and want, the fruits of prodigality, prove, oftentimes, good schoolmasters to the ding-thrift, for his bettering; as we see it fell out with the prodigal son: but the effects of covetousness, which are usually riches, and plenty, harden the hold-fast; causing him to bless himself the more, in his wicked way. Luke xv.13. The riot of the prodigal draws him dry; but the gettings of the other serve to feed his disease, which causeth him, dropsy-like, the more he hath, to desire the more [Polybius]. Add we unto all these, that whereas age is some remedy against other vices, specially against prodigality, which grows old, and decays with the person, in whom it is; covetousness then grows young: so as they who are but thrifty in youth, are usually covetous in age [Jerome].

And though it seem, and, indeed be unreasonable, that the less way men have to go, they should be more careful for the viandour, and provision for their journey [Cicero]; yet there are divers dolorable occasions, though no

just causes of this malady. As first, age being impotent, and unable to sustain itself, is occasioned the more carefully to seek, and get riches, as a staff to lean on. But for this, we shall never see any, more greedy, than such, as have more than enough for many ages, their abundance no more quenching their lust, than fuel doth the flame [Gregory]. Secondly, the aged are oft charged with families, and friends, for whom they are to provide; from which burden youth is free: for "children are not to lay up for the parents, but parents for the children." 2 Cor. xii.14. But for this also; we see, that "a man, though he be alone, and have no second, neither child, nor brother, puts no end of labor to get, nor is ever satisfied with riches." Eccl. iv.8. I have not in my life observed any more given to covetousness, than such as have not, nor are likely to have children to leave their goods to. Thirdly, the other lusts of prodigal youth languishing in age, the heart, not being set upon God, and true goodness, which alone could fill, and satisfy it, finds only the lust of coveting riches a fit guest to harbor in it; wherewith the flesh maintains itself, that it fall not wholly into decay. So Simonides, being accused of covetousness, answered, that, whereas, the delight of all other pleasures was gone, he nourished his age with that alone profitable pleasure [Plutarch]. And, lastly, what is worst of all, though God have set religion and covetousness at such variance, that they cannot possibly reign in one person: "none can serve God, and mammon:" and again, "he that loveth this world, the love of God dwelleth not in him: " yet we see it, that religion working in persons a loathing of excess in worldly vanities, their flesh so works with it, as it disposes very many to such a wariness, as between which, and plain covetousness, there is too near affinity. Yea, how many have I known, who having passed the danger of the highway ground, and understood the word of God preached, and professed the same ; and of the stony ground too, in undergoing some troubles, and persecutions for the same: yet nourishing in themselves too much love and care of worldly riches, have had all their goodness choked before the harvest, by those dangerous thorns! Matt. xiii.19. Against this, so dangerous, deceitful, and close-cleaving evil, we are, first, to get into our hearts faith in God's providence, as well, and as much, for the good things of the life present, so far forth as they are good indeed, as of that to come. 1 Tim. iv.8. He that dares not, in the use of good means, trust God for this life, does not indeed trust him for life everlasting, how oft soever he say over his creed. Such a man mocks with God, in making a show of trusting him with that, which in truth he profanely despiseth: whereas, for worldly good things which he desires in earnest, he will trust God no further than he sees him. Though the Lord's love show forth itself more in heavenly, than in earthly things; yet his truth binds him alike to performance, as he hath promised: upon which, he that dares not rest for the lesser, makes but a show of resting for the greater. Secondly, we must get contentation with that which we have, seeing God hath said to us, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," Heb. xiii.5: esteeming, and saying with ourselves, that, this which we enjoy with a good conscience, and by means lawful, diligently used, is our allotment from God, by the sanctified use whereof, he will provide competently for our temporal state, and further our eternal. Thirdly, considering, how uncertain means of our good, even for this life, all earthly things are; and how many times they become the very snare thereof, as in the case of Naboth, 1 Kings xxi.1-3; and how always the coveting of them deprives of the hope of a better: for "the covetous is an idolater, and hath no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God," Eph. v.5, it is both sin and folly, inordinately to affect the getting, or keeping of them. But, as the Pharisees being covetous, mocked at Christ, when they heard him speak against their joining the serving the "mammon of unrighteousness," with the serving of God, Luke xvi.14: so men, in all ages, becoming rich by covetousness, and proud by riches; are ready to mock at whatsoever God or man can say against their gainful wickedness.

Considering how many poor people want, and of those not a few, the living members of Christ Jesus; we ought to make great conscience either of spending prodigally, or sparing covetously anything less, or more, wherewith we might comfort them, and show them mercy; how much more, of that, whereby, we should deal justly with them in giving them their due? which should first be done.

CHAPTER XXXII: OF HEALTH AND PHYSIC

Health is the great bodily blessing, which God bestows upon any in this life, yet is it one of the least regarded: partly, by reason of its commonness to all sort of people, poor and rich, fools and wise, the vilest and most excellent otherwise: partly, for that it is a natural good thing, which we bring, for the most part, into the world with us, and so often preserve, without any sensible change, and accordingly, we see, that no man is the more honored for his health, which can scarce be said of any other good thing whatsoever. The benefit of this most

sweet sauce of all other goods is scarcely discerned by them that enjoy it, till sickness come; for then only Orpheus' song, but much more our own experience, teacheth us, that nothing is available to men without health [Plutarch] : neither riches, nor honor, nor the greatest delights for belly, or back, which the earth can afford. This blessing therefore, where it is, may be set alone against many other wants : and God acknowledged to deal graciously with us in bestowing it, though with the want of many other outward good things: which, though others enjoy, yet without it, they want the comfortable use of them; and have less joy of their lives by far, than we by it, without them.

The best rule in physic is to preserve health by the use of things wholesome, and eschewing what is noxious, and hurtful, either in matter, or manner, or measure : and that betimes, and before distempers have taken too deep root, or that the strength of nature be too much impaired by the inordinate appetites and licentiousness of unadvised youth. We say in the proverb, "At forty years every man is either a fool, or a physician." But, because most are fools so long before, and that in their best years; it is too late for them to become physicians at this age, and the after years are constrained to bear the manifold infirmities and diseases which are owing to inordinate youth. and a happy thing it were, considering how few young folks will regard or believe these things till they be taught them by miserable experience, that wise parents and governors would so show their care over their children, pupils, and servants, that, where they cannot dissuade the affection, they might yet prevent the using of those unwholesome and hurtful youth-banes, unto which inordinate appetite carries young folk headlong.

I have marveled oft at the averseness of many, specially of the meaner sort, from physic, in time of sickness: but more at their unreasonable choice of physicians, when they use it. How ordinary a thing is it with a number, that if but their horse or cow be sick, or but in danger, they will let them blood, or get them a mash, or run to a leech for them! who yet for themselves, or their nearest friends will neither seek, nor willingly be persuaded to use the counsel or help of a physician. The reasons, hereof, I conceive to be, either, for that men are prone, and ready to persuade themselves, and to be persuaded by their friends, that they shall do well enough without such helps, and that many times out of a superstitious presumption of God's special help, where man's is neglected: or, on the contrary, when they are heartless, and despair of good thereby. But yet more strange is the choice which many make, when they use means. For though in all other courses, men seek for such, as are most skillful; yet in this they are not only more ready to believe any that professeth himself a physician, than of any other faculty [Pliny]; but also choose rather to trust their bodies and lives in the hands of ignorant empirics, men or women, than of the most expert, and learned physicians that are. Which I speak not, as esteeming the counsel or help of the meanest to be neglected, specially where either the more skillful cannot well be come by, or that the danger is not great, but for that all things are to be done reasonably, and for the best advantaging and likelihood of good, that may be. The causes of this are on the empirics' part, that they are more officious about their patients; the other being many times supercilious, and neglective of meaner persons: secondly, that they are more bold boasters of their own doings, than the other, whose learning makes them modest: thirdly, their affording their counsel and pains at a cheaper rate than the other do, who, very likely, and as experience teacheth in other countries, if they would descend to that rule of equity in other cases, a pennyworth for a penny, would find, that lighter gains coming thicker, would make heavier purses. Fourthly, their administering of medicines usually less offensive, and loathsome unto nature, which, it may be, the other's skill, and care, if custom made not men less compassionate than they should be, might much correct: though it cannot be denied, that by God's providence, and for man's sin, the most wholesome things either naturally or morally, are bitter and displeasing. On the patient's part this arises commonly; 1. from the suspicion, lest they being mean and plain persons should either be overreached, or neglected by the learned; 2. from envy, which the learned's arrogancy also often occasions; 3. from an ambitious desire in them, to advance those of their own order; as of old, the citizens of Rome would have their chief officers, even the Consuls, and Dictators, created and chosen out of their rank [Livy]. And lastly, for that, if any cure be, or seem to be wrought by them, which want art, men are therein ready to conceive of a special divine assistance, and helping hand of God.

One special use of a skillful artist, is to discern aright of the variety of circumstances that fall in. Simple men and women have many times the same medicines, or simples, at least, with the most skillful doctors: but wanting art, and skill to temper and apply them, according to the diversity of the estates of patients, and variety of accidents within and without the sick, they either profit not; or hurt one way, what they profit another. To which purpose it was wittily answered of the physician, who having prescribed a medicine to his patient, and thereby cured him; and being asked by him afterwards, why the same medicine, which the same person, falling

into the same disease again, took himself, did not avail him, as before, that the reason was, because he (the physician) gave it him not. Neither is the use greater of the skillful in this consideration, than of the experienced.

Physicians, saith one, and truly, have this advantage above them of other professions, that the sun beholds their cures, and the earth covers their failings [Antoninus]. They that die under their hands, or by their default, are past complaining of them: they that recover and survive, though, sometimes, by the benefit of nature alone, under God's providence, will repute, and report them the means of their recovery. Which consideration makes not the honest, and conscionable the more secure; but the more careful of their account to be given unto God, from whose eyes nothing is covered.

CHAPTER XXXIII: OF AFFLICTIONS

All afflictions are for sin, as the deserving cause: for living man mourneth for the punishment of his sin. Lam. iii.39,40. Whereupon the prophet tells the Jews, that their own wickedness should correct them. Jer. ii.19. Neither doth God punish, but where man sins, saith one. Now to set these two together orderly, is the property of a wise man, Jer. ix.12: and accordingly in our afflictions, to mourn for our sins, which we then rightly do, when out of the clear sight of their odiousness in God's account, we more vehemently desire the pardon of them, than the removing of the bodily punishment: as who having understanding in him, would not rather have the bodily sore healed, than the plaster, though biting, taken from it? And withal, when we acknowledge, that our afflictions are infinitely less, than our sins, which they that do not, neither know God's justice, nor their own demerits as they ought. Neither yet is it sufficient, that in such cases, we confess our sin, and how we have walked contrary unto God, Lev. xxvi.20; but we must withal confess our misery, and that God hath walked contrary unto us, and brought our present afflictions upon us. In confessing our sins we shame ourselves, and declare our naughtiness: but in acknowledging ourselves justly punished for them; we honor God, as a wise, powerful, and just Judge. Josh. vii.19.

Notwithstanding there be always the desert of sin procuring punishment: yet God doth not always principally aim at that; but sometimes, that his power may be seen, as in the man born blind, John iv.1-3: sometimes, for the honor of his holy name, having been blasphemed of his enemies, by the sins of his servants, as it was by David's adultery, and other mischiefs following thereupon: 2 Sam. xii.13,14, sometimes, for man's salvation, as we see in the sufferings of Christ: sometimes, for the confirmation of others, by testimony given to the truth [Melancthon], as in the case of Stephen, whose sufferings, saith one, exhort to the confession thereof [Ignatius]: sometimes, for the trial of our faith, James 1.3, seeing without afflictions neither others know us, nor we ourselves [Seneca], and for the shaming of the devil therein, as in the case of Job: sometimes, to draw men nearer to himself by humiliation, and repentance, which is a general end: sometimes, to wean us from the love of the world, unto which we are too much addicted, notwithstanding all the sorrows which we do find in it; and like foolish travelers, love our way, though troublesome, instead of our country [Gregory Nazianzen]: sometimes, to prevent some sin ready to break out in us; as physicians let blood to prevent sickness: lastly, to make the glory which shall be showed, and whereof our afflictions are not worthy, the more glorious, 2 Cor. xii.7-9; as the sun is, when the clouds are driven away, wherewith, for a time, it hath been darkened [Ibid]. Now, as it were to be wished, that we could always certainly know the Lord's particular ends in afflicting us, as we may gather much ordinarily, by the knowledge of his Word, observation of his dealing towards ourselves, and others, and due examination of our estate, and ways in his sight; so it is most necessary for all his people, ever to hold this general conclusion; that in all their afflictions the justice and mercy of God meet together; and that he begins in justice, and will end in mercy, with them.

God hath, in a peculiar manner, entailed afflictions to the sincere profession of the gospel, above that of the law before Christ. The law was given by Moses, whose ministry began with killing the Egyptian, that oppressed the Israelite; and was prosecuted with leading the people out of Egypt, through the sea, and wilderness, with great might, and a strong hand; and lastly, was finished with bloody victory over Sihon, and Og the kings of Canaan. But Christ's dispensation was all of another kind: his birth mean; his life sorrowful; and his death shameful. And albeit the love of God towards his people be always the same in itself, yet is the manifestation thereof very diverse. Before Christ's coming in the flesh, in whom the grace of God appeared, God showed his love more fully in earthly blessings, and peace; and more sparingly in spiritual, and heavenly: but now, on the other side,

he dealeth forth temporal blessings more sparingly; and spiritual with a fuller hand. It is not improbably gathered, that, after the destruction of the dragon, and beast, and recalling of the Jews after their long divorce from the Lord, the blessings of both kinds shall meet together, and the Church enjoy, for a time, a very graceful state upon earth both in regard of spiritual, and bodily good things.

In the meanwhile, many would fain have their worldly advantage, and the obedience of the gospel to agree together, further than they will. And when they cannot frame the world and their worldly convenience by the gospel; they will fashion the gospel to the world, and to their carnal courses in it. Pity it is, that such men were not of the Lord's council, when he first contrived and preached his gospel; that they might have helped him in some such discreet, and middle course, as might have served the turn both for heaven, and earth. But let the world, in its foolish wisdom, say and do what it will, or can; "the way is narrow, which leads unto life," Matt. vii.13,14: and considering man's naughtiness, it is neither fit, nor hardly possible, that it should be broader. All the afflictions which Christians suffer are not afflictions of Christ: nor all the crosses which they take up, the crosses of Christ. The afflictions of Christ may be set in three ranks. The first, and those most properly so called, are when men for Christ's cause, hate, revile, and persecute us. The second, when we suffer evils, which we might be free from, and escape, if we dared deny in word, or deed any part of Christ's truth. The third, and last sort are, such as befall us in the course of godliness, though human, and as they do all other men; as bodily sickness, death of friends, crosses, and losses by sea, and land, and the like. If we be members of Christ our such afflictions are the afflictions of Christ; else the mercy showed, and good done to such were not done to Christ. But now, if he that in his person is a true Christian, suffer for evil doing, he takes not up the cross of Christ, but of the devil therein; and if he put himself upon needless danger, and difficulties, he takes not up Christ's cross, but his own herein: and so hath his amends in his own hands. Yet may even afflictions so coming, by our true repentance, be sanctified unto us, and we please God in their use, though not in their cause. Both good conscience and wisdom must be used in applying such scriptures, as speak of the afflictions of Christians for well-doing: neither is all that can be said out of every text thereabout, to be applied to all times. For howsoever hardly at any time, or in any place, things go so well, especially in our days, which even they, who are none of the best themselves, will confess, yea complain to be extremely evil, but that truth goes with a scratched face, less, or more; yet the differences of times and state of things must be observed, and put this way. Yea further, though the times in general should be very evil; yet for a person, who himself is well furnished with earthly good things, well fed, and glad, and in outward peace, to dwell much upon the afflictions of Christians, specially with application to the present state of things, is not to hold decorum, but hath an appearance more orator, than preacher-like.

We are never simply to desire crosses, because they are natural evils: nor to abhor from them, because we know they work together with our election, calling, justification, and sanctification, for our good, Rom. viii.30: not as causes thereof, as the forenamed are, for the effects of sin cannot be the causes of righteousness or happiness; nor yet as means properly, as are the word, sacraments, prayer, and examples of good men: but only as occasions capable of sanctification to our use, which sins properly are not, as having no good in them, as such; whereas afflictions have a moral good in them, as they are of God, and by him inflicted. Though to speak of crosses most properly, God sanctifies us to them, in giving us grace to make a right use of them. And considering, how it is both good for us to be afflicted, and that God hath promised, that "no good thing shall be lacking to them that fear him," Psa.xxiv.9; cxix.71; we are thus to make account; that God afflicts us, as he doth, not only in justice for sin, but in faithfulness also; that is, both in mercy, and in truth of promise: and must accordingly confess with the man of God; "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are righteous; and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me," Psa.cxix.75: and so must learn to take our several crosses at God's hands, not only patiently, but thankfully. We have cause to thank ourselves, and our sins, that wholesome things both for body and soul are for the most part bitter and grievous to our nature: and to thank God, that makes afflictions bittersweets, by turning deserved curses into fatherly corrections to us.

It is commonly received for truth, that in all adversity the greatest misery is, sometimes to have been happy [Boethius]. But we must here use a distinction. If we only respect the time in which we are in misery, apart from the former time, we are both more sensible of our present misery, by remembering our former happiness [Keckerman], and also more tender, and delicate, and so less able to bear it. But if we consider our whole life together; then the less time we are afflicted, the less our afflictions are, in that respect, and so must be minded of us. It is not nothing, that God hath given us to pass over some part of our days in peace and with comfort:

neither must be we so unthankful, as to account it no benefit, because it is past: but we must, contrariwise, something quiet ourselves in our present affliction with the remembrance of God's goodness in our former peace; as did our "example of patience," James v.ii, who in the extremity of his present distress said "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Job. ii,10. reason teacheth this, except in a case, when God lifts up a man on high, that he may the more violently throw him down, how much more, faith, which persuades the godly man's heart, that the Lord loves him as well, as much, in his after afflicted estate, as he did before in his prosperous; as the goldsmith esteems his gold as much, though melting in the furnace, as glittering in the shop; and that the same God will both give patience, and strength of faith, according to the trial, and increase of strength if he increase the affliction; as also full deliverance in due time. "He will redeem Israel from all his trouble." Psa. xxv.22.

As even good men perform their whole duty to God, with some corruption mingled among: so God promiseth, and performeth accordingly, the good things of this life, with exception of the cross, and tribulation. If we could amend the one, God would leave out the other. Mark x.30.

The Lord who tried Abraham in his son Isaac, whom he loved; and the rich young man in his riches which he loved, knows well in what vein to strike a man, that the blood may follow. The more we love any earthly thing, we are the more in danger to be crossed in, or about it. Not that God envies our delights, as one man often envies another's: but either because we do, or lest we should surfeit in affections towards it.

Most men are moved too much with their own miseries in this world, melting in them, as wax in the sun, so as they are unapt to hold any impression either of faith, or reason: but are too little moved with other men's calamities, not affording them so much as a compassionate affection. yet may, and doth the contrary extreme of over pitying others also, prevail with some. Against both which it is good to consider, that either we, and they reap spiritual benefit by our afflictions, or no. If the former; that may, and ought to moderate the grief: if not, there is cause of greater grief for after greater afflictions to come upon us and them.

A man may much increase, or lessen a cross by the course, which he suffers his mind to run in it; seeing all crosses have some conveniences joined with them, as all commodities have some discommodities. If a man set his thought a work upon the inconveniences, and discommodities alone, which are in it, he shall heap sorrow upon sorrow. But if, on the contrary, he draw into consideration such conveniences, as usually fall in with their contraries; he shall always find some matter of ease: and sometimes, that "meat comes out of the eater," Judges xiv.14, and that, which at first seemed a cross, is rather a benefit. It is a most dangerous thing for any to deem his afflictions extraordinary; lest by so doing, he prejudice himself against ordinary comforts, which we should with readiness and thankfulness embrace, and not look for angels from heaven to comfort us, or for manna from heaven to feed us.

CHAPTER XXXIV: OF INJURIES

An injury, say the lawyers, is whatever is not done justly [Pacius]. In one and the same act may be found both sin against God, and injury against man. And therefore in cases of wrong done either by violence or deceit, the offender, under the law, was bound both to make restitution to the wronged, and also to bring his trespass offering to the priest, to make an atonement for him before the Lord. Lev. vi.5-7. Sometimes, the sin is taken away, and the injury remains; as when the person which hath wronged another, truly repents, but is not able to make satisfaction. Sometimes, on the other side, the injury is taken away, and the sin remains; viz. when the offender makes satisfaction by compulsion, or for shame, but repents not before God. Sometimes, both are taken away, and sometimes, neither; as both or neither satisfaction to men, and repentance towards God is performed.

Between the injuring and offending of a man there is this difference; that we may injure him that is altogether ignorant of it, but can offend only him that takes knowledge of some evil in truth, or appearance, done by us, whether with injury, or not.

The more power any hath to do hurt, without worldly prejudice to himself therein, the more careful had he need be, that he take not to himself any lawless liberty that way; remembering always that he hath also a "Master in heaven," Col. iv.1; and that "He who is higher than the highest regardeth," Eccl. v.8; who also may with more right and reason destroy him for ever, than he, how great soever, do the least hurt to the silliest worm, that crawls upon the face of the earth.

They, who use injurious dealings themselves, hate them in others and them that offer them [Seneca]; as do they also who take knowledge of them. For whom men fear, they hate. Now there is cause for all to fear him, to his power, that hurts any; seeing in wronging one, he threatens all that he hath power to hurt. Yet, if we will look upon things a little spiritually, such persons are more to be pitied, than either hated or feared; as being, though cruel to others, yet more to themselves, hurting others in their bodies, and bodily states; themselves in their hearts [Austin], and consciences before the Lord, which is far the greatest damage. and upon this ground it was, that the ancient father desired Scapula, that he would pity himself, if he would not pity the Christians, whom he cruelly persecuted, seeing the most hurt came to himself thereby [Tertullian]. When, therefore, we thus suffer any heinous injuries of any kind by any, we must pray the Lord both to deliver us out of their hands, and them out of the devil's, whose instruments they are, in so doing.

For any one man, whosoever, to offer injury to any other whomsoever, is unnatural and inhuman, but especially odious in these four sorts of persons : The first is magistrates, and men in authority, whom god hath, therefore, furnished therewith, that they might prevent, and redress injuries by others, and "execute wrath upon evil doers," Rom. xiii.4: which if they become themselves, they transform the image of the Lord's power and justice, which they sustain, into the image of God's enemy, Satan, whom, therein, they resemble; and become, after a sort, wickednesses in high places, as the devils re. The second, are friends, whose office it is by help, counsel, riches, or otherwise, to succor their wronged friends [Terence]; and if no other way, at least, by condoling with them, and comforting them. A man that hath friends should show himself friendly, saith the wise man, Prov. xviii.24, and for such an one to show himself enemy like, is very grievous; as we may see in Job's and David's case. Now, if it be here demanded, whether the injuries offered by friends, or by others, be less tolerable, answer must be made with distinction; that some injuries are such, and so notorious, as cannot stand with a true friendly heart, but do plainly discover an evil, and enimious affection: and of these, by false friends David, and worthily, complains, as more grievous than by strangers, Psa. lv.12-14. Some again, are such, as may escape him that truly loveth, through negligence, rashness, or other infirmity. Such the heat of love should digest. And they, who, in this kind will bear more at the hands of others, than of friends, are unworthy of them. A third sort are men religious, whose professed piety towards God promiseth honest dealing with men; as on the contrary Abraham looked for all injurious dealing in that place, where the fear of God was not. Gen. xx.11. The fourth, and last, are men themselves oppressed by others, specially lying under the injuries of the times. When one poor man oppresseth another, "it is like a sweeping rain, which leaveth no food." Prov. xxviii.3. Yet it is found, by certain experience, that it oft rains from his coast, and that the poor by oppressing one another, teach the rich to oppress both; and this, not only in bodily things, but in spiritual also: none being found more injurious, and unmerciful, than are some, out of the favors of the times themselves, to others, that are a little more in their disgrace than they. None of the heathens were so cruelly bent against the Christians as the Jews, though themselves but scattered amongst the heathens, to be tolerated by them. Such should think of the brethren of Joseph, who being themselves in danger to be violently oppressed, remembered, and bewailed the violence and wrong which they had formerly offered to their brother Joseph. Gen. xlii.9.

There are two things causing inordinate stirring and indignation at injuries offered : the one natural, the other moral. the natural is the abundance of hot choler boiling in their veins, by which the blood and spirits are attenuated, and so apt to be inordinately stirred, and inflamed, upon apprehension of a wrong done. this cause may something be helped, by natural means and medicines; and the effect, by true wisdom and government, which represseth all inordinate motions in the mind. the moral cause is pride and self-love : for men having themselves in high estimation, make account, that if they be a little wronged, some great and heinous offense is committed, and that, at which there is just cause of high indignation. The injury to such, seems great, because they seem great to themselves : whereas to him that is little and lowly in his own eyes, injuries and wrongs seem less; specially, if he set this low price and valuation upon himself, in conscience of his sins against God, as it was with David. 2 Sam. xvi.10,22. What strange things is it, if an earthen pot get a crack? or if a silly worm be trodden upon? or that he, who is little, be little set by?

It is wisdom, in cases, not to seem to take knowledge of an injury: as, either, when it is small, and scarce worthy the minding; and such the stately gravity of some persons make many to be, which to others seem intolerable; witness Cato, who being asked pardon of him that had given him a bob on the mouth, answered, that there was no injury done, and so no pardon needful [Seneca]; or when the greatness, and malice withal, of the injurious is such, as that to expostulate a wrong is to provoke to the doubling of it; to which purpose his answer fitted well,

that said, "he had grown old in a tyrant's court, by thanking men, when he had receives an injury from them." Sometimes, again, it is wisdom to let persons know, that we account ourselves ill used by them, and that chiefly, when our expostulation is like to prove their warning, by working either fear or shame in them.

If the commendation given of Caesar had not been by him, who was too good a courtier, that he was wont to forget nothing but injuries [Cicero]; he, though a pagan, might therein have been a mirror to all Christians; considering the mischievousness of our corrupt nature this way, which is apter to remember a wrong done, than anything else, specially than a benefit; because, as one saith, we account thanks a burden and revenge an ease [Tacitus]. In regard whereof it was not without cause, that Christ our Lord in our directory of prayer, which we must daily use, reenforceth nothing but the condition of the fifth petition: "as we forgive them that trespass against us;" the petition, being, "forgive us our trespasses;" adding therein, that "if we forgive not them, that trespass against us, neither will our heavenly Father forgive us." Matt. vi.12. And this exhortation, saith one, if we be not more hard than iron and steel, cannot but soften us, and make us appeasable, and ready to remit offenses [Calvin], considering how many, and great our offenses are against the Lord; for which he both so justly might, and so easily could, take revengement upon us. And since vengeance is the Lord's, and that he will repay, Rom. xii.19, we must beware we take it not further into our hands, than God gives it us : lest meddling with edged-tools, in God's shop, we surely cut ourselves deep, howsoever they escape, against whom we use them. And, besides, the conscience of offending god by revenge, in wish, word, or deed, we may take instances of inducement to forgiveness, from circumstances of all the persons that injure us. If it be a meaner person than ourselves that wrong us, let us forgive him, in pity of his weakness: if our superior, let us pity, and forgive ourselves [Seneca] : the former in charity; the latter in wisdom. Is he a malicious and unmerited enemy? Why should we marvel, if he do his kind? have we hurt him before? he but gives us our due, and why should we not take it at his hands? Is he a good man? let us be ready to forgive him, whom God forgives. Is he wicked? alas! we may well forgive him, considering how fearful vengeance, if he repent not, God will take on him for that and other his sins.

Many, who think it devilish, as indeed it is, to offer an injury, think it but manly to requite it. But it is, saith one, evil as well to requite, as to offer; since god forbids both [Lactantius]. And there is, saith another, only this difference between them, that he who offers the injury, is before in mischief, and he that requites it, comes after therein, as fast as he can [Tertullian]. With which two join a third witness, saying, that to render evil for evil, is to make two devils for one [Calvin].

Not to be revenged for an injury done is not always to forgive it. For this may be through want of power, or of courage, or in a kind of haughtiness of mind, when a man esteems himself above the wrong done, or scorns to soil his fingers with his adversary. Neither yet is it sufficient, though it be a great thing that we wish him no hurt who hath wronged us; but we ought, further, also to keep our hearts, that they rejoyce not at his fall, or stumbling, by any other means, lest the Lord see, and it displease Him, and he turn his wrath from him, upon us. Prov. xxiv.18. All the other ways we may be accessory before; this way, after the fact. Notwithstanding, we may, and have cause to be glad, if the injurious and oppressors be restrained by some work of God's overruling providence, that the fox being chained up may no more worry the lambs; but this is not to rejoyce for his hurt but for his good. Lastly, as god forgives injuries against him, which all sins are, if for the same he hate not the person so sinning, though he both be angry at him, and correct him, and therein provide for the repairing of the honor of his majesty impeached by him: so many men forgive injuries done against them, 2 Sam. xii.13, in spiritual sense, and holy manner; if therefore they hate not, nor wish hurt to the person that hath wronged them; though in cases, they provide for his due correction, and also for the repairing the damage sustained by him in their body, goods, or good name, by lawful means.

CHAPTER XXXV: OF PATIENCE

It is our sinful condition that makes us subject to crosses, our human, that makes us sensible of them; without which sense of them we were no more patient in bearing them, than the stone is patient, upon which the weight of the wall lieth. But in the bearing of such evils as are brought upon us, or befall us, with equanimity and moderation, true patience is seen [Lactantius]. The grace itself must be in us, even without crosses, and we by it in heart martyrs, without fire, or sword [Gregory] : but so cannot the use of it be; no more than there is use of a salve, where there is no sore. And thereupon the apostle saith that, "affliction worketh patience," Rom. v.3, that

is, occasions that exercise and increase of it. And hence it is, that men are most deceived in the measure of this grace, and esteem their inches, ells, till by trial of evils, they find the contrary. But patience tried by afflictions, and found firm and good, gives, above other graces, experimental assurance of God's love. Whereupon the apostle, in the place forenamed, gives it alone the honor of working experience; and no marvel, seeing by it God gives a poor and feeble creature such experience of his powerful grace and goodness, for the bearing and bearing out of those crosses and miseries, both inward and outward; which, without this staff of supportance, were intolerable. Neither is the work of God's goodness lost in them, to whom he imparts this grace; seeing by it, if by any other, they show forth the virtues of God, and honor him in so many of his attributes, in the exercising of it. As first, of his will, both commanding, and approving it: as Christ tells the church and angel at Ephesus: "I know thy works, and labor, and patience." Rev. ii.1. Secondly, of his justice, as acknowledging really, that all the afflictions, which they suffer, are less, without comparison, than their sins deserve. Thirdly, of his power, and that both over them, with which they struggle not, but making a virtue of necessity, quietly bear what he lays upon them [Chrysostom]; and also in them, in sustaining them, that they faint not under their burden. Fourthly, of his wisdom, in effectual acknowledgment, that he hath his good and holy ends of his so dealing with them, though oftentimes not so particularly known to them. Lastly, of his goodness, in dealing with them in their chastisements, as with sons, for their profit, and that they might be partakers of his holiness, Heb. xii.10: without which last, all the rest, how honorable soever to God, are uncomfortable unto man. Upon this goodness of God, we do in our afflictions specially exercise the two main graces of faith and hope. Faith, persuading our hearts, that God loves us as well in our greatest afflictions, as out of them, and will do us nothing but good by them, is as the foundation for this bulwark of patience. Hope assureth us of happy issue out of them all; which, if we wanted, what would it avail us though we had the strength of men and angels to bear miseries?

Some Christians have said, that patience is a miserable remedy. But how much better said the heathen Bias, that he only is miserable that wants patience, for the bearing of his misfortunes [Laertius]; as indeed, he is in a miserable case, considering unto how many calamities all mortal men are subject; against which they can neither promise themselves beforehand, nor find in time, other sufficient remedy, than this of patience; which is a salve for all sores [Seneca]: and the same also so approved, that though it make not miseries cease to be miseries, yet it keeps the person that hath it, and suffers them, from being miserable. Yea, as deadly poisons may be, and are so mixed, and tempered, as they become, in cases, more wholesome, than meat; so do calamities, deadly in themselves, tempered with patience become better than their contrary delights. Sickness, with this, is better than health without it; and poverty so tempered, than riches otherwise: and so all the works of God's justice, unto which the faithful are liable, are better to them, than any work of his mercy to others. Lastly, so absolutely necessary is this grace, and the use of it, for all Christians, as that the apostle tells the believing Hebrews, and other believers in them, that "they had need of patience, that having done the will of God, they might receive the promise," Heb. x.36: with which accords another's exhortation, that patience may have its perfect work in the saints, that they may be perfect, and entire, lacking nothing, James i.4. A man would think in reason, that he who hath done the will of God, and been careful in all things to keep a good conscience towards God, and men, should have nothing lacking, for the receiving of the promised reward. But the wisdom of God tells us, that we must first do our duty in all things; and then afterwards, suffer evil with patience, before we receive the reward promised. In which our patient suffering for, or in the way of righteousness, we please God more, if it may be, than in our former well-doing; as Christ our Lord performed the greatest work of his obedience unto his Father, and of our redemption therein, by his innocent, and patient suffering of death. Of all manner of crosses none are so hard to bear by God's servants, without despair, as those, wherein the Lord seems, to their sense and reason, to be their enemy, by reason of some strange and unusual working against them; as we have Job for an example, Job. xix.6-13. Nor any so hardly borne by them, without inordinate stirring, and spurning again, as those, in which a man must be a mere patience, using, as they call it, that passive patience; and may, or can say, or do nothing in defending himself, or offending an adversary. A blow, or wound received in fight, or action, is scarce perceived: but if a man must sit still, and suffer himself to be bobbed on the mouth; or, as the Prophet saith, must "give his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that pluck off the hair," Isa. 1.6 or must be cooped up alone in a dungeon, or prison, where none may come at him, this goes near him, and tries his patience, and how he hath hearkened to "the Lord god, the Holy One of Israel, saying, In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." Isa. xxx.15. Where

men's injuries are joined, and concur with God's providence in a cross, there the flesh and fleshly passions take more liberty. I have known some, who have attained to a good measure of patient bearing of calamities and crosses by other ordinary hand of God's providence; and yet have been most impatient of any prejudice, or damage by men's injurious dealing. and this may seem not to want reason. To be stirred against God for a cross, is devilish; against unreasonable creatures, brutish; but hath a show of manliness, for a man to be stirred against a man that injures him. But, be the show what it will, the truth of the ground for the most part is, that pride causeth this swelling of the heart against him, who is deemed to injure us, specially if we conceive it to be out of contempt; whereof all men are impatient. Against the pang of impatience this way, it is best we labor, not to overvalue ourselves; nor easily to think that others despise us; and, as we have Job for a pattern of patience, so to follow his steps, who, looking through the violence and wrong of men, the Sabeans and Chaldeans, beheld, by the eye of faith, which sees afar off, God's providence, as the soul of the worlds body, and ruling all things in it; and thence took instruction for quiet and patient submission unto the Lord; seeing, and saying in all the outrageous practices against him by the devil, and wicked men; that God who had given, had taken away. Job. i.21.

CHAPTER XXXVI: OF PEACE

The Hebrews by comprehending under the name of peace, all, both safety and prosperity, whether bodily, or spiritual, do show therein how both pleasant and profitable a thing peace is, for all persons and societies. And though to strive, content, yea, and wage war also, be in cases, and at times, not only lawful, but also necessary; yet are they never so much as tolerable for themselves, but only for peace, as the lancing of the wound is for the curing of it.

From "peace with God, through the forgiveness of sins, by faith," Rom. v.1, and a good conscience, ariseth peace with a man's self; with the angels; with all men, after a sort, yea with all creatures in the world. Such a one is "in league with the stones of the field, and at peace with the beasts of the field," saith Eliphaz. Job. v.23. Yea "his very enemies," saith the wise man, "are at peace with him." Prov. xvi.7. I add, that though he be burnt in the fire, drowned in the water, or otherwise killed, yet that fire, water, and other instrument of his bodily destruction, and therewith, all other creatures, are in a kind of secret league with him, and do even in killing him bodily, work for his spiritual and eternal good. Rom. viii.28. And if they which are at peace with a king have his subjects at peace with them; how much more shall God's servants, and people, have all the creatures in heaven and earth at peace with them, for their true good, by the favor of him their absolute King and Lord.

God, to show how peaceable man should be, hath denied him such instruments of offense, and natural weapons, as many other creatures are furnished withal; of which some have horns, some hoofs, some paws, some tusks, some talons: but, alas, how hath sin armed man with hatred and malice; and they with weapons of violence and destruction! so as more men are destroyed by men, than by all other creatures.

When the Lord would show himself to Elijah, he did it not in the great and strong wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire; but "in the still small voice, which came after them" I Kings xix.1-13. And when he would have a temple built to dwell in, he would not have David build it, because his hands were full of blood, though of God's enemies, but Solomon the king of peace. 2 Sam. vii.5-13. In the building of which, there was "neither hammer, nor ax, nor tool of iron heard in the house." I Kings vi.7. As the spirit of man doth not quicken any member of the body, but as it is united to it; so neither doth the Spirit of God any member of the Church, but being united in the bond of peace [Austin].

God would have Christians, if it be possible, and "as much as in them lieth, to have peace with all men." Rom. xii.1.8. But in some cases, and specially, where this cannot be done without sin, on their part; it lieth not in them to have peace, but in the other, which would put upon them the necessity of sinning. And in such a case, they must rather want peace with men, which is a cross, than with God, which is a greater cross, and a sin also. The apostle that bids follow peace with all men, adds in the same place, "and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. xii.14. Such may be the case, as a man may see God without peace with men, because it may be their fault, and not his; so can he not possibly without holiness, of which no man fails but by his own fault and sin. the contention which makes us nearer God is better than the peace that separates us from him [Gregory Nazianzen].

They are not most unpeaceable always, who dissent most from others, whether in opinion, or practice: but they

who either affect differences, or carry them turbulently, whether small, or great, when they fall in. A fierce horse may be so whistled, or yoked, as he may draw in the same wagon, quietly with others, either gentle, or headstrong; so may a violent and turbulent person go on in the same course quietly a long time, because it pleases him, or because he is strongly yoked, though without all true love of, or earnest pursuit after, peace. But the Lord would have us not only to be held in peace by others, and to hold peace with others, when we have it, and to embrace it when it is offered; "but to pursue and follow after it," Psa. xxxiv.14, even when it seems to fly from us [Calvin]. Many cry aloud for peace, and against peace-breakers: and can speak very glorious things in commendation of so profitable and pleasant a good, whereby to persuade others to it. But what is this peace, unto which not a few of those good orators so earnestly and eloquently persuade? Surely, too often nothing else but either a cursed consent in evil, or servile subjection to their, or their master's wills and lusts, without regard either of equity or reason. They would willingly have peace; that is, they would do what they list, and have others do the same their lists also, how unreasonable soever. But this, saith one, is not to follow peace, but to command it [Hugo Grotius]. The devil himself would have such peace, and hath with his; "when the strong man armed keeps his house, all things that he hath are in peace," Luke xi.21; and upon condition that he might rule in and over them after his wicked will. But to follow after peace aright is clean another, and the same an excellent thing; requiring at the least these three particular virtues. First, a truly affectioned heart unto it, in conscience of God, and love to men, out of a due valuation of its excellency; as Elisha loving and reverencing his master Elijah, would follow after him, and not leave him. The second is, to deal justly, and equally with all men, without wronging any. It is double injury to beat men causelessly till they cry, and then to beat them for crying. Thus many breed strife by injury and oppression, and then cry out against it; as Athaliah cried out of treason. There are two friends, saith the father, "righteousness and peace," Psa. lxxv.10; he that will have the one, must do the other. All would have peace; but all will not do righteousness. But he that puts the one away, and loves not the friend of peace; peace loves not him, nor will come at him [Austin]. A third thing, is forbearance of others, what may be, though in our own wrong. For considering how ready all sort of men are to wrong one another, and withal how apt to think themselves wronged, when they are not, yea oftentimes, when they themselves do the wrong: except we mingle with the former two, such moderation and Christian forbearance, as to bear, and tolerate for peace sake, persons and things not intolerable, we follow strife in effect; whatsoever we either pretend, or intend otherwise. 1 Cor. vi.1-8; Eph. iv.31.

It is ill when good men have not peace and unity amongst themselves; and as ill, yea worse, when there is peace amongst wicked and godless persons [Austin]; seeing, thereby, their strength in evil is increased. It is better the work of God go on weakly, as it doth, when peace among the good is wanting; than the devil's work strongly, as it doth, in the conspiracy of wicked men. Psa. xxxviii.12. It is therefore a special work of God's good and powerful providence to cast a bone amongst such, and to set them one against another, that a "fire may come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem: and from the men off Shechem, and devour Abimelech," Judges iv.20: by which God makes one of them the other's executioner in his just judgment; and therewith provides many times for the peace of his people, whose utter ruin, otherwise, their accord in evil and violence against them would endanger.

CHAPTER XXXVII: OF SOCIETY AND FRIENDSHIP

God hath made man a sociable creature; and hath not only ordained several societies, in which persons are to unite themselves for their mutual welfare; but withal so dispensed his blessings, as that no man is so barren, but hath something wherewith to profit others: nor any so furnished, but hat he stands need of others to supply his wants. "The head cannot say to the foot," much less the foot to the head, "I have no need of thee." 1 Cor. xii.15-17. And the less need thou, by reason of thine abundance of bodily or spiritual endowments, hast of others, the more need they have of thee and thy plenty. To which purpose tended his saying, who having many servants, some better, and some worse, and being moved by one to disburden himself of such as were unprofitable, and to keep the rest, answered; that he stood need of the better; and the worse, of him. "The king himself is served by the field," Eccl. v.9; and stands need of the husbandman, and so doth he of many, of far meaner condition. Some wrong human societies by being too divine; many more, and much more, by being too bestial. By the former I understand such as, in the profession of devotion towards God, swallow up and dissolve such natural and civil bonds, as wherein God hath tied them unto men, by choosing solitary and monastical lives. all

Christians ought to "have their conversation in heaven," Phil. iii.20, and "to use this world, as though they used it not," 1 Cor. vii.31; and herein such as are called to the holy ministry, ought to be ensamples to others, and to go before them; but not to hide themselves in holes from them, as melancholic monks do. So for others; the lesser helps and provocations of grace they can have from them, with whom they are occasioned to converse, they are to be the more frequent with God in the personal exercises of piety : but so as they take heed that they wrong not father and mother by their Corban: nor make a special calling of the common works of all Christians. Others are grown more out of kind, who take greater delight in the following, and fellowship of horses and hawks and dogs, than in men's company. Such have drunk deep of the cup of Circe, by which she is said to have transformed men into beasts. That which was Nebuchadnezzar's punishment, they make their chief pleasure.

As God hath established fellowships and communities of men to procure their mutual good, and to fence them the better, on every side, against evil; so sin and wickedness being the greatest and only absolute evil, Christians are most bound by virtue of their association, to help, and assist, within the bounds of the callings in which God hath set them, their brethren, and associates against it: according to that of the philosopher; he that bears with the vices of his friend makes them his own [Seneca]. Hence all Israel was punished, and is said to have sinned, for not preventing, or reforming one Achan's transgression. Josh. vii.1, &c. The sin of another, how near soever unto me, cannot defile me, because he doth it; for then that which neither goes into a man, nor comes out of him might defile him: but when either I do something for the furthering of it, which I should not do; or neglect something which I should perform in my place for the preventing or reforming of it, by these means I become accessory either before, or after the fact; and not otherwise.

Although it is to be desired, and that, unto which we are bound, as humanity, and our special places and occasions will permit, that we converse only with such as either may make us better, which is wisdom; or which we are like to make better, which is charity : yet will a good and wise man make good use of all companies. Amongst the good he will learn to love goodness the more; amongst the evil, and most amongst the worst, the more to hate evil. But yet, notwithstanding, there is a difference. In evil company we see what to avoid, which is good: but in good, what to follow, which is better. Besides, there is danger, if, of no worse thing, lest the edge of our zeal against evil should be taken off, if we be occasioned continually to be grating against it. The Spirit of grace and goodness had need to be strong in him, that is not tired with continual strugglings and strivings with the malice of others. He that, at the first, with "righteous Lot vexeth his righteous soul daily with the wicked deeds of them with whom he liveth," 2 Pet. ii.7, yet will, in time, be in danger to be vexed daily, less and less, with them, as things growing by custom more familiar to him. Also there is a second danger, lest living amongst fools, or wicked persons, we content ourselves with the little model of goodness or wisdom which we have; because we are somebody in comparison of them, as he that hath but half an eye, is a king amongst them that are blind: whereas amongst the wise and good, we have still matter of imitation, and provocation to aspire unto greater perfection in goodness. I conclude with that of the father : If men good and bad be joined together in special bond of society, they either quickly part, or usually become alike. Friendship either takes, or makes men alike [Chrysostom].

Much acquaintance shows either great employment in the world, which puts men necessarily upon the acquaintance of many; or great ability and endowments, which draw the acquaintance of many to a man, for their benefit; or an ambitious heart, which seeks to be known and acknowledged by many; or an idle head, that hath little else to do, but to occupy itself in seeking or getting friends.

As many who, if they walked alone, would, by reason of their richer apparel, be thought men of better estate than they are; and others meaner than they are, by reason of their russet coat; who yet both are discerned of what condition and rank they be, by their companions and comforts: so the virtuous, or virtuous dispositions of men, are much discovered by the company which they affect, and with which they sort with most gladness and content: for like will to like, whether good or evil.

There is a difference between love, good-will, and friendship [Danaeus]. We may love other things besides men: bear goodwill to the persons that know us not: but we have friendship only with men, and that with mutual consent, arising from mutual love, and good-will, for our mutual good. Now, though divers other contracts be more strait in several relations, yet is there in this of friendship a kind of inwardness, arising from conformity of judgment, and affections, the conjunction of the mind being the nearest kindred [Seneca], by which persons are more straitly tied together than any other way. "There is a friend," saith Solomon, "that sticketh closer than a

brother," Prov. xviii.24: and Moses, passing from brother to child, and from child to wife, placeth her as near as the man's bosom; but a friend nearer, as reckoning him as his own soul. Deut. xiii.6. Such a friend Jonathan was, whose love to David "passed the love of women." 2 Sam. i.26. Him whom we are to take so near unto us, so constantly to keep, and so freely to communicate withal, we must not lightly make choice of; nor as the manner of many is, by meeting together at a feast; or playing a game at bowls, or tables; or lodging in one inn [Plutarch]: but either after long experience, and having, as the proverb is, "eaten a bushel of salt together," or upon some singular and extraordinary motive, or trial. And as Christ "committed not himself to the Jews, because he knew their hearts," John ii.14; so neither are we easily to commit ourselves to men, because we know not their hearts. We are wisely to judge before, but freely to credit after, the knot of friendship is tied: yet so as we try the wisdom, secrecy, and faithfulness of our friends in smaller matters, before we trust them in greater [Seneca]' as men use to try, whether their vessels will hold water, or no, before they put wine in to them [Plutarch]. And, albeit, that Christian love, "which is the bond of perfection, and first fruits of the Spirit," Col. iii.14, be due to all Christians from all; yet are not all fit friends for all, of that fellowship. Gal. v.12. David, notwithstanding the many worthies in his kingdom, had specially "Hushai, the king's friend," 1 Chron. xxvii.33: and so had our Lord, whilst he lived upon earth, specially John, among all the twelve, "the disciple whom he loved." John xiii.23. This special affection to one above the rest in Christ, was holy, yet human.

Many complain of the perfidiousness of friends, and how vilely they have been used by them, whom they have trusted; and not without cause; it being as vile, as common, to deceive him, whom we could not have deceived, if he had not trusted us [Seneca]. But if all things be rightly weighed, the most have most cause to complain of themselves, for making no better choice. He is but rightly served, in all men's judgments, that hath his broth running out, which he puts into a riven dish. And first, "God is love," 1 John iv.16; and no marvel then, if there be no firmness in that love, which is not founded in God, and goodness. As, on the other side, if a man be deceived by such a friend as he trusts, upon the show of pity and goodness which he makes; he hath comfort with God, unto whom he had respect in trusting him. Men that trust others upon the testimony and commendation of any, and are deceived by them, use to complain to them, for whose cause they trusted them. He that looks, in his league of friendship, to the appearance of godliness and virtue which the other makes, takes his friend, after a sort, upon God's word and testimony' and if he happen to be deceived by him, may complain, and moan himself to God' as David complained of Ahithophel, the traitor, "with whom he had taken sweet counsel, and walked into the house of God, as a friend." Psa. lv.14. But, on the contrary, he that leagues himself with a vain and godless person, especially with respect and liking to any vanity, or lewd quality in him; if he be deceived by him afterwards, as like enough he will be, may go to the devil to complain, upon whose word, in effect, he took him.

Some do discover their pride and ambition by affecting acquaintance and society with their superiors, thereby, either to become, or to seem greater than they are. So do others not a little, if not more, betray their pride, by affected sorting with much meaner persons than them selves, that they may have honor, and respect from them, and domineer amongst them; which, in truth, though under an appearance of humility, shows the prouder mind. It was swelling pride in Caesar, that he rather desired to be the first in the least village of Italy, than the second in Rome itself.

He that will thoroughly reform, and correct his faults, had need either of singular circumspection, and jealousy over himself, and his ways, for the finding out of his own failings; or of faithful friends who will seriously admonish him; in which duty, Christian friendship is specially differenced from all other; or else of bitter enemies, who will not spare, nor fail to cast his faults in his teeth, that so he may make a medicine of their malice, as physicians make treacle of venomous serpents. And as Jason had his imposthume opened, and so healed by his enemy's sword, in the wars [Plutarch], which his friends the physicians could not cure; so we receive sometimes, that good by our enemies' reproaches, which our friends either cannot, or will not afford us, by their loving and faithful advertisements. A wise man makes better use of his enemies, than a fool of his friends.

To him that knows the use of true friendship, no earthly thing is more delightful, than the sweet society of wise, and honest friends, whether for recreation after study, or labor; or communication in a prosperous state; or comfort in an afflicted. He that so esteems not this benefit, is unworthy of it. Yet, for myself, though I have ever thus valued truly loving friends; notwithstanding, considering unto how many dangers and calamities mine afflicted state hath been exposed, I have counted it a benefit, that I have not had many such, as were in danger

to take excessive sorrow for my misery that hath, or could befall me.

Some friends, in this respect, have a very ill and unfriendly fashion. If any good come to them, they conceal it from their friends; if any hurt, they hasten to fill their ears with that, to the utmost. Such are more perversely childish than children. For as they will straight complain to their mothers, of any hurt that befalls them; so, on the other side, if any good come to them, though it be but an apple or nut, they will as readily run and acquaint them with it also. Such persons are commonly lovers of themselves, envious and unthankful. We, on the contrary, should rather hasten, and desire to manifest to our friends matter of gladness, when good befalls us, than of sorrow, in our crosses: and show, therein, both our love towards them, in procuring their rejoicing with us, and also our wisdom, and strength of faith, and patience, in the silent swallowing of our sorrows, without grieving our friends more than needs must. So we read of "the woman, that had lost her piece; she lighted the candle, swept the house, and sought it diligently;" and all this she did alone: but "when she had found it," then "she called in her friends and neighbors to rejoice with her." Luke xv.8. It is best mourning alone, and best rejoicing with company.

Some friends are rather to be used than trusted; namely, such as are more able, than entire, or free-hearted. Some again are rather to be trusted, than used, save in case of necessity, and then also sparingly; and those are such, as whose truly loving affections exceed their ability. and in these considerations, the proverb oftentimes fitteth: "Rich men's purses, and poor men's hearts."

Wealth maketh many friends, and poverty trieth them; as the wind shows which clouds have rain in them, and which not. And so, though the rich have the more friends, yet the poor's better appear to be faithful, in giving testimony that they love their friends for God, and the persons themselves: which to know is not a small privilege, that poor men have above others, who can hardly discern whether their persons or riches be loved [Gregory]. "A friend," saith the wise man, "loveth at all times: and a brother is born for adversity." Prov. xvii.17. He saith not, a friend is born for prosperity, though it be one end of friendship, that we might have with whom to communicate, and rejoice in a prosperous state of things; but for adversity, this being the more principal end, specially in our sinful and sorrowful state, for which God hath linked men together in all societies; which the wiser sort of the heathen have seen by the dim light of nature, and that it appertains, specially, to the office of a true friend to ease his friend's grief by speech, to afford him counsel in doubtful cases, to drive away sadness by his cheerfulness, and to refresh him with his very presence [Seneca].

And for such persons in societies, as, in effect, make account, that they are only for other men's prosperity, and not for their afflicted state; and that others are for their help and benefit, and they, for their own: these are the very moths and caterpillars of family, church, and commonwealth; and so far from deserving the fellowship of men, as they are scarce worthy of the flocks, and herds of beasts: of which, divers are helpful to their fellow, as they are able, and the other need.

As none can sin against the Holy Ghost, and irremissibly, but they, whom God hath received into some degree of fellowship with him, at least, in the knowledge of the truth: so there is no so great enmity amongst any others, as amongst them, who of friends become enemies. "A brother offended is harder to be won, than a strong city," Prov. xviii.19: and such contentions are like the bars of a castle. A twine thread, if it be broken, is more easily knit together than a cable [Cartwright]. And the hard adamant, if it happen to be beaten in pieces with the hammer, flies into such small dust, as is scarce discernible [Pliny]. And no marvel, if, where men look for love, and kindness, they find, in truth or supposition, the contrary, and that which agrees not with a friendly affection; that there they conceive most indignation, and greatest matter of alienation. It is therefore requisite, that "a friend show himself friendly," Prov. xviii.24, for the preserving inviolated that bond of amity with his friend; and avoid all make-bates [Promoters, or occasions of quarrels], persons or things. And of this sort, not only greater unkindnesses use to be, but even smaller also, if they be frequent: as men consume their states, many times, by small, if daily, losses, and misspendings. and if it so come to pass, that our friends become, or appear so ill, as that in their friendship there is more hurt, or danger, than in their hatred [Isidorus], it is yet better we untwine, than break the cord of former friendship [Cicero]: save where some extraordinary unworthiness suddenly breaks out, and which urgeth present renunciation. Lastly, when we are necessarily pressed either to the one or other, let us rather do it with sorrow than anger: and withal, have in us a disposition to reassume our old course of kindness, if there appear cause afterwards; as the storks, when the winter is over, do affect their former nests [Pliny].

CHAPTER XXXVIII: OF CREDIT AND GOOD NAME

Credit and good name, with men, so follow virtue, and good deserts, like the shadow the body, as it remains notwithstanding God's good gift, sundry ways. First, in bestowing upon men virtue and goodness to deserve it; for which also the gifts of God are to be the more welcome [Austin]. Secondly, in guiding them to manifest, and improve their endowments to the advantage of their good name, not as stage-players, but as good stewards of the gift of God that way. Thirdly, by moving the hearts of other men to have them in due respect and estimation: to which purpose it is said of Joseph, and others, though of most singular desert in regard of men, that "God gave them favor in their eyes." Gen. xxxix.4.

Many, rather desire a great name, than a good; and, therefore, rather enterprise great, than good matters. Some, matters greatly great; as they "in the East, who to get them a name, would build a tower, whose top should reach heaven." Gen. vi.4. Such also was the level of the huge and high pyramids built by the Egyptian kings. Some, things greatly strange, though mean, as Parmeno in his artificial imitation of the grunting of a sow [Plutarch]. Some, greatly dangerous; as those Funambuli [Rope-dangers], who rather will venture their necks, than want a name. Some again, things, if not otherwise, yet greatly odious; as Herostratus, in burning the temple of Diana, in Ephesus, with wild fire. And so Pilate is famous for crucifying Christ; and Judas for betraying him: so is Jeroboam known by this brand, "he that made Israel to sin." But a great name so got, and left to posterity, is like to the great stink of a lamp or candle, when it is gone out: whereas "the memorial of the righteous is blessed," Prov. x7; and like "the smell of the costly ointment of spikenard, wherewith Mary anointed our Lord's feet: the sweet scent whereof filled the whole house." John xii.3. And this good name of the godly, and virtuous, living amongst good men upon earth, when they are dead, is a kind of pledge of their souls living for ever with God in heaven. This none neglect, but they, who mean to do nothing to deserve it; nor despise, but with endangering their own hardening in evil, both against the fear of God, and shame of the world.

This "good name is rather to be chosen than great riches," Prov. xxii.1, saith he, who could well discern what was best. Which shows, both that he, who impairs another's credit by slander is worse than a thief, and steals a more precious thing; as also that he, who seeks, and gets it to himself undeservedly, is as well to answer to God for his undeserved credit with men, as is a thief for his stolen goods.

This credit, and good name we may desire, as a good, pleasing, natural thing, and for our more comfortable living amongst men: and so David prayed sundry times in one Psalm, that God would "turn away reproach from him, which he so feared." Psa. cxix.39. But this good name, and note with men, we are specially to desire, to honor God withal, and to further and prefer goodness with others: as otherwise, so chiefly, by the good regard, and respect, wherein they have us, to advantage the example, and other provocations of virtue, and godliness proceeding from us, for more ready imitation by, and better acceptance with them. And them, who thus labor to honor God with the honor, and respect, which he vouchsafes them from others, he will surely honor with men, so far as is meet, and with himself for ever. Whereas, the vainglorious and ambitious, that either seek honor above their desert, or only thereby to advance themselves, and theirs, above other men, they lift up themselves against God, and climb higher, than that the bough will bear them: and God, first or last, will throw them down into perdition.

And whereas God would have us seek good name and fame by well doing; if any seek it by evil, as in evil times and companies too many do, (as Austin confesseth of himself, that in the days of his vanity, he oft did evil, not only in lust of the thing, but for praise by it, amongst his consorts; and sometimes also slandered himself with the evils, which he had not done, lest seeming more chaste he should be more contemptible than the rest [Austin];) such do no better than set the devil in God's place, and "glory in their shame, whose end, without repentance, is damnation." Phil. iii.18,19. For God will keep his place in heaven, and from him shall men at length, and for ever, receive praise for well doing, and not from the devil for evil. Neither yet is credit always gotten with men, by following it, no more than a man's shadow is: but he that seeks to honor God in his main intention, God will cause some sprinkling of his own praise to reach unto him; and covering his sins from his divine eyes, will so far, as it is meet, cover them from the eyes of men also; and therewith, as it were, commend his virtues to their acceptance: specially, if withal, such a man join with his zealous heart towards God, good thoughts, and speeches of other men, and good doings unto them. God will provide, that others shall "mete the like measure to him again, in thinking, and speaking well of him." Matt. vii.2.

As the whiteness of the Ethiopian's teeth is the more remarkable by reason of the blackness of his whole body:

so are the few virtuous doings of some persons the more noted, and they the more famous for the same, by reason of their contrary course in evil. Things either rare in themselves, or not expected from such or such persons, are most observed: so are the commendable actions, in them, whose ordinary course in evil gives men little cause to look for better. and, by this means, it comes to pass, that divers, specially great men, who have many trumpeters of their few virtues, and scarce any, that dare so much as see their vices, get often times a greater name of just, merciful, and pious, for some one, or a few works of those kinds, like the Ethiopian's teeth, though in a course of injustice and impiety, than many others do by the constant practice of those, and other virtues.

Seeing honor and respect is in the hand of the honoring and not of the honored [Cicero]; we are for the right valuation of men's credits in the world, to have special regard to the persons that honor others, whether by praising them, or otherwise. For fools will praise men lightly and at venture: flatterers, having *linguas venales*, for their own advantage: vain and lewd persons, such as are like themselves, in praising of whom, they praise themselves by reflection: but to be praised by them, who themselves are praiseworthy, is both a reward of virtue, and a blessing of God. But above all things, we must remember, that whatsoever either we think or speak of ourselves, or others of us, only "he, whom the Lord commendeth, is approved," 2 Cor. x18: without, or against whom, he that would be commended of men, shall not be defended of men, when God judgeth him; nor delivered by men, when God condemneth him [Austin]. And what doth it advantage him, that runs a race, that the standers by approve of his running, if the agonothetes, or judges of the course disallow him? And what will it avail any, if all men, and angels, should extol him never so highly, and even clap their hands at him, in admiration of his excellence, if God the judge of all, and by whose sentence he is eternally happy, or miserable, should condemn him, and cast him off, as unworthy? Let our main care then be, "that we may always be accepted of God," 2 Cor. v.11,12: and for acceptance with men, let us not neglect it, for that were desperateness; nor yet set our minds too much upon it, lest to procure or keep it, we lose favor in a better place. let us rather fear, with the apostle, "lest any think of us above that which indeed there is cause," 2 Cor. xii.6; and if we be approved, or happen to be raised by any, let us with the godly father, considering both our wants, and other things amiss, take, thereby, occasion of blushing in ourselves [Ignatius]: and, with another, of begging at God's hands, that he, would make us answerable to the good, that any think, or speak of us [Greenham].

Contumely hath a sting, as the saying is, and is hard to be borne either by wise or good men [Cicero], how mean otherwise soever. Even the worm being trodden upon will turn again: neither can any esteem, either so highly of another or so meanly of himself, as to think he deserves to be contemned by him. and therefore Jonathan, though both wise, godly and humble-minded, being reviled by king Saul, his father, scarce kept himself with the bounds of due respect either to a father or king. 1 Sam. xx.30-34. many, saith one, can better endure painful stripes, than contumelious words [Ambrose]. And hence it is, that poverty is more grievous unto many than other ordinary crosses, because it brings with it more contempt in the eyes of others. Now, although the fear of God in a person, should, in all equity, procure him honor, and respect from all: yet as the philosopher advised, in his time, "Wouldst thou take up the study of wisdom, prepare thyself to become a laughingstock to many, " [Epictetus] &c. So in ours, and all ages, must God's most faithful servants much more arm themselves against contemptuous and contumelious carriages by many, if against any other temptation: following therein the holy apostle, who "approved himself to God in honor and dishonor," 2 Cor. vi.8; yea the Son himself, "the author, and finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before him, not only endured the cross, but also despised the shame." Heb. xii.2,3. and this the more carefully we must do, because the devil will never fail to stir up his cruel instruments to ply the servants of God, with the most sharp and biting rods of contempt and vility, in the midst of their other most grievous afflictions; as is to be seen in Christ our Lord, Matt. xxvii.43, and David his type, 2 Sam. xvi.6,7,8: that, they finding themselves despised in those their calamities, which should move compassion towards them in all men's eyes, might even be broken in their hearts, and so, through despair, fall from their steadfastness; as many do, not being sufficiently rooted in God's promises by faith, whereby, to bear this sore-pressing temptation.

Many buy at a dear rate the use of a few contemptuous speeches, and that, not only at the hands of superiors, and equals, but oftentimes, of meaner persons, than themselves; with whom they lose more love and respect by one contumelious passion, than they can recover by many friendly actions. Yea men, so impatient are all of contempt, are better satisfied and contented with a respectful denial of a benefit, than with a contumelious grant of it; yea, I add further, with a plain injury of some kind, than with a flavor so sauced; because in some injuries,

persons are thought worthy to be minded, though not for good towards them; in the other case, worthy to be despised, even by them from whom they receive good.

"He that despiseth the poor," either such in estate, or naturally impotent in mind or in body, "despiseth God that made him so," Prov. xvii.5: at which he is always as truly displeased in a measure, as he was at the "children, upon whom he sent a she-bear to tear them in pieces, for mocking at the prophet's bald head," 2 Kings ii.24, though he do not so visibly manifest his anger. He that despiseth a man for the grace of God appearing in him, which is too frequent in ours, and all evil days, despiseth and almost despiteth the very Spirit of God which made him so. But he that depiseth a wicked, and vile person, in lieu of his vileness, despises the devil and sin, that made him so. And albeit the followers of Christ should not come near a proud, or disdainful spirit; yet ought they to get, and maintain in themselves a kind of spiritual highness of mind, by which, villainy, and a vile person for it, may be "contemptible in their eyes," Psa. xv.4: and vices, as said one, not only odious, but ridiculous [Seneca].

Some have gotten the fox's cunning, in scorning the grapes for their sourness, which for their height he could not reach to; affecting the contempt of that good, which they want and cannot obtain, that so they may seem to want it, upon judgment, as a thing not worthy the having; and not of impotency. So some contemn learning, others policy, others, other things, as unworthy their having; which they are indeed unworthy to have, and unable to attain to. others partially say, with Solomon's buyer, that things are naught, Prov. xx.14, when they would have them easily and for nought: thus Lot said of Zoar, which he would have God spare for his cause, "Is it not a little one?" Gen. xix.20. Lastly, there are, who, in a cruel craft, use to vilify, and debase, what they can, such persons and things, as they either have oppressed unjustly or mean to oppress. Thus Saul purposing to oppress David, still terms him, in contempt, "the son of Ishai," [For Jesse] 1 Sam. xx.30. So did the Ephraimites term the Gileadites for like purpose, "fugitives of Ephraim amongst the Ephraimites, and amongst the Manassites," Judg. xx.4: the Jews and others, Christ, a Samaritan and Galilean: and wicked men now, the faithful servants of Christ, Lutherans, Huguenots, Calvinists, and by other more contemptible names, that so they may make themselves, and others the better believe, that it matters not, what is done to, or becomes of so vile and unworthy persons. But men are men, though they be sewed in bears' skins, that dogs might worry them: and the contempt cast upon the Lord's servants, by those carnal and crafts enemies, neither makes the oppressed by them, less precious in God's sight, nor their oppressions less odious. Men, on the contrary, when they have in hand anything hard, or grievous to another, should bethink themselves of what is good, and commendable in the person that, thereby, they may breed in their hearts due respect of him, and not wrong him: if the grace of God, though in never so great weakness, that we wrong not it: if the image of his authority, wisdom or other honorable attribute, that we wrong not it: if nothing else, yet that he is a man, and so deserves all human respect to be given unto him, as the apostle bids, "honor all men." 1 Pet. ii.17.

Men say, familiarity breeds contempt; whereupon many fearing to be contemned by others, dispose themselves to contemn others by a supercilious, and overly behavior. But as there is a mean in familiarity, as in all other things, so they most fear contempt by it, who have least worth in them to free themselves therefrom: and therefore in jealous, and consciousness of their own wants, take up a theatrical, and affected strangeness, and stateliness, specially towards their inferiors, and equals. Such are like the ass in the lion's skin; but, by braying when they should roar, are discovered, and become more ridiculous, than if they had always showed their asses' ears.

Considering how grievous a thing and hard to be borne, contempt is, it is wisdom in a man, not easily to think himself despised by others, and that, even for his own peace. But if an injury be offered, rather, if it may be, to impute it to unadvisedness, or negligence, or almost to any other original, in the offerer, than to contempt. Besides, an aptness to conceive a contempt shows a mind uncharitable, discontented, and usually proud withal, as looking too much for respect. Lastly, he that judgeth himself despised by another, specially being troubled at it, honoreth him therein: since it cannot be, but that he desires to be respected of him, with whose contemptuous carriage towards him he is troubled [Seneca].

CHAPTER XL: OF ENVY

Envy is a grief conceived at the good of another [Plutarch]; specially, by him that wants it himself [Cyprian]; whereof the highest degree is, so to envy it to him, as we desire it ourselves [Scaliger]. It is a very shameful

affection, and which no man will own, how many soever use it. Some will confess and profess, upon occasion, that they hate, or fear, or scorn others; but none that they envy any [Plutarch]. And no marvel; for though many deserve to be hated, feared and despised, yet none, to be envied. Good and wise men are to be honored in, and for all the good things that God hath given them; foolish and corrupt to be pitied in their greatest jollity, considering what their end shall be. And though there be cause to grieve, in a sort, at the prosperity and power of unworthy persons; yet this is not because those things, good in themselves, are good to them; but because they abuse them to their own and others' hurt.

It is like a fire [Politian], ascending upwards, still aiming at that which is above it: for though superiors often grudge at the good of inferiors, yet rather this is indignation than envy. Or rather it is like smoke, not only in the former respect, but also for that, as smoke is greatest at first, and before the fire burn clear, but after the flame bursts out, vanisheth away: so is envy greatest in the first rising of any [Plutarch] in virtue or honor or other eminent good; but, by continuance of time and virtue in the envied, is tired out, and gives over.

He that envieth, maketh another man's virtue, his vice, as Bernard confesseth of himself [Bernard]; and another man's happiness, his torment [Politian]: whereas, he that rejoiceth at the prosperity of another, even thereby, if no other way, is partaker of the same [Chrysostom]. Yet were this vice the more tolerable, if, besides men, ourselves, and others, we in it did not so directly wrong the Lord; and that, which is worst, even, in his goodness, which it not only perverts, as other vices do, but abolishes, as much as it can. It is, and worthily, accounted in some, horrible impiety, to complain of God, that he made the world no better: but what is it than to quarrel with him for making it so good? as in truth, an envious person doth, saying unto God, in effect, Why have thou bestowed this virtue, this knowledge, this honor, these riches, or the like good upon this man or woman? So the 'First laborers in the vineyard said of the last, to him which hired them; Why givest thou so much unto them? Matt. xx.10-12. How injurious soever, notwithstanding, this cankerworm is both to God and men; yet is it, in this point, most just, that it punisheth and tormenteth, with no small torment, him in whom it beareth sway, consuming his heart, as rust doth the iron, whereon it groweth [basil], and "rotting his very bones," Prov. xiv.30, while he liveth.

The good gifts of God, as riches, honor, wit, learning, &c., in any eminency often endanger their owners by puffing them up with pride in themselves and if they have the grace, and modesty to use them aright, yet are they dangerous to others, becoming often fuel to kindle their fire of envy withal. And so it fell out between Joseph and his brethren, David and king Saul, and many more; verifying that of the wise man - "Every perfection of work is the envy of a man from his neighbor," Eccl. iv.4. By means whereof it also hurts its owners, many times, by a kind of unnatural rebound, as it were, from the envious; and that so violent, as none, but God in heaven, "can stand against it." Prov. xxvii.4. Not Adam in paradise against the devil's envy; nor David against Saul's; nor Christ against the Pharisees'. and in this regard, a mediocrity in any good is the more thankfully to be accepted from God; considering unto what danger this way, all eminency exposeth a man. The highest trees are soonest and sorest shaken with tempests.

The best remedy for preventing envy by others, is to carry a low sail in the most prosperous gale that can blow: and to ascribe the good a man hath rather to any other cause, than to himself, or his own wit, industry, or worth any way. Therein he least disparageth others that want it, and so frees himself best from their envy at him.

CHAPTER XLI: OF SLANDER

He is a slanderer, who wrongs his neighbor's credit, either by unjust raising or upholding an evil report against him [Bernard]. of which two, viz., the raising, or receiving a false report, seeing that if there were no receivers, there would be no thieves, one of good skill in discerning, doubteth whether is more damnable. We must then get amongst others, this mark of him that shall sojourn in the Lord's tabernacle, and dwell in his holy mountain, that we neither raise, nor take, or hold up a reproach against our neighbor. Psa. xv.1-5. Though the north wind be not always to be wished, because it driveth away rain, yet is an "angry countenance to drive away a backbiting tongue." Prov. xxv.23. As a man may be wounded in his body with the sword taken out of his own hand; so may he in his credit, by the injurious relation of the very thing, which his hand hath done, or tongue spoken. And the same also, sometimes, being good in itself, and either wrested to some other sense than he intended; as were the words of Christ by false witnesses, Mark xiv.58, 59: or craftily made an opportunity whereupon to build some false, but colorable insinuation of evil; as was David's being at Nob with the High-

priest, by Doeg, 2 Sam. xxi.1; xxii.9. Sometimes, also being evil; as when men without just and necessary occasion blaze abroad the faults of others; either in idleness, for want of other talk; or of hatred, by way of revenge; or in flattery, to please other men; or in envy, as grudging at their good name. and it may well be thought, that persons oftener calumniate others of love to themselves, than of hatred to them; thinking therein to build their own credit, upon the ruins of other men's; which is, as if one, to make his own garment seem the fairer, should cast mire upon his neighbor's.

Some slanders are such as confute themselves in the eyes of all reasonable men, as either being so great, or so senseless, as are incredible [Hubert]; or when the known quality of the person accused, fastens a slander upon the accusation; as did Plato's with Diogenes, when he heard one accuse him of evil. Some also there are, which turn to the advantage of the slandered's credit afterwards, namely such, as a little time will plainly manifest to have been false, and feigned. For then they, who before have wronged them, through credulity, will hold themselves their debtors for amends afterwards; which also it may come to pass they may make them, by not believing some ill, though just, report of them, in after time.

Slanders of any others may rightliest be called devilish, seeing the devil hath his name of slandering [Taffin]. He sometimes slanders God to men; as to Eve, of envy, in the beginning, Gen. iii.1-6: sometimes, men to God; as Job of hypocrisy, Job i. 9-12; and, continually, man to man, by his venomous instruments thus anatomized in their parts, by the apostle. "Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongue they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." Rom. iii.13. And truly it may be, he should not much miss the mark, that affirmed, slanders and false reports to have raised as great, and many quarrels amongst equals; conspiracies, from inferiors; and from superiors, violent oppressions: as all injuries in truth offered, or other provocations whatsoever.

Men commonly with one stroke wound, or kill but one, whereas a slanderous blow reacheth to many. He wounds himself with his own slanderous tongue; his mouth making his flesh to sin: he wounds him in the ear, to whom he slandereth, specially if credulous, as the most are, in receiving false reports. and as for him, whom he slandereth, he wounds him in his good name, though him only by suffering evil, the former two as workers of it [Herodotus], and withal, often makes way by so doing for further wrong to be offered him, either by himself or others. Thus Maximinus the tyrant set a-work certain vile persons to accuse the Christians of heinous evils, that so he might persecute them with more show of reason [Eusebius]; like, as men, when they would have their dogs killed, give out, that they are mad.

David never complains of the sharpness of the swords of the Philistines, or other enemies; but of the sharp swords of the tongue of slanderers, he oft, and piteously complains in the book of the Psalms, as piercing deeper than the former. Psa. 3, 57, 58, 64, &c. and yet, for fence against those sharp swords, God hath put into the hands of his innocent servants two bucklers; the one inward, viz. a conscience, upon due knowledge, and examination, excusing before God, and this is of proof: the other, such a conversation before men, as may ward our credit and good name from being wounded in the eyes of such as know us, and are equally minded, and such, as are not apt either greedily to devour, or lightly to admit slanders, and vituperies raised against us [Calvin]. yet, if the devil could by the serpent's slanders impeach the credit of God himself with our first parents, in their state of innocency, no marvel, if his serpentlike instruments can prevail with sinful men and women this way, even against god's faithful servants. We must therefore prevent slanders what we can; bear what we cannot avoid; and always be mindful by earnest prayer, as well to commend our good name to God, that he may take charge of it, as our persons and estates.

Better never accused, than quit, though after the clearest, and most honorable manner, that may be; seeing after a bold slander something ever will stick behind, by which the ignorant of the truth will be abused, and adversaries take advantage to upbraid. But how great soever matter of grief or shame unjust slander causeth; yet he that is "reproached for well-doing, hath the spirit of glory resting upon him," 2 Pet. iv,14, and being innocent, may say, that the evil is not against him, but against another, whom the slanderer takes him to be [Chrysostom]. the advised consideration partly of the cause, and partly of the end, which the Lord will make, abundantly sweetens all the sourness of the reproaches which he suffers: and such a one may know himself to have attained to the highest pitch of Christianity, and conformity with Christ, when for well-doing he is ill dealt with. It is kingly, saith one, say we, Christian-like, to do well, and to be ill spoken of [Antisthenes]. Yet it is not enough, that when we are slandered, we be from under the desert of it directly; but we must withal consider, whether we have not drawn it upon ourselves deservedly, in regard of God, by slandering others, and that so

God pays us home in our kind: or by some other scandalous sin, which the Lord will punish in us by slanderous tongues; as he did David by Shimei: or whether we have not given vehement occasion of men's suspecting us; and so accusing ourselves, as one saith, of suspicion, what marvel, if others think, and speak evil of us?

CHAPTER XLII: OF FLATTERY

The reproof by Diogenes is not more known, than just, upon flatterers; that as tyrants are the worst of all wild beasts, so are they, of all tame [Plutarch]. And yet there is, and the same very common, a worse beast, than either of them severally – to wit, a monster gendered of them both. Men flatter their superiors, or others able to oppose them; to the intent they may tyrannize over their inferiors the more freely, without danger, or fear, and so, become both flatterers and tyrants.

A man needs no other flatterer than his own partial heart to infatuate him. Notwithstanding, though few would rather buy a false, than a true glass to see their faces in, yet how few are thee so truly hating their own vices, as they had not rather seek, or at least, entertain such friends, as may rather cover their faults by flatteries, than cure them by faithful reproofs. And this benefit, men of a poor and despised condition may set against diver miseries incident thereunto, that they are thereby out of danger of being much flattered. Every one will be bold to a call a poor man, fool, or knave, and to speak of and to him all the ill which he knows, and more also.

Whereas the rich and mighty in the world are, for the most part, soothed up to their destruction; as the fat ox is clawed [scratched] by the same hand that strikes him down. And this is just from God upon the most of them, because they desire rather to be pleased by flatteries, than bettered by hearing the truth. Few coming near David's order, will say as he did, "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness: let him reprove me, it shall be a precious oil." Psa. cxli.5. Where yet the excuse is not nothing, which the philosopher makes; that as worms soonest breed in soft and sweet woods, so gentle and noble spirits do most easily admit flatteries [Plutarch].

He that reads the epistles dedicatory of learned men's books in all faculties, divinity not excepted, if either he knew not the contrary, by experience, or suspected not, how easily ambition, the canker of learning, and mother of flattery, might grow in learned men's breasts, would soon be brought to think, that almost all the great men in the world were so good, so virtuous, so religious, such, and so wise, and worthy patriots, as nothing more could be wished or hoped for. But how oft, God and men know, whilst they labor to honor many of them unjustly, do they most justly shame themselves, in proclaiming those things of their benefactors to the world, with all confidence, which a modest man that knows the persons, cannot read without blushing; and giving men just cause to suspect, as Lactantius speaks of a philosopher in Bithynia, writing against Christians, and pouring out himself into the praises of persecuting princes, that oftentimes they write their books rather to flatter in their prefaces, than for other matters prosecuted in the treatises themselves [Lactantius].

Flattery is in all cases and persons a base sin, and which will make one man dog-like, to fawn upon another, for a morsel of bread. Prov. Xxviii.21. But in the ministers of God's holy Word, above all other men, it is most pernicious. For whereas in other cases a man makes himself a claw-back [a flatterer or sycophant], in this he makes God himself, in whose name he speaks, no better, what in him lies: besides, that he turns into deadly poison the only sovereign medicine of the soul. This made the apostle "take God to witness, that he never used flattering words," 1 Thess. Ii.5; and to protest against others, that they in doing it, "served not the Lord Jesus, but their own bellies." Rom. xvi.18. Such are not to be accounted the servants of Christ, whom they make their stales [decoys]; nor yet of their flattered lords and masters, how loud soever they profess themselves their obedient servants; but they have a base master, whom they serve, and are ashamed to own, their belly, and the devil in it. It is not for nothing that the prophets, and apostles have so thundered against the flatterers of the mighty, who both look so much for it, as that they think themselves half maligned, and envied, if they be but sparingly flattered [Seneca], and yet are so deeply endangered by it. Here notwithstanding, we must beware, that to avoid the note of flatterers we become not railers, affecting to "speak evil of dignities," Jude 8, either in pride, as many scorn to flatter, that is, love to revile, or out of discontentment in ourselves, or to nourish it in others.

CHAPTER XLIII: OF SUSPICION

Suspicion, as it is commonly taken is, as it were, a looking under a hidden thing, with an inclination to judge it evil and amiss. It sets the person suspected in a kind of middle state, but something bended the worse way, and neither quit because he is suspected; nor condemned, because he is but suspected.

He that should deal by all persons and things, as Caesar did by his wife, whom he put away, because she was suspected of uncleanness [Suetonius], though solemnly cleared in judgment; should leave himself neither friend, nor wit, nor honesty neither: for all these, and whatsoever else he hath that good is, are subject to unjust suspicion, by others. Suspicion indeed, how unjust soever is a blemish, and so may justly occasion refusal, where there is free liberty, but not rejection in way of punishment; this is to right a former wrong, by a second greater.

Some suspect all men, and some none: both are in fault; the former in the most sinful fault, the latter in the most honest, but more dangerous to themselves. And yet even for that, there want not, who by causeless suspicion teach their servants, friends, yea wives, and children also to deceive them [Seneca]. For many respecting more their credit with men, than a good conscience before God, by being suspected, though causelessly, grow desperate; yea think themselves half privileged to deceive them that suspect them; seeing that by so doing, they but become that, which they are deemed to be before. It is best therefore, first not to suspect without good cause; next, not to betray our suspicion, except we have great hope to overawe thereby the suspected person. There are many, unreasonably though not altogether unoccasioned, transported from the one of the extremes formerly mentioned to the other: who being at first credulous, and light of belief, and thereby oft deceived, at length come to trust none; but would burn, as they say, their shirt, if they thought it knew their secrets: and therefore set it down for a rule, to have all men in jealousy. Such overwise men are like the fool, that because the sieve deceived him, and let his drink run out, would not trust his dish with it afterwards. Howsoever things fall out, it is best to keep our bias always on the right side; and to incline still to a better, rather than to a worse opinion of men, than they deserve. For though it be best of all, to judge of others just as they are: yet seeing, that is always hard and sometimes impossible, we shall less offend God in judging of men too well, though sometimes to our own damage, than too ill, with certain injury to them, and sin in ourselves, in the violation of the law of charity, which "is not suspicious." 1 Cor. xiii.5.

The general cause of suspicion is the want of this true love, whose property is to believe all things, and to hope all things, which with reason, can be believed, or hoped for; and so men are in danger to presume of, and promise to themselves more good of their wives and children and friends, whom they entirely love, than there is cause, rather than otherwise. Notwithstanding, a very inordinate, and doting affection also breeds causeless jealousy. Another general cause of suspicion is the knowledge and consciousness which persons have of their own inability, and weakness any way. Of beasts and birds, hares and cover, and such impotent, and unarmed creatures; and of men and women; the childish, weak, silly and decrepit are most given to suspicion, as being most subject to be circumvented and oppressed. So it hath been observed, how the Scythians, and other barbarous nations have labored to supply their defects of wisdom for prevention of hurt from enemies, by excess of suspicion [Bodinus]. It is true, that this disease sometimes befalls very wise men; but this arises from another and worse cause, to wit, an evil conscience. Men muse as they use, and suspect others by themselves; as is common with all lewd persons. He that is good himself, does not easily suspect another to be evil: nor the evil, that another is good [Chrysostom]. Besides, an evil conscience accusing men and women, that they in truth deserve not love, nor respect, nor credit, easily persuades them, that they are not loved, nor respected, nor credited by others. Lastly, it is often a punishment from God, that as a man in debt, suspects that every bush which he sees, is sergeant to arrest him; so they which are without true grace, and assurance of the pardon of their sins from him, should be suspicious, that every one would deceive, or hurt them otherwise. It was God's curse upon Cain, when he had killed his brother Abel, to suspect and fear that every one that he met with, would kill him. Gen. Iv.8. Notwithstanding all these things; sometimes God sends a spirit of jealousy upon interested persons, Numb. V.12, &c, for the discovery of evils in others formerly hidden; which out of probably suspicion come to be searched into, and by searching are found out. And always we must strive for that discretion and wisdom, as not to take our marks amiss, by censuring any rashly, as Eli did Hannah for drunkenness, because her lips went, and her voice was not heard: nor yet to be so fondly charitable, as not to see the spots of men's leprosy breaking out in their foreheads.

We are not only by innocency to prevent just blame; but withal, by Christian care, and wisdom, to provide that we hurt not our good name by coming under colorable suspicion of evil. We provide things honest before God

by preserving innocency; but before men, by giving no probably cause of their suspecting us. And so doing, if yet God by his providence, so ordered, that we come under it; we must bear it patiently, as a burden laid upon us by him, either to prove us; as it was not the least trial upon Job, to be suspected by his friends and others of hypocrisy: or, it may be, to warn us to take heed of some sin, of which we are in danger, though not guilty of: it may be, for our present peace and safety, as it happened to David, by being suspected of the lords of the Philistines; or, it may be, for their just punishment, by whom we are unjustly suspected; as in the same David's case, in being suspected by king Saul of affecting the kingdom, to his own great harm in wanting him, and the worthies with him in the battle with the Philistines.

CHAPTER XLIV: OF APPEARANCES

It is the royal prerogative of God's infinite wisdom to judge of persons and things, as in truth, they are. It is men's, yea angels' imperfect condition, in comparison, under which God hath humbled them, to judge of one and other, according to outward appearances; leaving to him alone and the persons themselves, the hidden things of the heart. To appear evil to a righteous judgment, is always evil, whether the person be evil, or good: if evil, his evil appearance is but his inward evil manifested to be, as it is, and his inside turned outward: if good, he slanders himself in appearing evil. He that makes an ill show, we may well account evil and corrupt, ordinarily; seeing all, save in the case of some special temptation, desire to seem, as good, as they are, and to put the fairest side outward.

He that is once well known to me for good and virtuous, I will always esteem so, except I come to take certain knowledge of his after declining to evil. So, on the contrary, if I have once rightly and certainly branded a man for evil, I shall not easily come to think good of him, except his after repentance as plainly appear to me. The reason is, because bare time makes none of evil, good; or of good, evil; but only confirms men in that which they are, whether the one, or the other.

Although it be not, simply, a sufficient warrant for our answerable judgment of, or carriage toward persons, or things, that they appear good or evil unto us, because we often err in our judgments about them, through ignorance, negligence, or partiality: yet is it a certain rule, that we must never proceed, either in judgment, or practice against appearances: for in so doing, we condemn ourselves in the thing, which we approve, if it appear good, and yet we condemn it; so do we also in the thing which we condemn, by holding any course of approbation towards that, which seems evil unto us. Notwithstanding, such is the force of outward appearances, as that, in cases, they bind us in conscience, both for judgment and practice, to that which indeed is not true, nor due; but wherein we are altogether deceived. As when we receive a matter for truth, which yet indeed is not so, upon the clear testimony of two, or three witnesses worthy of credit, so far as we can discern; or when we esteem an hypocrite cunningly dissembling, for good and godly, as did Philip, Simon Magus, Acts viii.13. It is a fortune sin to suspect him, without apparent cause, that dissembles; and an unfortunate virtue to be deceived in him.

The appearance of evil, by the apostle's prescript, is to be abstained from. 1 Thess. V.22. Which yet we must not understand absolutely of whatsoever seems evil unto others; for then we should abstain from all, or the most good; whereof there is little, but some, or other misdeem it. But the meaning is properly, that, in prophesying, of which the apostle speaks, as we are to hold that which is good, and proved so to be; so if anything be delivered of which we have a sinister suspicion, as fearing that some poison cleaveth to it, though not plainly so discerned by us, we withhold our assent, till by faith we can receive it [Calvin]. And in the general, that, if a thing appear amiss, and evil unto others, especially unto weaker brethren, though it be not such of itself, yet we forbear it; except either conscience of duty simply bind us unto it, or that some greater conveniency appear in doing it, than is the inconveniency of, or to others, in misconceiving of us, and our doings.

If it be a good thing to appear good, how much more to be so indeed? It is also the readiest way, and most compendious for any to appear, and be thought wise, virtuous or godly, to be, in truth, such. For God will both, so far, as it stands with his glory, and the person's good, give occasion of manifestation of that good which is; and also provide, that others may accordingly take knowledge of it. And though many things be secret in the mean while; yet, when the Lord shall come, he will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every one have praise of God. 1 Cor. iv.5.

The Lord bestoweth his graces upon men not only for their own good, but for the good of others also: and that, as otherwise, so for the manifesting, and showing forth the virtues of him, who hath "called them out of darkness,

into his marvelous light.” 1 Pet. ii.9. Who must therefore provide carefully, both to be, as they appear, for their own comfort; and to appear, as they are, to the glory of God, and good of men. Yet so as their first, and greatest care herein be, that their appearances be not above their existences, and that they make show of no more than they have. As in the outward estate, it is the highway to poverty, or worse, for a man’s expenses to exceed his receipts; and his layings out his comings in: so in the spiritual course, to overstrain in outward manifestations is a way tending to all impudent, and desperate hypocrisy, under a form of godliness, without the power thereof. And for other gifts, as knowledge, wisdom, learning, eloquence, or the like; he that in the manifestation of them will strain above his reach, may easily crack his credit, and make himself ridiculous to others; like the stage-player, who with too much wiping of his borrowed beard pulls it from his face, and so betrays his bare chin. And though a forth-putting man play his part so well, as many do, that he not only satisfy, but draw into admiration his simple spectators, who cannot discern between shadow, and body; yet shall he hardly, or not at all, escape the censure of vain-glorious and arrogant, by more judicious men.

We are often angry, and offended at others, for wrong us, by conceiving a worse opinion of us, than we deserve: whereas, in right, we should be angry at ourselves, for giving them occasion so to judge, by our ill, and suspicious appearances. For, albeit thereby, he, whose heart, and way is upright in God’s sight, lose not his comfort with him, who sees the heart: yet by his misappearances made in word, or deed, he may justly forfeit his credit with men; to whom it appertains to judge of the tree by the fruit, or leaves, or any other outward mark, or note, rather than by the sap. Cunning naughtiness hath often more credit in the world, than unadvised honesty.

CHAPTER XLV: OF OFFENSES

“It must needs be,” considering man’s frailty, Satan’s malice, and God’s providence, “that offenses come,” saith Christ our Lord: “but woe be to the person by whom they come.” Matt. xvii. 6, 7. Woe be to him, first, that gives offence; next, to him that takes it, where he should not: as the same our Lord teacheth elsewhere, saying, “Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me,” Matt. xi.6; that is, who takes not occasion of stumbling, to hinder himself in the way of godliness, either at my person or doctrine, or works or followers; or at the persecutions and contradictions raised against me and mine, by mine and their adversaries. And considering how many such like stumbling stones are in the narrow way of Christ, which leads unto life; he is a happy man indeed, that hath either power to remove them, or wisdom to decline from them, or nimbleness of grace to leap over them.

Offence may be given, where none is taken; as in such evil actions, as whereby others may or might be, but are not provoked to evil, and so Peter was an offence, or scandal to Christ, Matt. xvi.23: or offence may be taken, where none is given; and so Christ, and the gospel were “a stone of stumbling” and “rock of offence to both the houses of Israel,” Isa. viii.15; 1 Pet. ii.8; and so are many good and lawful things, yea necessary also, to many now. Offence also may both be given and taken in the same action, and that either in things simply evil; as when one provokes, and another is provoked to evil, by false doctrine, corrupt counsel, ill example, or the like; or in things of indifferent nature, but unseasonably used, to the effectual hindrance of others, in the way of godliness. In such cases, as I last mentioned, offence is given through want of charity; and taken through want, or weakness of faith in the particular. Rom. xiv.1.

God would have us walk in faith towards him, and love towards men, 1 Cor. viii.5-7; that so doing we may neither offend God nor men. But these two, which the Lord hath joined together, Satan would not only disjoin in many, but so oppose, as either may oppress or destroy other. Hence some are so strong in faith and zealous for faithfulness towards God, as they are lifted up above charity towards men; now considering how they ought to receive the weak, Rom. xiv.1, and bear and forbear them, yea apply unto them in many things, and drive according to their pace, as fearing to offend one of those little ones. And though we may do nothing simply evil to please men; for that were to prefer them before God, nor betray the truth to gratify them; so better scandal arise, than truth forsaken [Austin. Bernard]; yet are we not only to do or leave undone things of indifferent nature, wherein we have liberty, for the preventing of offence, and so to depart from our own right: but withal, both to do divers things, which out of the case of offence, were sin, as Paul circumcised Timothy, Matt. xvii.26; John xvi.1; Matt. ix.11; and for a time also to forbear both the publishing and practicing of some truth, to the which, in time, we do owe testimony both ways. Others, on the contrary, are so full of charity, towards men, and fear of offending them, as that for, and sometimes under pretence thereof, they will both adventure to do

many things, which God plainly enough forbids, and neglect the practice of other things commanded them, and all Christ's disciples, in his gospel. Many pretend the weakness of others, where, in truth, they show their own weakness; others, that they would do such and such things, to which indeed both conscience of God, and duty to men binds them, but for offence. And what is this offence many times? Surely often nothing else but the waspishness of some peevish and imperious persons carried against others with hatred, or contempt, or envy, or divers of those passions. But this is not to respect the weak in faith, but the strong in passion.

To be offended at good things in men, which is the property of an evil mind, is to be offended at God in men [Tertullian]; to be offended at things indifferent, is to be offended, as it were, at men in men: but to be offended at evil, in men, in due manner and measure, is to be offended at the devil in men. IN this last case no man should think much at due opposition and reproof, seeing it is not properly against him, but against Satan in him.

Readiness to take offence, and exception at and against other men in their failings, shows either weakness of understanding in the offended, when they discern not either of men's temptations, under which they lie, or what they may and ought to bear in their brethren: or it shows pride which makes men either out of envy apt to bark at others upon every small occasion, or to despise them in their wants and weaknesses, through over-valuation of their own excellency; whereas, on the contrary, they should support them, that they sink not under the burden of their infirmities: or else it comes from hypocrisy, out of which many seek to cover both from other men's eyes and from their own also, their proper beam-like corruptions by quarrelling at the motes in their brother's eye. I never knew any more forward to take offence, than such as were most apt to give it; nor any more hardly brought to bear with failings at the hands of others, than such as stood in greatest need to have both God and men to bear with no small things amiss in themselves. "Oh! hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye: and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." Matt. vii.3.

None should plead his own offence against a thing, but, his reason; nor say this should not be done, because it offends me; but it offends me, because it should not be done, being contrary to the word of God. To say to another, do not this because it offends God, shows love to God: and, do not this, because it offends others, love to men: but to say, do it not, because it offends me, without rendering further reason against it, is from plain self-love; and is an absurd and insolent request, and motion. All should take care not to offend one another; but none should look much not to be offended by others; for that is to nourish weakness in himself, and to provide trouble and disquietness for himself beforehand.

CHAPTER XLVI: OF TEMPTATIONS

God tempts a man, and Satan tempts him, and one man tempts another. God's temptations are, as he is, good and for good: and no other thing, but so many trials of the faith, patience, love, wisdom and obedience of his creatures; not that he might know them, for "he understands the thoughts afar off," Psa. Cxxxix.2; but that they might have use and make manifestation of the grace of the heart in outward acts, that others might know them, and they, themselves: or that, by accident, as they speak, the contrary vices of unbelief, impatience and the like might be discovered where they lie hid, which is good also. It is good, on God's part, and for his church, that men's naughtiness, where it is, should in its time, be discovered. Where also we gather it to be our Saviour's meaning to teach his disciples, and us all, in them, to pray against temptations, Matt. vi.13, as they are provocations unto sin; but not, as they are moderate trials of faith; and therewith, that our heavenly Father would so sweeten the bitterness of them with the sprinklings of the sense of his love in Christ, as that they may not be excessive or intolerable. Satan's temptations, on the contrary, are as he is, evil, and for evil and sin: either outwardly by fitting of objects or stirring up of instruments or providing of furtherances of evil of all sorts: or in regard of the heart and soul by suggestion of evil thereto, together with the so disposing and stirring up of the humours of the body, as that they may be ready instruments for the mind's inordinate passions. And albeit he cannot compel either the understanding to assent, or the will to consent, or the affections to liking, and so, not the body to the acting of evil: yet being a spirit, he is undoubtedly able to unite himself in his suggestions with our spirits, after an unknown manner; and the same also very persuasive, specially with such, as upon whom he is by the Lord in anger let loose, for the punishment of former sins by latter. So we read that "Satan filled the heart of Ananias," Acts v.3: "entered into the heart of Judas," Luke, xxii.3: "works in the children of disobedience," Eph. ii.2: and "blinds the mind of the unbelievers," 2 Cor. iv.4. Notwithstanding all which his both power and malice, seeing he can do nothing to hurt, but by the permission of God, and power

which he hath from him [Ambrose], and that justly given, though, on his part, unjustly used; we are still to remember the good counsel by one given us, which is, never to fear the power of the devil more than the offence of God [Gregory]. This were to fear the executioner more than the judge.

Though a man cannot be drawn away, but by his own concupiscence, yet may he be tempted otherwise, James i.14, and be compelled to suffer temptations, which is human; and devilish only to be overcome by them [Ibid.] by assent, consent, or liking: and where none of these three is, there is the devil's sin, and but man's cross, as one saith, in the temptation. If the thought of evil arising in the heart be such, as unto which not so much as our affections do incline, but that, on the contrary, we wholly abhor from it, in the very first rising, we may gather it to be rather by suggestion from Satan, than of our own concupiscence. And as it is not in our power to avoid the outward presentations of evil, by wicked men, to our eye, or ear; but we are compelled often to see, and hear their unlawful works, and words, as did Lot, the Sodomites, 2 Pet. ii.7,8: so neither seemeth it to be in our power to avoid the bare thoughts of evil, which are not always evil thoughts, by Satan's suggestions: but that he being a spirit, and spiritual wickedness, can present them to our spirits more effectually, than can any man object and offer outward, and corporeal provocation to our outward, and bodily senses.

As Christ our Lord, after the glorious testimony given of him by his Father from heaven, and by the Holy Ghost sitting upon him in the form of a dove, and by John, the Baptist both in word, and deed; "was immediately led into the wilderness, by the spirit, to be tempted of the devil." Matt. iii.1,16,17; iv.1: so must Christians make account, after the special testimonies of God's love received, of some singular combat of temptation, for their trial; wherein, if they overcome, the love of God is thereby, as it were, sealed up unto their hearts. Holy men therefore prospering in virtue must exult, and count it all joy, when they fall into divers temptations, and are exercised in them by the divine providence [Gregory], for the trial of their faith, James i.2: and therewith of God's gracious power, which is perfected in their weakness, 2 Cor. xii.9, this way.

There are none of God's servants, but in the case of temptation have reaped the fruit of his singular providence towards them; sometimes, in preventing such temptations, as if they had come upon them in their full strength, would have been most like, if not clean to have overthrown them, yet to have caused their grievous fall; by which, they have, through God's providence sitting at the stern, slid, as a ship by the side of a rock: sometimes, in guiding them even in the very midst of temptations compassing them about, like so many sands: and sometimes, by helping and hauling them off, even when they have stuck fast, and been ready to sink in them. Many have been the bodily dangers known, and not known, which, by God's good providence, we have escaped: but how many more those those are spiritual, in which we had been utterly swallowed up, a thousand times, if his gracious hand from heaven had not relieved us? Now, besides those common to all, every person hath his special temptations, arising either from his temper of body or sex or age or education or custom or state or calling or company or other occasion, against which he must watch most carefully, as men used to watch in the gates of a city besieged, and in such other places, as in which the enemy is likeliest to make his assault; in which, if we quit ourselves as men, and stand fast, we shall have our part in his comforts, who said "I was upright with him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity." Psa. xviii.23.

Some have thought it a wise, Christian course in the confession of our secret sins, residing in the heart, unto God, not to use the outward voice, for fear of acquainting Satan with them thereby, and so of advantaging him to tempt us, by applying himself to that, wherein he seeth us likeliest to sin [Hugo Grotius]. As it is certain that he knows not our hearts at all, as God doth, by immediate insight, but gathers them by the motions and manifestations of the body [Austin]; so, considering, that he himself is the original of all evil, mediately or immediately, it is like, he is, for the most part, acquainted with his own work in men. And so it is good wisdom in us, to prefer the best manner of acknowledging our sins to God, for the advantaging of our repentance, before the fear of discovering our corruptions to the devil.

Christ our Lord teaching us to pray, that God would "not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one," Matt. vi.13, would warn us not to lead ourselves into temptations, nor to deliver our souls into Satan's hands; which yet we do by affecting familiarity with wicked men, which are, as it were, his brokers, by omitting duties of religious publicly or privately, or doing them unfruitfully; by neglecting our special callings and doing nothing, and thereby giving him opportunity to tempt us to do evil; and lastly, by opening too wide the windows of our outward senses towards alluring objects. By these means we not only tempt God to leave us, but the devil, after a sort, to tempt us. Prov. xxiii. 26-35. We have a promise, that "if we resist him, he will fly from us," James iv.7; but that is, when he assaults us, and not when we challenge him, as it were, with his own

weapons, wherewith he hath foiled so many. He that thus puts himself within the reach of his paws, shall hardly escape being torn in pieces by him. Let us commit ourselves unto God's safe keeping in all our ways, Psa. xc.11; but not come in Satan's way, lest we advantage his malice, and put ourselves out of God's protection. As the sailor's skill is seen in carrying his ship through a storm; so is the strength of faith in vanquishing dangerous temptations. Yet must we not measure the state of a man too much by that which befalls him in some, or other such dangerous trial. There are few so evil but have at times their temptations, that I may so speak, to some particular good, by which they are carried less or more that way: and few or none so good, but, on the contrary, have temptations to evil, in which, at times, something human befalls them. Now to judge of men's persons according to some such few particulars, contrary to their general course, were partiality. The wicked fall not into evil, but lie groveling in evil. The godly fall sometimes by occasion; but "God is faithful, who with the temptation maketh a way for him to escape," 1 Cor x.13, by their renewal of repentance, and victory of faith. And though in those their wrestlings they get a wrench, and limp afterwards, as Jacob did; yet they have power, and prevail, and go on, as he did, in their way.

CHAPTER XLVII: OF CONSCIENCE

Every man's conscience is, as it were, a second God within him, both to judge of his actions within, and without him, and also of his person, and personal state, and whether in it, he be accepted of God, or not. And surely, a great good work of God it is, that he hath created, and set such an overseer as this conscience is, in the soul of man, by which, if he do anything amiss, he is checked in secret, that so by repentance he may find mercy at God's hands [Perkins]. And how good is it, saith one, that this worm should be felt, whilst it may be killed; and gnaw for a time, that it may be choked for ever [Bernard]. As, on the contrary, if a man do the thing which good is, the conscience gives testimony of God's acceptance, and therewith boldness before him, 1 John iii.20,21; making him cheerful even in the sorrows of the world, quiet in its turmoil, and happy in all extremity of torments; and withal satisfying him with the testimony from within himself, against men's unjust accusations [Seneca]. This conscience makes a man either a conqueror over the whole world, or a craven [Politian]; and ready, specially in danger, and being wakened, to thrust his head in a hole.

But now the comforts are not greater in having this good conscience, than are the dangers in mistaking it. Many do craftily pretend it without cause, merely for their credits before men, whose hearts condemn them before God; and whom "God, who is greater, will condemn" much more. 1 John iii.20. Many more are securely presumptuous; and being ready to believe that, which they wish true, are bold upon their good conscience so deemed; not because they know, and try themselves, and their ways before the Lord, by his Word, as they ought, but because they know not, nor will know and examine them. And this is the vulgar conscience of ignorant persons, that are free from those grosser sins, which the light of nature condemns: and of some others also not without understanding, being of bold spirits, and stout hearts, and which will not easily be in fault, either before the world, or God himself. There are besides these, whose "consciences are benumbed, and seared with an hot iron," 1 Tim. Iv.2; who by practicing at first, and continuing after, in sins against their natural conscience, have obtained from the Lord this miserable privilege, and seal of their condemnation, that their minds should be void of understanding, and hearts of sense and feeling, even of heinous sins, in time. "Better," said the godly martyr, "sit in the stocks of this world, than of an ill, or accusing conscience [Philpot]. And, yet, better a conscience accusing, if not desperately, than benumbed, and without feeling. The dead flesh must be eaten out of the wound, and soreness come before soundness: so must a benumbed conscience become accusing, before it can become excusing aright.

The larger conscience the better, if rightly informed. To know that to be lawful for me, which indeed is lawful, is the perfection of understanding, and strength of faith: as, on the other side, to be ignorant of it, is to be weak both "in knowledge, and faith." Rom. xiv.1. But we must here put a difference between the conscience itself, and the use of it: for the largest use of conscience is not always best, though the judgment be. Some things are so commanded, as they absolutely bind conscience, as to love God and our neighbour, &c. Some things again are so commanded in the general, as for example, the obedience of the magistrate, keeping peace with all men, and the like; as, yet, they have this particular exception, if we can without sinning on our parts: for we must not do evil that we may do good. But yet in these cases we are to be as large as we can, and to go as far as possibly we can see it lawful, in conscience of the commandment of God. Other things are in their kind indifferent, and

such as we perform for our profit, pleasure, credit, or other worldly commodity. In these we are to use less liberty of conscience, and to take heed that we give not the devil advantage, by some blast of temptation, or other, to blow us into the ditch, if we go too near the side of it. And in observing this difference, we have a conscionable use of our conscience.

It is a great question, whether an erroneous conscience be to be followed, or no: and as ill resolved by many affirmatively, after much dispute. Not to follow it is evil, and to do, or leave undone that, wherein, the man so doing, or not doing, condemns himself, and, therein, hath God also condemning him: to follow it, is for the blind to follow the blind, the blind person his blind conscience, into the ditch, and to have God condemning him in his Word, though he justify himself. Besides then the violation of the conscience, which is always evil, and a by-path on the left hand; and the following it, in evil, as a by-path on the right, which is sometimes worse, than the former, as in sins against the light of nature; there is a third, and middle way, safe and good; and that is, the informing of the conscience better by God's Word, and following it accordingly, unto which also every person is bound, for the duties of his general and special calling. It is the first duty of a man to inform his conscience aright; and then to follow the direction which it gives.

A good conscience is as the ship, in which faith saileth to heaven; and which, they that put away, "make shipwreck of faith." 1 Tim i.19. We must therefore, first get a good "conscience by the sprinkling of the heart," Heb. X.22; with the blood of Christ from the guilt of sin, and with his Spirit from the filth thereof: and having got it, must keep the same with all care, and tenderness, specially by eschewing "presumptuous sins, in which is much transgression," Psa. xix.13, and by which the consciences wasted and consumed, as iron by the rust. We offend too much, alas, through ignorance, and infirmity: let us not add to provoke the Lord by sins against conscience; in which we sin against a double voice of God, first speaking in his law, and, secondly, in our own hearts. Where this is, no marvel though the voice of faith, and witness of God's Spirit cease; and that the conscience so violated excuse not, but accuse.

CHAPTER XLVIII: OF PRAYER

No Christian exercise hath so many counterfeits as prayer' which, whilst all would seem to practice, few in truth, and experimentally know. We may say prayers, and sing prayers, and read prayers, and hear prayers, and yet not pray indeed. Yea, we may out of a kind of natural instinct, by reason of the indissoluble relation between the creature and Creator, be carried towards God, so far as to appeal unto him, or heartily wish good from him, wherein, as one saith, the soul gives testimony to God [Tertullian]' and yet be far from praying aright; that is, from making known our requests to God, according to his will, with faith in his love, and the feeling of our own wants, in our hearts. Phil. iv.6; 1 John v.14; 1 Kings viii.47, 52. And the reason why this true prayer is not every man's work, is, because God must first work it in men's hearts, by "pouring upon them the Spirit of grace, and supplication," Zech. xii.10, thereby to teach them both "what to pray, as they ought," Rom. viii.26 for matter; and how, for manner: and without the hand-leading of which Spirit we dare not in truth approach unto God [Calvin]; but do, by reason of the guilt of sin, fly from his presence, as Adam did, how nigh unto him soever we seem to draw.

Where, with the apostle, I speak of making our requests known to God; my meaning is not, that we pray to the intent to inform God, but ourselves, both what our wants are, which we desire supply of, and from whom also we expect it: nor yet to move God to do that which before he purposed not, as one man is moved by the importunity of another; but to move ourselves, and make our own hearts believe [Austin] the performance of that which God before both purposed, and promised: for therefore David found in his heart to pray unto God to establish his house, because God had revealed unto him, that he would build his house. 2 Sam. viii.16, &c. And if we look for this honor at our children's hands, that they should ask of us such things as they want, and as we purpose to bestow upon them: how much more is it agreeable to our duty, and God's right, that we by prayer beg at his hands all good things both purposed, and promised by him aforehand.

By this all things are sanctified to our use, which are sanctified in themselves by the Word of God; by it we have spiritual right to our daily bread, 1 Tim. Iv.4, 5; in what abundance, and by what natural, or civil right soever we possess it before; by it we obtain many good things of all sorts, at God's hands, unto which we could attain by no art or industry or other help: as the favorites of kings get more by begging, than any other can do by any other faculty. Besides, as by conversing with men, we do by little and little, learn their manners, and have

bred between them and us a certain mutual affection: so by our conversing with God in prayer, we learn the manners of heaven, and feel increase both of love in us to God, and of God to us [Taffin]. Lastly, by prayer we obtain with the good things prayed for, the confirmation of our faith in God's goodness towards us, whereof he giveth us testimony in hearing and granting our requests, put up unto his Majesty. And in this respect, a good thing received by prayer hath a double good to it.

God is to be invocated not only with the heart, and with the tongue, but, as one speaks, with the hand also [Seneca]; as "Asa and the men of Judah prayed to God, and fought with their enemies." 2 Chron.xiii.14. And for us to ask anything at the hands of the Lord, which withal we do not offer ourselves ready instruments to effect, and bring to pass; is to tempt God's power, and to abuse his goodness. To pray for that which we desire not, is to mock with his Majesty, as Austin confesseth of himself, that in his youth he begged of God chastity and continence, but was afraid, lest he should be heard too soon of him [Austin]. All things live by heart: and the life of prayer stands in the heat of earnest and fervent desire. And how should we make account, that God should hear us, if we hear not ourselves? or look that God should be mindful of us, if we ourselves mind not, with intention of thought and desire what we ask of him?" [Cyprian] I, saith the father, prayed, when I was little, with no little affection, that I might not be beaten in the school [Austin]. But how many grown men pray but with little, if any, affection, that they may not be beaten in hell! Our prayers must be earnest, as well for small things, as great; temporal, as eternal; but with difference of degrees of earnestness, according to the degrees of goodness, or the necessity of the thing prayer for. But as for faith, our very degree should be the same, whatsoever the thing be, which we pray for, according to God's will: seeing the truth of his promise, upon which our faith resteth, is the same in all things small and great, and always infallible. We ought as well and as much to believe a small thing, as a great, if God have promised it, and as he hath promised, because his truth and power are as great in performing all things, though with different degrees of his love. He hath not absolutely promised temporal good things in the particulars, and so sometimes denies them in love to his children, as seeing them unfitting for them; and sometimes again he grants the desires of his enemies in wrath and indignation; as he did of the rebellious Israelites desiring quails. Besides, if the Lord should not sometimes grant unto his that ask him, the good things of this life, even plenteously, men would think they belonged not to him. Psa. Lxxviii.24. If he should grant them to all, and always, it would be thought, that for them, and them alone, he were to be served; and so in serving him men should not be godly, but covetous [ibid.]. But above all things, we must take heed we ask nothing evil of God; for that were to transform, and turn him, what in us lies, into Satan himself.

Whosoever, saith one, will bring his enterprises to good effect, must begin with prayer to God, and end with praising him [Gregory Nazianzen]. And he that begins not his work in that manner, specially being of any difficulty or weight, is in danger, if it succeed, rather to end in his own praises, than in God's; and if it succeed not, he may thank his own profaneness in passing by God. And as we are to pray upon all occasions, so specially in the time of trouble; as children are always running to their fathers, but chiefly, when they get hurt or fear danger. Then even hypocrites are forced to God; and this, partly, out of a natural desire of relief, and partly, by natural persuasion of the power, and goodness of the Creator, by which he is able, and willing to help his distressed creature: and so Jonah's mariners in the extremity of the storm, "went every one to his god." Jonah i.5. But as God is a sanctuary to fly unto for his faithful servants, in the time of need, whither he leads them by his Holy Spirit given them: so it is not faith, but impudence, for hypocrites, and such as in their quiet and prosperous estate, have not hearkened to God, speaking to them in his Word, and works, to press upon him in their affliction, for help, and succor, without true, and unfeigned repentance, and sorrow, as well, yea more, for sin than punishment, accompanying it. And "though they call up him, he will not answer: though they seek him early, they shall not find him." Prov. i.28. And if "he that stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, shall cry himself, and not be heard." Prov.xxi.27, how much more he that stops his ears against the Lord calling and crying unto him in his Word! The prayers of such are abominable, and sin. Prov.xxviii.9; Psa.cix.7. And how miserable must his state needs be, unto whom that becomes sin, by which the godly obtain remedy against sin, and all other miseries!

A readiness to pray earnestly to God for good things, and the same improved accordingly, is a kind of pawn from heaven to him that hath it, that he shall receive the good things prayed for: both because all true prayer is by "the teaching of the Spirit of God, which searcheth the mind of God," Rom.xiii.26; 1 Cor.ii.10, 11, and so acquaints him therewith, in whom it dwells: and also because such a disposition hath faith not only joined with

it as a companion, but as the very parent of it; which faith on man's part, ever presupposeth a promise on God's. From the use, and fruit of this heavenly grace of prayer nothing can keep him, that keeps himself in the favour of God; though many things can from other exercises of religion. Not want of fellowship of men, nor solitariness of place, nor depth of dungeon, nor darkness of the night, nor thickness of walls neither: but his devout prayers will find way of ascending unto God [Cyril]. Blessed be his name who hath provided for his poor servants in their most doleful, and desolate estate, this ready means of Divine comfort, whereof they, in whom his Spirit dwells, cannot possibly be deprived!

Prayer in secret, and by him that is alone with God, hath these advantages above that which is public, and in the church: first, that it is less in danger of the taint of hypocrisy. The proud Pharisee, as well as the humble Publican goes to the temple to pray: and "the hypocrites love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men," Luke xviii. 10; Matt. xi. 5. He that prays in secret, doth it to be seen of God. Secondly, in private, a Christian may descend to such particulars, as in public, or before others, he will not, nor ought to mention. Thirdly, he may in private, use such expressions, and outward manifestations, for the better passage of his heart's affection, specially being perplexed with sorrow or fear, as before others were unseemly, and immodest. "In that day of the great mourning in Jerusalem, when they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him in bitterness; every house and family shall mourn apart and their wives apart." Zech. xii. 11, &c. On the other side, public prayer wants not its prerogatives: as first, that it is performed in the order, and ordinance of the Church, which the other is not. Secondly, that in the church and congregation, many agreeing touching a thing to be asked, have a special promise, that it shall be done for them of their Father in heaven, Matt. xxiii. 19; upon whom they set, by their prayers, as it were, in a troop [Tertullian]. Lastly, in our public prayers, and praises of God, we do give testimony of his providence in governing the world, and all our affairs; and that he is present with his Church, and hears their request; for the convincing of atheists, and epicures; and confirmation of others in believing undoubtedly his care over his people and servants.

CHAPTER XLIX: OF OATHS AND LOTS

There is a great affinity between an oath and a lot. Both the one and the other serve to "end controversies, and cause contentions to cease," Heb. xi. 16; Prov. xviii. 18, not easily or conveniently otherwise to be decided. In both, men as it were, renounce themselves, and all other creatures; and appeal to God's special providence. In an oath we appeal to God, 2 Cor. i. 23, as a wise and righteous witness and judge, knowing what is truth, and hating and punishing falsehood and lies. In a lot we appeal to God, as to an absolute Lord, for the disposing of persons and things, by his more singular work of providence, Prov. xvi. 33: unto which alone he that casts the lot, refers himself, if he mock not both God and man; wholly renouncing his own wit and skill every way, for the furthering of this chance, event, or lot, rather than that. Some may be, and are too scrupulous in both. But a thousand times more are too profanely prodigal of the one and other.

In an oath we desire God, as the searcher of hearts, and patron of truth to testify with us, that we deceive not: and withal, to take vengeance on us, if we do deceive [Chemnitius]. It is a part of God's worship, though much used civilly, as civil things are religiously: in which we make clear and solemn confession of God's presence, wisdom, truth, justice, and omnipotency. There is in it no shadow of any shadow, or type: and therefore no color, why it should not be moral and perpetual, and as lawful for us now, as for the Church before Christ.

It must be taken "in truth, in wisdom and in righteousness." Jer. iv. 2. In truth of thing, and so the same known to him that takes it, in an oath assertory: and, with firm purpose of heart, in an oath promissory. There are, saith one, three bonds or degrees of confirmation of truth. First, a bare affirmation: secondly, an assertion: thirdly, an oath [Perkins]. IN the first of the three we only give our word, as they say, by yea or nay: "and whatsoever is above this, (to wit, in ordinary communication) is of evil." Matt. v. 37. When our bare word will not be taken, and the weight of the matter requires it, we do pawn our best jewels, as our truth, faith, and verity in an asseveration; as Christ our Lord confirmed divers his weighty sayings with a doubled amen. But now, if men will not accept of our pledge neither, we procure God for our surety in an oath; unto whose justice we also enter counter-bond, for punishment by him, if we deceive. And an oath being the strongest bond of truth that is, and so avowed by God himself, who, when he would confirm unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, when he had no stronger bond, interposed an oath, and swore: and when he had no greater to swear by, swore by himself,

Heb.xi.12-17; it followeth, that they, who are either without conscience what they swear, or can dispense, or be dispensed with in their consciences having sworn, though “to their own hindrance,” Psa.xv.4, are both impious towards God, and treacherous to men; and such as do really outlaw themselves from all human societies; as neither deserving credit with them, nor fellowship amongst them. Secondly, we must swear in judgment, with prudent consideration of the thing, together with the circumstances, to which we so straitly bind ourselves: as in an oath promissory, first, that it be possible unto us; else we mock both men to whom, and God by whom, we swear: secondly, that the thing be lawful which we tie ourselves unto. To bind ourselves to that which is evil by an oath, is to make sure work to do evil. Lastly, the matter must be of some weight, and such as becomes the majesty of God, whom we thus far interest in it. Now what Christian heart, any way tender of God’s glory, bleeds not at the world’s impiety this way? Which fears not to call the glorious majesty of God, to witness, upon such trifling occasions, as for which no wise man but would be ashamed to call his meanest neighbor, yea or servant either? Lastly, we must swear in righteousness, that is, both according to his meaning, being made known unto us, to whom, and for whose satisfaction we swear [Bernard]; as also for warrantable, and good ends, as the glory of God, our own and others’ good, his satisfaction to whom we swear; and for the ending, and not the beginning of strife [Cicero], else we prostitute God’s name either to our own, or other men’s lusts.

Common and light swearing argues such a degree of irreverence of God’s majesty, as many truly, and boldly say, that the heart of a common and customary swearer is void of all grace, and true fear of God. And in weighing with myself with admiration and horror, the customary swearing amongst so many, considering that there is nothing in it, as in other sins, either profitable or pleasant or of credit in the world, or that brings either reasonable or sensual good; I have made account, that, besides imitation of one another, and custom, which makes it half natural to some, and a conscience guilty of want of credit in others, which moves many to swear that they may be believed, and want of it in not a few, who strive, by accessory oaths, to supply their defect of matter or other inability of speech, there is in this swearing-vein a deeper mystery of mischief, than ordinary: and that indeed men take it up, specially, in the devil’s intention, who sets them a-work, and not a little in their own, in direct opposition of God, and because he in his law hath so severely prohibited it. If God had not in his Word so expressly and severely forbidden it, as he hath done, certainly there would not be the least part of it used, that is. Graceless men seem therein, to affect a professed contempt of God; and withal, an opinion from men, that they fear nothing, neither God, nor devil, as they say. But God will make them feel, that fear not the “guilt of taking his glorious name in vain,” Exod.xx.7, which all creatures ought to honor and reverence.

This sin being directly against God’s majesty, he reserves, by his providence, the punishment of it ordinarily to himself; spiritually, by hardness of heart and impenitence, in this life, usually to the end thereof: and both bodily and ghostly, by hell-fire for ever. Where it is also like, that the devils and damned men do and will swear and curse in their utter rejection from God, and intolerable torment; and so make their sin and course of blaspheming as endless as their punishment for it.

CHAPTER L: OF ZEAL

Zeal is by some well defined the heat, and intention of all affections; and not either any one simple affection, or composition of divers; I add, of the understanding also. So men meditate zealously, and love zealously, and hate zealously, and rejoice zealously, and mourn zealously, and with great intention of heart. The like is to be said of all the rest of the affections. As nothing lives without natural heat; so neither lives he the life of Christ indeed, who is destitute of Christian zeal to warm him in his affections and actions, specially in matter of God’s worship and service; in which whether wrong or right, lukewarmness is odious and loathsome. “The Lord will spew out of his mouth the lukewarm” Rev.iii.16, whether wine or water.

Worldly-wise men despise zeal, as prejudicial to wisdom and discretion. So Festus judged Paul, mad; and Michael accounted David, as one of the fools, for the singular zeal of God which they manifested. But even this “foolishness of God is wise than men.” 1 Cor. i.25. Yet is it certain, that men of great knowledge and judgment do seldom make that manifestation of zeal, which weaker persons do. The former have their spirits most in their brains, and are exercised specially in the disquisition and discerning of truth from falsehood, and of good from evil: the latter have them most in their hearts, and accordingly give themselves to the affectionate pursuit of that, which they conceive to be true, and good; and alike to the avoiding, and impugning of the contrary. Some deceive others by the pretence of zeal, which they put on for their advantage, as stage-players do visors,

till their part be played. And thus Ishmael deceived the forty men of Samaria, Jer. xli.6 with his crocodile tears. Also there are not a few, who deceive both others, and themselves, by seeming to both, either to have the zeal of God, which they wholly want, or much more, than they have. And of this number was Jehu, how loud soever he cried to Jehonadab, "Behold the zeal, which I have for the house of the Lord," 2 Kings x.16: whereas in truth, that, which most set him a-work, was zeal for his own house; though it may be, he thought not so. Besides craftiness in this Jehu's zeal, there are two other properties: the one suspicious, where it is found; and the other odious. The former is a furious march against evil, without an answerable pursuit of, and affection unto the contrary good. Many are vehemently carried against anti-christian devices in truth, or so appearing unto them; in whom yet appears little love and affection to that which is of Christ in their own judgment. Such are rather carried by their own flesh, than led by the Spirit of God. The other is cruelty. To be aright and truly zealous cannot but be good; seeing so many, and those wise men, desire, at times, to seem so, though they be not. True zeal must be for God, and from God, and according to God: and having God both for beginning and end, and rule of direction, it cannot but itself be good and godly. It must be for the Lord, and for the furtherance of his glory in the obedience of his will, and in man's salvation; and not for our own, or other men's, by purposes. And if it so fall out, that by one and the same thing God's cause, and our own profit, credit, or other worldly advantage be promoted; we had need keep a jealous eye over ourselves, that we serve not our turn on God, by making his ends, as it were, a bridge to our own, as Jehu did. Secondly, as the fire of the altar came from heaven; so must our coal of zeal be fetched thence, as being the work of God's Spirit in our hearts, in the use of prayer, meditation upon the Word of God read and heard, the examples of others godly, as it were, riding in the fiery chariot of Elijah, and the like holy means; by which this Divine fire is kindled, and nourished in men's breasts. Thirdly, it must be according to God, both for the quality of the matter, and quantity of the intention of affection. For the former, "it is good always," even then, and then only, "to be zealous in a good matter," Gal. iv.18; and that neither lightly presumed, nor partially conceited so to be, but certainly known; else we burn not sweet incense with holy fire, but direct and dung instead thereof. Our zeal also must be apportioned to the object, and that not only considered in itself, but also in the circumstances attending upon it: in regard whereof, things not always the most good, or evil in themselves, may justly deserve at our hands, a great bent either of love to them, or hatred against them. And amongst other circumstances we must be careful so far to have respect to that of persons, as to hate evil most in them whose persons we most love; and so in our wives, children, and friends, more than in strangers; and in ourselves most of all. And he that hath not learned to bear things amiss in others, which he will not bear in himself, hath either too much fleshly zeal, or too little spiritual, or both: which two, often lodge in one breast: by which it comes to pass, that many are earnest to "pluck the mote out of their brother's eye, that perceive not the beam in their own." Matt. vii.3. Notwithstanding, as it doth not detract either from the dignity, or necessity of natural heat in our bodies, that there is found in some, an aguish and unnatural heat far greater than the natural; so neither, in truth, and just valuation of things, doth it derogate from the excellency and necessity of the heat of true zeal, and life of grace in the godly, consisting therein, that many are zealous amiss, whether knowing, and so deceiving others; or not knowing, and so deceiving themselves, "of what spirit they are," Luke ix.55.

CHAPTER LI: OF HYPOCRISY

Hypocrites have their names from stage-players [Chrysostom], as rather playing than working that which is good and virtuous; and the same, only upon the stage, and to please lookers on. And as amongst stage-players the same persons act divers parts, at divers times, and those very different one from another; so is it with the actions of hypocrites. They hold no correspondence once with another; but some of them cover and other discover their master's shame; as Noah's sons did their father's. And as such persons are never constant, for none can long play the counterfeit untired [Seneca]; so neither are they free in any one kind of good; but have a goodness rather like the water in a dead pit, forced out at times with buckets; than of a living spring, which sends out its streams freely and constantly. Yea further, as Jacob, though for his father's blessing he covered his hands and neck very cunningly, was betrayed by his tongue and voice: so, hardly can a counterfeit carry his matters so close, but that oftentimes, even in one and the same work, there will be found a jar of the parts one with another; so as either the tongue will check the hands, or the hands the tongue, or both mutually; to the showing and shaming of all.

When great hypocrites and deep dissemblers are left of God to fall into any gross or scandalous evil, they seldom or never recover their former show of religion: neither, as one saith, will the lamb's-skin, which the wolf wears, being once shorn, ever grow again: but God in judgment leaving them in some special temptation to gross wickedness, in which they lose their credit in the world, which alone they sought, and so break the hedge which formerly restrained them, doth punish their former close dissimulation with after open profaneness.

Young hypocrites commonly prove old atheists.

It may well be said, as it is in the proverb, that, Hypocrisy is spun with a fine thread: considering how hypocrites deceive, and overreach others, and oftentimes, weaker persons those, that are wiser than they; how much more, considering, how thereby they deceive themselves. In which latter there is a transgression and evil both in deceiving, and being deceived. For albeit a man may often without sin be deceived by another, yet never so by himself: seeing the spirit of a man may, if it do not always, know the things of a man. 1 Cor. ii. 11. This self-deceivableness ariseth in men either from presumption, when they think they need not; or from sloth, that they will not take the pains; or from an evil conscience, that they dare not try and examine themselves, and their works and estates with God, as they ought. Besides hypocrites by false appearances getting credit with others, come to esteem themselves better than they are, because others esteem them so [Gregory].

This hypocrisy is indeed not only a base, but a foolish evil. Base in dissembling the evil, which it hath, and is ashamed of: and in counterfeiting the good, which it hath not, and is ashamed to seem to want. And therefore notably proud people, scorning, as they used to boast, to dissemble, seldom come under this coat; but do usually appear to men, as void of grace and goodness, as they are before God. Foolish t is, if in nothing else, yet in covering form men that evil, which God seeth, and hateth, and will punish with infinitely greater both loss and shame and torment, than nay, or all men will, or can: and not only the evil dissembled, but therewith the dissimulation also, which men legally do not. Great must the hypocrite's portion be in God's plagues: with whom, as the principle, the apparently evil, as but an accessory, hath "his portion appointed," Matt. xxiv, 51. It is one thing to do a work in hypocrisy, which only hypocrites do; and another thing to do with hypocrisy, which is still ready, alas, to mingle itself with the work of God's grace in all our best actions; as Tobiah, and the rest of the heathen would have mingled themselves with the Lord's people in the building of his temple. The same may be said of unbelief, indevotion, and the like corruptions.

It is no marvel, that atheists and epicures judge all that make show of piety and godliness, specially above the size and custom of the times conceited, fantastical and very hypocrites; seeing they measure others by themselves. And knowing, that if they should make the semblance of godliness, which the others do, it should be no better in them than hypocrisy, and fancy; they conclude the same roundly upon others, from their own premises. And of this they are also desirous to persuade both themselves, and others: themselves, for a kind of envious comfort in evil, that others are as ill as they, and for their own hardening out of that imagination: others, for their miserable credit, when they are not thought lewd alone. They being themselves Sadducees would fain think others, and have them thought Pharisees by others. A tang [rank taste] of this also is to be found even in them who are not void of all goodness, towards such as a little overstep them in the ways of godliness.

Though hypocrisy be in itself a very odious thing, and so evil as it corrupts all good in him, in whom it reigns; making both his works of devotion and of mercy abominable to the Lord: yet considering how little true good is in the world; it were well, for others, at least, that there were more hypocrisy in many, than there is. Which would help both to repress in them many gross enormities, for shame, and to keep credit with men; which now, shamelessly, they practice: and also provoke them to many outward good works, for the good of others at the least, which now they wholly, and boldly neglect in professed godliness and dishonesty.

Besides, hypocrisy yields, though it intend it not, a full and loud testimony to true virtue and godliness; seeing no man, ordinarily, desires to seem but good. Now if it be a thing so desirable, even by their testimony, who want goodness, to appear good; how much more to be so indeed. What is the empty shadow to the solid body? To shut up this head: as the shadow follows the body, so doth the name and fame of good, true goodness, with equally-minded men. And instead of a thousand compasses of device which men fetch bout to obtain the name of good and virtuous, this one short, and right on way, of being good indeed would serve the turn for the procuring it from all indifferent and wise judges. The most compendious way to this honor is, that in truth a man be, as he would be accounted [Cicero], saith the heathen: how much more ought Christians, who are persuaded of God's providence in ordering this, and all his other blessings upon themselves, and others, thus both to say, and think, and proceed accordingly!

And look what recompense of honor or other reward, this plain and homely uprightness, which of all other virtues, *laudatur et alget*, is denied from men, God who seeth and loveth it, will plenteously supply. "Blessed are the perfect in way: who walk in the law of Jehovah," *Psa. cxix.1*. To choose the right way of God's law first, and then to walk uprightly in it, is to be guided by God's own Spirit to heaven.

CHAPTER LII: OF SIN, AND PUNISHMENT FROM GOD

Whatsoever swerveth from the law of God, written in the table of the heart, or of stone, whether in our nature, or actions, either in the not being of that which should be, or being of that which should not be, which two are always joined together in original sin, and often in actual, is sin, and evil: yea, the greatest; yea, the only evil indeed. Sin is worse than the devil, as having made him evil, whom God made good: yea, than all punishments, yea, than hell itself, which God prepared, and made, and is therefore good, to punish sin and sinners by. *Matt. xxv.41*. And accordingly, it was godlily said of one, that if sin and hell were set before him, the one on the one side, and the other on the other; and that he must needs go through the one of them; he would rather enter upon hell, than sin [*Anselmus*]. But blessed be God, who will assuredly keep them from hell, whose hearts are so set to keep themselves from sin, by his grace.

This sin is incident only to reasonable creatures: God the Creator being above sin; and unreasonable creatures, beneath it. For the disorders in brute beasts, they are not sin in them, to whom there is no law; but punishments of man's sin against God, who hat "subjected them to vanity," *Rom. viii.20*, thereby to testify how greatly he is offended at man's, for whom at first he made them, and all other creatures in a more excellent state [*Beza*]. The case of children is otherwise, as being reasonable creatures, made after God's image in Adam, and having the law written in their hearts, as a subject capable both of good, and evil, which brutes are not.

Although sin be only in reasonable creatures, yet is it a most unreasonable thing; otherwise it were not sin, save as it crosses true reason, either by lust against reason, or show of reason against truth. So for particular enormities; the more unreasonable, the more sinful: as lusts against nature; adultery in a married person; pride in a mean; prodigality in a needy; covetousness in him that abounds in riches; profaneness in a preacher; and so of all other vices.

All sins, save that first of Adam, and man's very last, are both sins in themselves, and effects of former sin, and causes of latter: and that not only by God's just, though severe judgment, in punishing one by another; but oftentimes also by a kind of natural, and necessary coherence and affinity. Sometimes one sin brings on another by provoking unto it, as rash anger unto strife, *Prov. xv.18*; sometimes, to back it, as Peter's denying of Christ did his after forswearing him, *Matt. xxvi.70-74*; sometimes, to conceal it, as all other evils draw on laying, and theft, and murder, many times; sometimes to maintain it, as pride doth covetousness and oppression; and sometimes, to countenance it, that it be not disgraced, as Herod's rash oath drew after it the beheading of John the Baptist. *Matt. vix.7-10*. And of these commonly a lesser draws on a greater, as lesser sticks set the greater on fire. So also by those degrees of iniquity do men proceed in one and the same particular enormity; in which, as in a chain drawing from heaven to hell, each link moveth his next, from the one, and smaller end, to the other greater. First, there is in a man concupiscence, by which he is drawn away from God, *James i.14*, unto whom he ought to cleave with the whole heart. And having once let go his hold on him, the true and unchangeable good; he is forthwith seized by some appearing and counterfeit good, and thereby enticed; as the bird by falling on the ground is taken in the snare, from which, whilst she held aloft, she was free. Upon this inveigled affection, and deceived judgment thereby, comes consent of will to have or do the thing which is evil, called by the apostle the conception of lust: which that it may bring forth sin in outward act and execution, wants nothing but opportunity. This sin perfected by a continual course therein without repentance, brings forth death unavoidably. He therefore that begins to do evil, or to forsake that which is good, in the affection of his heart, is like him that puts his feet into a pit, and lets the hold of his hands go; and without God's gracious hand catching hold of him, can never stay, till he come to the bottom of the pit of perdition. And no marvel of this progress in evil, seeing every sin, how small soever in degree, hath joined with it the contempt of God. As therefore the safest way against the flame is to quench the spark, by which it may be kindled; so against this fire of hell, to quench betimes the spark of concupiscence and lust. This is done, partly, by withdrawing from it the occasions, and incitements of, and unto sin, which are as fuel for nourishing it; as, if it be the lust of anger and revenge, not to give ear to words of provocation, *Eccl. Vii.21*, but to be as a deaf man that hears not, *Psa. xxxviii.13*; if of uncleanness, not to look upon a maid, *Job xxxi.1*; if of

drunkenness, or excess that way, not to look upon the wine, when it is red, Prov. xxiii.31, &c. The second help is by smothering the corruption in the beginning; which as fire, if it have no vent, goes out; but getting passage, breaks out into a flame. Lastly, as water, fire's contrary, quencheth it; so do the spiritual means of grace, as prayer, meditation upon God's Word, and the like, quench by degrees, the sparks of sin, and fire of hell.

The greatness of the sin is not always to be esteemed by the thing done. For, as much crookedness may be found in a small line; so may a great evil be committed in a small matter. Hereupon, he that but "gathered sticks on the Sabbath with a high hand," viz., in contempt of Moses, and of God in him, was to be "stoned by death without mercy," Numb. xv.33-36. The sin is also greater, as the temptation or occasion is less; and therefore the rich man, that having many sheep of his own took his poor neighbor's lamb to entertain his stranger withal, 2 Sam. xii.25, was adjudged worthy of death; whether we take the words, as they seemed to David, or as Nathan meant them. Likewise, the forecasting of evil exceedingly aggravates it; as with him who "devised mischief upon his bed." Psa. xxxvi.4, and after, set himself in a way to practice it: others are overtaken by sin, but such overtake sin, Gal. vi.1. So doth it not a little, if men sin, that they may sin; as it seems many swear, that they may swear: and as Austin confesseth of himself, that being a boy, he stole apples, and cast them away, when he had done. He stole, that he might steal. Lastly, sin becomes more sinful, if it have scandal, and offence of men, or other damage joined with it. Yet even for the least sin; if any sin by any, being against God's infinite majesty, may be accounted little, if God should press the same upon the conscience, and suffer Satan to urge it to the full, it would be a burden intolerable, and such as neither the heavens could bear; for the angels that sinned were cast from thence: nor paradise; for Adam for transgression was driven from then: nor the earth; for that swallowed up Dathan and Abiram for their sins; neither could any men or angels undergo it, without being borne down into the bottom of hell by it; and there only it rests, as in its proper center. Happy are they, who in the sense and feeling of the intolerable burden thereof come to Christ by faith, that he may ease them! Matt. xi.28.

The sin against the Holy Ghost, which small never be forgiven in this world, or the world to come, is not only committed by them who have sometimes professed the gospel; but by others also, though never coming so far, but being convinced of the truth thereof, do maliciously hate, blaspheme and persecute it, and therein, sin against the work of the Holy Ghost in their own hearts. And this Christ insinuates against the Scribes and Pharisees, Matt. xii.31,32, who yet never came to profess Christianity. The reason of the irremissibleness of this sin is not any defect either in the mercy of God or merits of Christ; as though the evil in it were greater, than the good in them; but for that God hath set those bounds of his grace and mercy, that he will never vouchsafe faith and repentance to that person, who once so despiseth his Spirit, in that, its holy work. And considering how oft the Scriptures speak of this sin, not only for warning of persons in themselves, but also for direction touching others so sinning; it is to be feared, that the same is more ordinary, where the gospel is preached, than the most make account of; and that many maliciously hating and persecuting, specially after some singular profession made and forsaken, true and conscionable gospellers, would do the same by the gospel itself, if they were not restrained by fear of men, and shame of the times. Matt. xii.31; Mark iii.28; 1 John v.16; Heb. vi.5, x.29; 2 Pet. ii.20; Jude 13.

The Lord often punisheth men in the same kind, wherein they have sinned, and causeth to be meted unto them with the measure, wherewith they mete to others. Matt. vii.2. Thus he drowned Pharaoh in the sea, who had formerly drowned the Israelitish infants, Exod. i.22, xiv.23; and served king Adoni-bezek, as he had served other kings before. Judges, i.6,7. And this God doth to make his justice the more conspicuous; and that men's punishments may be as glasses, wherein their sins may be seen more clearly, if not for their repentance, yet for the warning of others.

When I seriously weigh and consider the fearful and grievous punishments, which God so good and gracious hath partly executed, in this life; as upon the old world; Sodom and Gomorrah; Korah and his company; and the like: and partly threatened; as in the end of this life, in the soul; so in the end of the world, both in soul and body; and the same for measure, intolerable; and endless in continuance: Lord, think I, what sin can procure such punishment? But when, on the contrary, I consider the horrible contempt of God and his Word, even in them to whom it is daily and diligently offered: Lord, think I, what punishment can be sufficient for such sin? What is it then? Man is fearfully wicked in sinning: and God fearfully just in punishing, where, by faith and repentance, mercy is not obtained. "My flesh trembleth for dread of thee: and I fear for thy judgments." Psa. cxix.120.

Men that are able and ready accordingly to reward the virtues of good men, and well-deserving, do therein not only give them, and God in them, their due; but do give others encouragement also to apply themselves to virtuous courses, which find so good acceptance, and reward at men's hands, specially at theirs who are of place, and ability in the world. Whereas, on the contrary, for such to favor wicked and lewd persons, is really to invite, and persuade men to evil, and little better than plainly to hire both them and others to do naughtily. The former in that, their approbation, and remuneration of goodness and virtue, bear the image of God, who plenteously rewards the well-doers: the latter plainly resemble the devil, who offered Christ the glory of the kingdoms of the earth, if he would fall down and worship him. Matt. iv.9.

It is a known, and approved saying, that by rewards and punishments societies are preserved [Cicero]. And of these two, though occasion of rewards be more to be desired, yet the execution of punishments is more diligently to be looked unto, for the preserving of human societies. The reason is: because, whereas virtue, as the philosopher said, rewards itself, or more truly, if it be true, expects its reward from God; vice and villainy, on the contrary, can be restrained in the most, and worst, only by the fear of punishment [Bodin]. Neither serve human laws to make men good, but to keep them from such outrages, and extremities of evil, as into which otherwise they were in danger to break. The special use of the law of God itself, where, by his Spirit, he puts it not in men's mind, and writes it not in their hearts, is to restrain lawless persons, as murderers, whoremongers, and the like, 1 Tim. I.9,10; how much more of men's.

There is then a merciful cruelty, when men save, by severity, the persons themselves that are punished, and others also; the punishment reaching to one, or a few: and the fear and warning to many. There is, on the other side, a cruel mercy, when men by sparing, spoil both the persons offending and others, who by their impunity take boldness to offend. This foolish pity spoils the city, if the magistrate use it: so doth the fond love of parents, the family. This love, Solomon respecting the effect more than the affection calls "hatred," saying "He that spareth the rod hateth his son." Prov. xiii.24. Notwithstanding this, and that God hath left power and charge also of punishments in all societies, family, church and commonwealth, which they that exercise, bear the image of God's justice, and holiness; the honor whereof they are to preserve, and to breed, and continue in them over whom they are set, a reverend awe of their authority for their good: yet considering both man's frailty, and proneness to offend; and misery in suffering for offences: all in authority should still incline to the more favorable part, and rather to come short, than to exceed measure in punishing even where the offence is evident; and where it is doubtful, to forbear, at any hand. He that punisheth another, whether as judge or executioner either, must know legally, that he hath done evil, and deserved it: otherwise the authority of the whole world cannot bear him out, from being a murderer before God. The law which saith, "Thou shalt not murder," forbids specially violence in judgment. Besides, punishments must be administered with sorrow and commiseration; as rewards with joy and gladness. It is pity men should deserve punishments; and deserving them, pity but they should have them: yet are we to pity them in their misery also; which he that doth, remembers himself to be a man. Lastly, it is worthy the observing, which one hath, that in all punishments respect is to be had to things to come, rather than past [Seneca]. For howsoever the punishment be just only in lieu of the offence committed; yet is it profitable only, because it tends to prevent after offences, either in the person punished, or in others warned by it. And hereupon another, would not have a wise man punish, because an offence is committed, but lest it should be committed afterwards: of which the former renders this reason, that things past cannot be recalled; but things to come may be prevented [Plutarch].

Temporary torments, specially those more great, are grievous to conceive of; how much more to undergo: yet will the sad and serious consideration of those that are external eat them up, as it were, and make them seem nothing in comparison. Whereupon it was, that Polycarpus told the proconsul, who threatened to burn him, if he did not renounce Christ: "Thou threatenest me with the fire, which would burn for a time, but presently after should be extinguished: because thou art ignorant of the fire of the judgment to come, prepared for the eternal punishment of the wicked." [Eusebius] "Fear not them," then "which kill the body; but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Matt. x.28.

CHAPTER LIV: OF THE AFFECTIONS OF THE MIND

Our affections, as love, sorrow, fear, and the rest, are common to us with brute beasts; which therefore the understanding must order, that they be not brutish; and with them, the will, for its yielding of consent to their

motions or withholding it from them. But as the little sticks set the greater wood a-burning: so do they most what set the understanding and will a-working in sensual objects. For example. One sees a naturally pleasing good thing, but belonging to another, or not to him; as Achan's wedge of gold: his affection of love and appetite is inordinately carried unto it, and is ready to solicit the will to consent to the getting, and enjoying of it. But now, if the understanding do its duty, it steps in, represseth the affection, and restraineth the will, by discerning and discovering, that the good thing desired is another's, and therefore not to be desired, or had by him. But as the fumes arising from a corrupt stomach darken and dim the bodily eyes: so in sensual persons the understanding is commonly, besides its own inherent blindness, so corrupted with partial and brutish affections, as that it neglecteth all due search, and disquisition; and unadvisedly judgeth that good, which is pleasing to appetite, and sense: and so being swayed, and led by the affections, as a foolish wagoner by his horses, draws with it the will's consent; which obtained, the evil is done in God's account, and wants only opportunity for outward effect.

Although the sea of the affections be the soul, whose motions they are, and not the body's: yet do they more or less vehemently and efficaciously act, and exercise themselves, as the blood, and spirits, the soul's immediate instruments, are more or less fitted to their hand. Hence is it, that anger in the heart moved by some occasion, is so vehement in a choleric body; sorrow, or fear in a melancholic; and so for the rest.

These our affections are either merely natural in us; or sanctified by grace; or morally corrupt and inordinate. Nature, and so natural affection, is content with a little; corruption not with a great deal: as the third, which is natural, is quenched with a draught, or two; but that which is unnatural and unwholesome, not with a whole vessel of drink. This and the reason of it he lays down wittily, that saith, natural desires are finite, but those arising from false opinion have no limits: as he that goes his right way, hath some end of his journey; he that wanders, none [Seneca]. And as for sanctified affections, they, alas, are too feeble in us: and as Jehu was known by his furious marching; so may they be, by their soft and lazy pace: neither, if they were excessive, were they sanctified, that is, directed by grace, and good reason: nor are they easily so, if they be anything vehement; but have commonly too much flesh mingled with them. And no marvel: for setting our affections above, where Christ is," Col. iii.2, and whither the Spirit of grace advanceth them, we climb up the hill, and withal draw after us the clog of our flesh, lusting the contrary way, Gal. v.17: whereas sensual men led by their lusts, go down the hill, and are carried headlong to evil. Besides, sensual objects are present to the outward senses, by which the affections are moved: but things spiritual are seen afar off, 2 Pet. i.9, as needing the direction and discourse of faith for provoking of affection unto them; which makes their work in this case more weak and slow. Yet being created faculties, they are the greater the better, if rightly ordered. And so it is not improbably said by some, that Christ had the greatest fear, sorrow, anger, &c. upon him, that ever man had, or could have. But as the stronger the horses in the wagon are, though the better, yet the more dangerous; so are those horses of the soul in us, lest by misguidance they overthrow all [Plato].

And as for violent, and inordinate affections; the person, in whom they are found, how wise, or well meaning soever otherwise, or howsoever bent upon some good course, is no more to be trusted to; than the chariot drawn by unbroken horse, going, for the present, quietly on, and in a good way, but which will quickly take a toy, and endanger the overthrow of all.

As in a tempestuous sea, the waves, in the same place, are sometimes lifted up; and the depths, at other times, disclosed: so in an unmortified, and passionate heart, one unlawful, and inordinate passion often breaks into the contrary, as evil, and inordinate, as it: as did Amnon's inordinate love to his sister Tamar into an excessive hatred. 2 Sam. xiii.2. So some of extremely prodigal, become extremely covetous; of credulous, suspicious; of mad-merry, sad without measure. The cause is, for that such persons are not led by the lore of reason, or conscience; but carried headlong by pangs of passion; and withal driven by the devil, and so must needs go, and run to; though up and down the same way; and forward and backward, after his will.

As in a fish-pond some one great pike devours both the lesser fish of other kinds, and of its own also; so in divers, some one affection is so predominate, as it eats up not only reason and conscience, but with them, almost all other affections. Many are so soured with discontent and sorrow, that they appear to have place left for nothing else in their heart: some are set upon so merry a pin, as if they had the image of laughter which Lycurgus set up for the Lacedemonians ever before them. Others again are so overgrown with anger, as they seem to have no blood but choler running in their veins. If any danger be coming towards them, which all reason would teach them to fear specially, they will pick a quarrel at something in or about it, to set anger, and

indignation a-work. If God send grievous crosses upon them, and thereby call them to mourning; if shall go hard but they will find what to be angry at, in some person, or other, to turn the stream that way.

It is some disparagement ordinarily to the government of a wise man, specially in their eyes who have no share in the motive, to make great manifestation of affection, one or other: and therefore Joseph when he would make himself known affectionately to his brethren, commanded all the Egyptians out of the place. Gen. xlv.1. So Zechariah foretelling the extreme mourning, which shall be by the families in Jerusalem, when God shall pour upon them the Spirit of grace, shows, that every family shall mourn apart, and their wives apart. Zech. xii.10.

Yet are there cases, in which it stands as well with wisdom to manifest great affections, as with grace or nature to have them. And this David prudently considered, and practiced, at Abner's funeral. 2. Sam. iii.31.

We should order our affections before we have any special provocations; and set down with ourselves, what may be, beforehand, that if such or such a thing come to pass, we will allow it such and such a measure of its compatible affection, and no more: that as fierce dogs, though provoked by other men's voices, yet are quieted by their master's voice, to which they are used; so the fierce motions of the mind may be, by reason's voice, with which they are formerly acquainted, for that purpose, made still, and quiet [Plutarch].

These motions and affections are well ordered, when they rise and fall according to the variety, and weight of objects [Lactantius]. To be greatly affected with small occurrences, is womanlike weakness: little, with great matters, stoical blockishness. And methinks, he that hath a life to lose and considers it well, should not easily come to fear excessively the loss of his goods: nor he the loss of his bodily life, who hath a soul to lose, or save for ever. And therefore Christ our Lord bids, "Fear not him that can kill the body," and then hath shot his sting, and can hurt no more; but "fear him, who can cast both body and soul into hell." Matt. x.28.

As physicians fearing a man's over bleeding at the nose, open a vein in the arm, thereby to turn the course of the blood another way: so we, finding one affection, or other inordinate in us, and like to overflow; if we cannot so rule and repress it, as is meet, by good reason, shall do well to set some other affection a-working, by some moving and lawful object; that so the stream being turned another way, we may disappoint the passion, which we cannot so well order. For example: If a man find himself in danger of exorbitancy in anger, it is good for him to set a-foot sorrow, or fear, by some such lawful object, as God offers him: and so for other passions of the mind. Or if the stream of the affection happen to run so strong, as that we cannot well turn it another way; it is wisdom to get it upon some such object in the same way, as wherein it may freely take its scope: as the horse that cannot be stayed, yet may be guided into such a way, as in which there is no great danger, how fast soever he runs; which may also be so heavy, as will keep him from running fast in it.

Thus, if sorrow, fear or anger be like to work inordinately in us, let us set them upon our sins; and so the danger of all excess will soon be over, for the most part. And, indeed, it is no small point of Christian wisdom, for a man to provide fit matter for his affections especially predominant in him, to be exercised in. "Is any among you afflicted?" saith the apostle, "let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms." James v.13. And by this means he shall neither lose his own advantage for good; nor further Satan's for evil, by any passion or affection in him.

CHAPTER LV: OF FEAR

Fear hath only evil for the object; either evil in itself, as is sin; or to him that feareth; as are the effects thereof, temporary, or eternal punishment, and the anger of God inflicting them. It is a base affection, and the cognizance of the creature's infirmity, showing him to be subject to evil; from the fear whereof only the Creator is absolutely free. And so, whereas courage, and stoutness of heart, though none of the best, procure unto men a kind of respect in the eyes of others; fear, though better used, makes them more contemptible. A lion is more regarded, than many oxen; though one ox be of more use both for labor and meat, and otherwise, than many lions. God loves rather a good, than a great heart. And in the law, God's sacrifices were to be offered of lambs and kids and doves and pigeons, fearful creatures, and innocent withal; and not of lions and eagles; though they be the kings of beasts and birds.

There is in man, a threefold fear of God, arising from a threefold apprehension of his majesty: the first, is of God, as our glorious Creator, and Governor; and this is natural: the second, as of a just, and angry Lord; which is servile: the third, as of our gracious Father in Christ, called and being filial. All these are found in the true fearers of God in this life; though the middle, least, which "perfect love driveth out," 1 John iv.18, and in them, the last only reigns. To fear sin more than punishment, which they of the last sort do, is to love God more than

ourselves: on the contrary, to fear punishment more than sin, which the second disposition leads to, is to love ourselves more than God; considering, that by sin God is offended, and we by punishment: and that sin in the committing of it seems good to us, and ill to God; and that punishment, in the executing of it, is good in respect of God's justice, though evil to our sense.

The holy fear of God, the Scripture put many times for the whole service of God, as being a general virtue diffusing itself into all the parts thereof. For we must trust to God with fear, love him with fear, obey him with fear: and in conscience and consideration of his excellency and our own frailty, "work out our salvation with fear and trembling," Phil. ii.12; that is, do all things tending thereunto, with that affection of heart. And considering our boldness, as king Saul saith of himself, to step aside, to our destruction; it is worthily advertised by the wise man, that "he is blessed, who feareth always," Prov. xxviii.14: that is, who sets himself in God's sight continually, making him the judge of all his ways and works, out of a serious consideration within himself, unto what sin and misery for sin, he is exposed, poor creature as he is. Besides, this fear of God, is called the "beginning of wisdom," and that partly, because the true reverence of his majesty in the heart makes a man careful and studious to know and do the things which please him and to avoid the contrary: as also for that God blesseth such an affection with good understanding, and reveals his secrets to them that fear him. Psa. xxv.14. Whereas, on the other side, a profane heart is commonly punished with a foolish head, and mind void of discerning, specially in particulars, what is good, or evil.

God would have them that hearken unto him, not only safe, but also secure, and quiet from fear of hurt, and evil. Prov. i.24. For which purpose the Scriptures so oft both exhort them, not to fear, and propound arguments of encouragement unto them, not to exempt their hearts wholly from fear, for that were to exalt them above the condition of mortal and frail men; but so far to bring that unruly passion under the regiment of faith, as that by it a man be not drawn to do anything evil, and unlawful, nor to forbear any requisite good in his place, nor to be divided in his heart, nor to shame himself, nor to discourage others in that which is good. It is wisdom for us so far to fear an evil, as to quicken our careful use of all good means to escape it; or being a cross inevitable, to prepare us the more patiently to bear it, as not coming unlooked for: in which regard, Christ spake to his disciples, beforehand, of their approaching persecutions, that when they came, they should not be offended. John xvi. 2. And further to fear evil, is an evil both of sin and punishment; and that, of unbelief specially, if being hindered by fear we dare not do that, which appertains to our calling, or be driven by it, to do that which becomes not piety [Calvin]. Otherwise, to be fearful of heart, and yet not to be overcome by it, more commends a man, than if he were without fear [Chrysostom]. This fear though it be something excessive, if not extreme, hath this good in it, that it makes a man the more circumspect, and causeth him to call his wits, and other helps, about him, as men in danger use to do. It helps in deliberation and preparation, though it hinder something in execution. But and if it once get dominion over a man and rule in him, there is no such cruel and tyrant-like master within or without him. It makes him cruel, and a tyrant to others, from whom it may any way be suspected that danger can come unto him; and provokes to the oppression of whatsoever is in his way. Neither yet doth it exercise less tyranny over the fearful himself. It bereaves him of the use of understanding, drives sleep from his eyes which sorrow procures, disables the tongue from speaking, and all the other parts of the body from doing their office, by withdrawing the blood and spirits from them to the affrighted heart. And, whereas, men by serious consideration and thought of things in hand are holpen against most other affections, the objects of fear the more they are minded, and thought upon, are the more terrible. Some have through extremity of fear become grey-headed in a week or two, as one Mr. Baynings of London, as I have heard: and some in one night, as is testified of the Duke of Mantua's kinsman, Franciscus Gonzaga, unto whom, being committed to prison upon suspicion of treason, thought and care, in one night brought grey hair, by subduction of nourishment [Scaliger]. And, if we would further and in another and worse kind, take knowledge of this tyrant's cruelty, in constraining even good men to do evil; we may see Abraham, for fear, denying his wife; David, his reason; Peter his master Christ in his person; and many continually in his truth, less or more. He is a man, that can overcome excessive fear by reason: but a child of God, that can overcome it, by true and sound faith in God's good providence over him.

Some, though lambs amongst lions, yet are lions amongst lambs; fierce and terrible towards their underlings, which cannot or dare not resist them; and like the young ruffian in the poet, that showed his courage in beating a silly woman and poor bond-slave, that durst not strike again [Terence]. Such believe not; or forget that they have a Master in heaven, whose terrors if they knew, with the apostle, they durst not, in such sort, be terrible

unto others. Col. iv.1; 2 Cor. v.11. There are many governors in families and commonwealths; who, if difference arise between them of the last sort and their subjects; or between them of the first and their wives, children and servants, will domineer marvellously, and be so stout and stern, as if they were made of iron and steel: whereas, on the contrary, if they have to do with such as stand upon even ground with them, especially such as have a little the higher ground; they show all cowardice, and base fear, suffering them even to play with their noses. Such a one was Rehoboam, who spake roughly to the people under him; but had no courage against the king of Egypt; and a little against Jeroboam, that rebelled against him, as that his own son Abijah taxed him of tenderness, that is, feebleness of heart, after his death. 2 Chron. x.12, 13. Such another also was Nabal; so evil, that none of his servants or family or others of whom he was secure, might speak to him: but perceiving himself to have been in danger, though it were over, by David, whom, and whose men he had rated and reviled, in his drunken security, at the very hearing of it, his heart died in him, and he became like a stone. 1 Sam. xxv. 37, 38. These lion's paws and roarings amongst the poor beasts are odious in civil administrations; more, in domestic; most of all, in church governments, where they are found; which ought to be specially doctrinal and exemplary. Tit. i.5, 9. Let us fear, as we ought, the doing of wrong to others, over whom we have advantage: and God will so provide, that we shall not excessively fear hurt from them who have power to hurt us. 1. Pet. v.1-3.

CHAPTER LVI: OF ANGER

Anger, as fear and sorrow and other affections of averseness, hath only evil, in truth, or appearance, for the object on which it worketh. But whereas fear and sorrow, out of a kind of impotency, withdraw the person fearing or sorrowing, from the evil feared or sorrowed for; anger in strength, and stoutness, as being the strongest of all affections, intends the driving away and dispelling of the evil [Scaliger]; at and against which it riseth. Which, being also, as Chrysippus calls it, and experience confirms, a blind thing; there is nothing so sacred and precious which it will spare; but without difference it flieth, where the wings are not clipt, upon friends as well as foes [Plutarch]; and upon unreasonable creatures, as well as upon men. And so Xerxes in anger beat the sea, and threatened the mountains, if they hindered his passage [Seneca]. Yea it will not spare the truth itself, if it be against its purpose, Lev. xxiv.11-14: no, nor God neither, as we may see, not only in furious blasphemers, or piercers of God, as the word imports, but even in the prophet himself, who was angry even to the death at God, for sparing Nineveh. Jonah iv.4-9. It is therefore rightly called a short fury, as differing from plain madness in nothing, but time [Cato]. And, in truth, it is pity, that they, in whom it reigns, specially pleasing themselves in its fits, are not chained up like madmen; or that they have either riches or strength or authority or wit or anything else to hurt with. It were good he had no other thing in his power, who is not in his own power; as no angry man is [Seneca].

If a wrathful man saw himself in a glass, when his fit is upon him; his eyes burning, his lips fumbling, his face pale, his teeth gnashing, his mouth foaming, and other parts of his body trembling, and shaking [Plate, Seneca, Jerome]; or but some of these deformities; he would, and worthily, loathe himself, and it may be amend things, for after, as some have done. But if the same person saw the face of his soul, in the glass of God's Word, and the deformities thereof, in God's sight, he would much more abhor himself, and start aside, as terrified at the sight of so hideous a monster. This rash anger, whether causeless or immeasurable, where some cause is, hath always evil in it, Matt. ii.16; though it be never so speedily repressed: upon which if the sun be let go down, and that it lodge all night in the heart, it becomes malice by the morning. Men nourish it in pride, and because they will not give place to other men; not considering, that in so doing, they give place to the devil, Eph. iv.26, 27, and become like him in malice, wherein he exceeds himself. This anger God so brands, as he scarce doth any created affection, in forbidding the making of friendship with an angry man, and walking with the furious, for fear of learning his ways, and getting a snare to the soul. Prov. xxii.24. For though all affections becoming inordinate, are vicious, and that God would have his servants watch diligently against the excesses of sorrow, fear, joy, and the like; yet doth he never give warning of the fellowship of such, as in whom they reign, for fear of learning them: neither is there that danger of smiting by other passions, which is by this.

If Solomon were a wise man and took not his marks amiss, who so oft, and plainly sets out a fool by rash anger and wrath, there are many more fools in the world, than go in the motley coats; and the same no small fools neither; considering how many, specially of them who take a privilege from their greatness, to give scope to

their passions, either affect or give way to inordinateness in this kind; as if otherwise they could not sufficiently manifest their wisdom in discerning, and goodness in disliking, and greatness in controlling things amiss in others. But as vain-glorious men desire to show their authority in needless commands; so do fools affect the showing of their wisdom, goodness, and greatness, in needless anger.

The links whereof a chain may be made to tie up this fierce dog, that he do not more hurt, than good in biting, and commit not a greater offence by unadvisedness and excess, than the person hath done [Jerome], which he is set upon; are specially these: First, lowness of mind, by which he that thinks not himself great, thinks no great hurt done, if he be a little wronged: whereas, on the other side, the high-minded conceives great indignation, that his understanding should be opposed, his authority neglected, his will crossed, his credit impeached, or anything said or done importing any undervaluation of his presumed worth of himself. Christ the Lord teacheth both by example and doctrine, that humility and meekness are inseparable companions. Matt. xi.29. A second, consideration what is just with God, in regard of our sins, to bring upon us, though by man's unjust provocations and injuries: and this was David's remedy, when Shimei reviled him. A third, true love to others, which is not easily nor excessively provoked to anger, 1 Cor. xiii.5, at such as wrong us; but rather moves to pity them, as the father wished Scapula, a great persecutor of the Christians, that if he would not spare them, he should spare himself, who should have the worst of it [Tertullian]. A fourth, is a little delay and forbearance, either for the inward working or outward uttering of anger, whilst we gather our wits about us; which he that can bring himself to, will often by finding just cause of anger at himself, forbear being angry at others. And to this tended the counsel given unto Caesar, that he should neither do, nor speak anything in anger, till he had said over the Greek alphabet [Seneca]. A fifth is, not to take liberty to be a little angry at trifles, for he that useth himself to that, will not keep from extremity in great matters [Plutarch]. The last is to avoid occasions of provocation, whether persons or things: which whilst angry folk, for the most part, affect, they gather fuel for the fire, wherewith to burn themselves, hasten to discover their own shame, and make way for the devil's temptations, unto which they give way afterwards.

CHAPTER LVII: OF HUMILITY AND MEEKNESS

Humility is that virtue by which we are taught to value according to, and not above the worth, ourselves and all the good things, which God hath given us. I say, according to the worth; for men may, as one saith, not subject, and abject themselves [Seneca]; and sometimes, we see men, specially pressed with great burdens of temptations, in a kind of abjectness of mind, to molder away, and make their gold little better than dross, by undervaluing God's goodness towards them. Such are unthankful to God, uncomfortable in themselves, and unprofitable unto others, in comparison. Besides, there is a humble hypocrisy, when men so subject themselves to others, specially superiors, as they reverence their vices [Gregory]; or suffer their reason, more, if their faith and consciences, to be captive to their lusts. And, hence, comes the worshipping of angels, and other points of will-worship, Col. ii.18; in which the show of wisdom in the inventors and imposers, and of humility in the followers bear sway. Lastly, there is a desperate humility, when out of an evil and accusing conscience, a man knows and judges himself out of God's favor and a vile person. But now the most of this humility hath joined with it no small pride. That of the first kind is very rare; and the infinitely more common and dangerous disease is the overswelling of the heart, through excess of self-love, and presumption. Self-love disposeth a person to think himself, and to desire to be thought of others, to have the excellency, which he hath not. Herewith the mind is easily corrupted, and vain man induced to presume of that goodness in himself, which he wants, and to be lifted up with that, which he hath. Many by stooping lose of their bodily height; but few stoop too low, in conceit of themselves. Yet as Christ Jesus ceased not to be God, though he humbled himself to the taking upon him the form of a servant, Phil. ii.7: so neither is any man either in truth, or account of God, or good men, the less, but much more the excellent for his lowly appearance to himself or others. Yea, as the same Christ our Lord stepped from the shameful cross to the height of his glory, and exaltation: so he that will make any high building in Christianity, must first think of, and lay this low foundation of humility [Austin].

This lowness of mind is the mother of meekness, as Christ insinuates, saying, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly," Matt. xi.29. The humble-minded, if a cross come or injury be offered, bears them moderately, as thinking moderately of himself, yea meanly in regard of his sins, and the misery to which they expose him. The proud through want of consciousness hereof, if he be a little crossed is fierce and violent: Jove dignas concipit iras.

What? He! A man of his worth so to be used? specially by such a one? And as the boar whets and sharpens his tusks in his own foam; so doth a proud person whet and sharpen his heart, hands, and tongue to indignation and revenge, in the frothy and foamish imagination of his own worth.

Seeing that in evil days the meek and mild in spirit following Christ's example, who "was as a lamb dumb before the shearer, not opening his mouth" Isa. liii.7, are in danger not only to be shorn, but to be flayed also; the most in the wisdom and lust of the flesh, think it better to howl with the wolves [Calvin], and to bite too, than by departing from evil, Isa. lix.15, specially by bearing wrongs patiently, to make themselves a prey. But here faith steps in and leads the meek to God's promises, that he "shall inherit the earth," Matt. v.5: and that "God will arise to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth," Psa. xxxviii.13: but for the violent and self-avenger, eh puts himself out of God's protection, and goes upon his own hazard.

As the stomach swells either with good meat excessively used, or with wind and ill humors: so there is scarce anything either so good or so evil, but man's corrupt heart takes occasion of priding and puffing up itself by it. The prophet speaks of some, who boasted in evil, Psa. lii.1: and the apostle of others, whose glorying was in their shame. Phil. iii.19. If former ages have been bold, ours is impudent this way: in which it is hard to say, whether the pride which persons take in good or in evil be greater. Many shame not to boast of the evils practiced by them, which modest men are ashamed to hear of; and some of the evils which they never did, nor dare, nor can do, thereby to get credit with vain persons. If pride, in good, be hateful, it is abominable, in evil: specially when men belie themselves to get matter of glorying in mischief; as Austin confesseth he in his youth had done [Austin].

Fools glory in their motley coats, and therein show why they wear them: but worse than mad are they who glory in sin, and are lift up for that, which cast the angels from heaven; Adam out of Paradise; and Nebuchadnezzar out of his kingdom amongst the beasts of the field: and which will cast all into hell, that delight in it.

As wicked men pride themselves in their evils: so are the good in danger to be enamored of their goodness. And, as he that besiegeth a city, if he can neither obtain it by composition, nor take it by assault, nor constrain it by hunger, will, in the last place, if he can, undermine, and blow is up with gunpowder: so our, and God's enemy, Satan, when he cannot corrupt or destroy God's servants, otherwise attempts, and that oft successfully, the lifting them up with vain conceitedness of themselves, and their own worth. The holy apostle was in danger to be exalted above measure with the number of revelations, for the preventing whereof he needed a messenger of Satan to buffet him. 2 Cor. xii.7. So God for the keeping and driving of pride from his servants, sometimes brings great afflictions upon them, and humbles them thereby; and sometimes, he doth this, by suffering them to fall into other sins, to remedy that great sin of pride; as men use to drive out a greater pin with another somewhat smaller. How close doth this corruption cleave unto us, and how dangerous is it withal; for the purging out of which, the Lord useth such a medicine!

There are in this pride many strange touches: some being proud in, and some of their humility. Of the first sort were they, who being vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind, in voluntary humbleness worshipped angles, Col. 11.18; from a touch of this kind Peter was not free, when he so refractorily refused to suffer Christ to wash his feet [Calvin]. There is also danger of being proud of not being proud, nor lofty in carriage, apparel, or contempt of inferiors: and of being called rather good-man, than master; and rather master than sir knight. Besides all these, many will go on their tiptoes, though barefoot, being proud of, no man knows what, either within or without them: and none more than they. There want not also amongst the rest, who put out pride to usury, that by forbearing it awhile, and using for it, humble and submissive appearances, they might after receive it with advantage. Of this sort are they, who use to dispraise themselves, that others may the more commend them [Perkins]: and who, forsooth, will always come the hindmost, and sit the lowest, that they may be the more solemnly preferred to the first place. Others also, their craftsmasters in this trade, will be very submissive to their superiors, which are but a few, that their inferiors, being many, may learn thereby to honor them the more. So Herod showed how desirous he was of honor from his subjects, by the honor which he gave to Caesar and Agrippa [Josephus]. Lastly, there are who put on pride, by strutting and looking and speaking stately, and other affected forth-puttings, to free themselves from contempt. Such as like Aesop's ass, in the lion's skin: and have like success with him, in the end. The proud so loves himself, as none other can endure him. Not God, for to him he is abominable, Prov. xvi.5: nor humble men, because he is not as they are, and as he should be: nor other prouds, because he is as they are, who would be singular, and have none other like them. And as God hates the proud, so he resists them, James iv.6: and no marvel, for they in a singular manner resist him. Some sinners are most directly and immediately against themselves; as the slothful, prodigal, &c.; some against other men, as the covetous, slanderer, cruel, &c. But the

proud exalts himself most directly against and above God, 2 Thess. ii.4, whom alone all creatures should exalt and magnify. And he, whom God resists, must needs fall, though the whole world would take his part.

Persons are vulgarly most noted for proud by their apparel. And indeed by it, if either too costly for stuff or affected for fashion or curiously put on, not only the flag of pride, as Augustine called it, is displayed, but the vice nourished. Many say to their fine clothes, in effect, as Saul said to Samuel, "Honor me before the people." And this also they may effect with them that know them not, nor their estates, and may get them more credit with such than they deserve; for which they are to answer to God. But to them that know them, and their condition, they thereby make themselves a by word, and ridiculous for their pride and vanity. A second mark of pride may be taken from men's lofty eyes, stretched-forth necks, Psa. cxxi.1, and other the like strutting gestures. A third, contempt of mean persons and things. A fourth, excessive care not to be neglected or contemned by others, and trouble if so it fall out. A fifth, continual strivings and janglings with others. A sixth, cruelty in word or deed towards feeble adversaries. A seventh, affectation of singularity, and being unlike to others. God men in evil days are compelled to be singular in many things, as Lot was in Sodom; but never affect it. An eighth, an aptness to observe, and task others, as proud. Lastly, a readiness to speak of one's own worth, or of his great acceptance with others of worth, Thraso like.

The special remedies against pride are, first, consideration how God forbids, hates, and resists the proud: who will, therefore, have a fall, if not upon earth, into hell. Secondly, meditation upon our sins, and misery for the same. Thirdly, thinking rather what good we have not, than what we have [Austin]. Fourthly, that, if in any good thing we go before others, we remember, that it is God that hath differences us: and that having received it, we should not glory, as if we had not received it. 1 Cor. iv.7. Fifthly, a serious forecasting with ourselves, that the more our receipts are, the greater our account to the Lord must be: which, if we consider as we ought, will rather make them matter of humiliation unto us, than of arrogancy. Lastly, it will something help to keep the heart down, if we consider, that others are instruments of God's glory, and of good to men, as well as me [Melancthon].

CHAPTER LVIII: OF MODESTY

Modesty adorns other virtues, and good things in a person; as blushing doth a comely countenance [Cicero]. And though many virtues, of which it is a very imperfect one, as some call it; and as others, the keeper of other virtues, be more serviceable; yet none is more graceful, in the eyes of others, than this maiden, and sweet grace, modesty [Ambrose]. For this, some have thought our Savior bare that singular affection to the beloved disciple. And what a lodestone it is to draw men's affections, we all find in our own experience; as being prone, in matters of comparison and controversy between others, rather to favor the more modest, than the more able, or more worthy either otherwise. Where it is, it covers many faults and inabilities from being seen: and where they do appear, procures, sometimes, excuse, and always, commiseration. It commends a man not only for that which he hath, but often even for that which he hath not. For as some by arrogating to themselves something which they have not, or know not, give others occasion to think them destitute of that which they have, or know indeed; so others' modesty in the things, which they have received, procures unto them oftentimes, the opinion, from other men, of having that which in truth they want. "Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace," which modesty will teach him to do, "is accounted wise." Prov. xvii.28.

It is an odious thing to see men, deserving little, to arrogate much to themselves: which yet is as usual, as for a windy stomach to swell; and that specially, in vain confidence, and conceit of knowledge: whereas men of understanding indeed, are more modestly minded. The former's brain, by straitness of apprehension, can hold but one thing at once: whereas, men of larger discourse so apprehend this or that reason for or against a matter, as that at the same instant, other things also offer themselves to their consideration, which may justly occasion modest doubting about it. And as an advised person by the reflection of his understanding, knows his knowledge, so doth he his ignorance; as we see a shadow by the light about it, without which, all would be black darkness. So Menedemus was wont to say, that men coming to study in Athens, were at first wise men; after that, very punies and ignorants: for that, as leather vessels or bags, being empty, are stiff and hard; but being filled with liquor, are soft and pliable: so is it with men commonly, as they have less or more knowledge. This tincture of virtue, as Diogenes calls it, though it be more useful for the young, than old; and for women, than men, for the covering of their infirmities, which through immodest boldness, irrespectiveness, and want of fear of shame and reproof, in which modesty consists [Scaliger], they proclaim to the world; yet is it necessary

for all states, sexes, and persons, at all times; whether alone or in company with others; whether conversing with God or men. The apostle testifies of himself, that he “served God amongst the Ephesians in modesty of mind, and many tears,” Acts xx.19: giving therein an ensample to all, how far they ought to put from them a secure, and impudent heart, and countenance. And though that monster of men, Caligula, accounted it the most commendable thing in his nature, that he was ashamed of nothing [Suetonius]; yet doth both nature and grace teach it to be a most odious thing for a man to have a dog’s face, as the proverb is: or as the prophet speaks, “a whore’s forehead, that refuses to be ashamed.” Jer. iii.4.

It is pity any should speed so well, by mere boldness, without reason or other defect, as many do: who become thereby of audacious, impudent, having once broken the bounds of modesty [Cicero], specially to their advantage. Towards men of such foreheads the proverb must be put in practice, “A bold beggar must have a bold nay-sayer.” It was the unrighteous judge, that did that for the widow’s importunity, Luke xviii.5, which conscience would have had him done for the goodness of her cause, and poverty of her person. Though to speak, as the thing is; to be overcome by importunity argues not so properly injustice, in what case soever, as impotency of mind to resist.

Peter and John with the other apostles prayed to the Lord “for boldness in the speaking of his word,” Acts iv.29. Many others also pray for boldness, as they did; but forget, that they are not apostles, nor infallibly directed, as they were. Who, if they knew themselves aright, and how prone they are to speak their own word instead of God’s, would rather pray for modesty and advisedness, that they rush not upon the rock of error. Besides, they so prayed in regard of the threatenings of unbelievers, with whom they had to do. But amongst brethren, and Christians, let us rather affect the lamb’s bleat, than the lion’s roar.

CHAPTER LIX: OF MARRIAGE

God hath ordained marriage, amongst other good means, for the benefit of man’s natural and spiritual life, in an individual society, as the lawyers speak, between one man and one woman: and hath blessed it along with this prerogative, that by it, in lawful order, our kind should be preserved, and posterity propagated. And though the Lord has sometimes suffered, and that almost unreproved by the prophets, other bodily conjunctions, than between the proper husband and wife, and altogether unpunished by the magistrate: and withal showed the effect of his powerful providence, as still he doth, so far, as for the procreating of children in that disorder: yet did he never approve of any other, or exempt the same from guilt of sin, in the court of conscience; and seldom from manifest signs of his displeasure; as experience, and the Scriptures teach.

Not only heathen poets, which were more tolerable, but also wanton Christians, have nick-named women, necessary evils [Menander]; but with as much shame to men, as wrong to women, and to God’s singular ordinance withal. When the Lord amongst all the good creatures which he had made, could find none fit and good enough for the man; he made the woman of a rib of him, and for a help unto him, Gen. ii.20,21; neither is she, since the creation, more degenerated than he, from the primitive goodness. Besides, if the woman be a necessary evil, how evil is the man, for whom she is necessary.

Some have said, and that, in their own and others’ judgment, both wittily and devoutly, that marriage fills the earth, and virginity heaven: but others have better answered, How should heaven be full, if the earth were empty? I add, that, because Christ hath said, that the children of the regeneration neither marry wives, nor are married, but are like the angels in heaven, Matt. xxii.3; many, whilst they would, by preposterous imitation, become like the angels in heaven, have in truth become liker the devils in hell: for they also neither marry wives, nor are married. But this is, indeed, the very dregs of Popery, to place special piety in things either evil, or indifferent, at the best; as is abstinence from marriage, and the marriage bed; which is no more a virtue, than abstinence from wine, or other pleasing natural things. Both marriage and wine are of God, and good in themselves; either of them may in their abuse prejudice the natural or spiritual life: neither of them is unlawful, no not for them which simply need them not: which also not to need, argues bodily strength in the one, but a kind of weakness in the other.

The ancient heathen used to place Mercury by Venus, to show what need the affections of marriage have of the rule of reason and wisdom, to order them [Plutarch]. Neither, in truth, is there anything wherein persons more need and less use reason, and true discretion, than in their marriage choice: in which the most are unreasonably transported by one affection or other. And if he moralized well, who made this a reason, why God cast Adam

into a heavy sleep, whilst he prepared and made him a wife of one of his ribs, Gen. ii.21; that the affections ought to sleep about this work, and the reason to wake; how do they miss, whose manner is to have their affections only waking, or working, in this business, whilst their reason, and conscience also, are fast asleep! I have always thought, that good men crossed with ill wives, or good wives with ill husbands, are ordinarily least to be pitied of any others in misery; considering how willfully, and presumptuously, for the most part, they tempt God in their choice. I add, herewithal, that there is no one particular, in which men and women betray, whether their hearts be set upon worldly riches and honors, or sensual pleasures, on the one side; or, on the other side, upon the nourishing and promoting of virtue and godliness, both in themselves and their posterity, than in their choice this way. When the sons of God take for wives the daughters of men, giants are born, Gen. vi.2; and all monstrous confusion followeth, first in the family, and after in church and commonwealth. But when the sons of God take the daughters of God to wives, and the daughters of God are taken by the sons of God, there is an equal yoke, for the persons themselves to draw in with comfort, and the right course taken for the leaving of a holy seed behind them.

Some marry by their eyes, as did those sons of God formerly mentioned, and therein, follow favor, which is deceitful, and beauty which is a vain thing, Prov. xxxi.30; others by their fingers, as minding what the woman is worth, in the world's sense [Erasmus]; others by the ear, as specially respecting their wives' title, and high birth; and so, many times, get themselves so many lords and masters over them, as she hath friends. But they that specially respect virtue and godliness, which being attended by the other handmaids, as Esther by her seven maids, Esther ii.9, is the more beautiful and desirable, they marry not only the daughters of such or such men, but the daughters of God himself. A woman that feareth the Lord, she shall so be praised, Prov. xxxi.30; and the man so blessed, that marrieth her.

We say, in wiving and thriving take counsel of all the world, and so men had need. But in this business affection so far overrules reason in the most, as they could willingly make their choice without the counsel of their nearest and wisest friends. Herein, therefore, friends should be officious and forth-putting, and that both in love of their friends, and for their own sakes also; who, so oft as their friend marries, makes an adventure, and the same full of danger, whether they shall not wholly or in a great measure, lose their friend, which is often seen. Herein, parents specially must both preserve the right which God and nature hath given them, and do the duty which the one and the other hath laid upon them; as accounting their children theirs, most of all other things, whom if they this way bestow conveniently and in due time, they provide well both for them and themselves: for them, in preventing two dangerous evils, uncleanness and unfit matching: for themselves, according to the saying of Democritus, that he who gets a good husband to his daughter, finds another son: as he loseth his daughter, that gets an ill one.

The virtue of the wife is the husband's ornament, so is the husband's the wife's, much more. And therefore Philon's wife, being demanded why she alone went so plainly appareled, made answer, that her husband's virtues were ornament sufficient for her [Stobaeus]. If her practice were a rule, and that husbands' virtues were to be measured by their wives' homeliness in attire; either fewer husbands would be thought virtuous than are, or more wives found soberly appareled than are.

After goodness, fitness in marriage is most to be regarded: and that so much that, as for a pair of gloves or yoke of oxen, two alike, though meaner, both are them are fitter and better for use, than if the one were more excellent; so in this marriage pair and yoke, the woman best qualified is not always the best wife for every man; nor every man the best qualified, the fittest husband for every woman: but two more alike, though both meaner, sort better usually. And according to this, Pittacus, being demanded by a friend what kind of wife he should marry, answered: one fit for him [Laertius]. Fitness of years is requisite, that an old head be not set upon young shoulders; nor the contrary, which is worse: fitness in estate, lest the excelling person despise the other, or draw him to a course above his reach: fitness for course of life and disposition unto it, the dislike whereof, in either by other, breeds many discontentments. Lastly, agreement of affection and inclination, what may be, to all good persons and things. Only, it is good, if the one be too fiery hot and suddenly moved, that the other can cast on the more cold water of forbearance. But now, seeing there is seldom or never found such conformity between man and wife, but that differences will arise and be seen, and so the one must give way, and apply unto the other; this, God and nature layeth upon the woman, rather than upon the man; although the man should not too much look for it, nor use all his authority, ordinarily at least, which none but fools will do. Gen. iii.16; 1 Cor. xi.3-7, xiv.34; 1 Tim. ii.11; Esther i.20-22. As the glass, saith one, though never so rich of gold and pearl, if it

represent not the face of him that looks into it, is not to be regarded; so neither is the wife, how well endowed soever otherwise, except she frame and compose herself, what may be, unto her husband, in conformity of manners.

Many common graces and good things are requisite both for husband and wife: but more especially the Lord requires in the man love and wisdom; and in the woman subjection. Eph. v.22-25. The love of the husband to his wife must be like Christ's to his church; holy for quality, and great for quantity, both intensively and extensively. Her person, and whatsoever is good in her he must love fervently; mending or bearing, if not intolerable, what is amiss: by the former of which two he makes her the better, and himself by the latter [Gellius]. And if her failings and faults be great, he by being inured to bear them patiently, is the fitter to converse quietly and patiently with other perverse persons abroad; as Socrates said, he was, by bearing the daily home-brawlings of Xanthippe. Neither sufficeth it, that the husband walk with his wife as a man of love, but before her also as a man of understanding, 1 Pet. iii.7; which God hath therefore afforded him, and means of obtaining it, above the woman, that he might guide and go before her, as a fellow heir of eternal life with him. It is monstrous, if the head stand where the feet should be: and double pity, when a Nabal and Abigail are matched together. Yea, experience teacheth how inconvenient it is, if the woman have but a little more understanding (though he be not wholly without), than her husband hath.

In the wife is specially required a reverend subjection in all lawful things to her husband. Eph. v.22, &c. Lawful, I mean, for her to obey in, yea though not lawful for him to require of her. He ought to give honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, 1 Pet. iii.7: but now, if he pass the bounds of wisdom and kindness; yet must not she shake off the bond of submission, but must bear patiently the burden, which God hath laid upon the daughters of Eve. The woman in innocency was to be subject to the man: but this should have been without all wrong on his part, or grief on hers. But she being first in transgression, 1 Tim. ii.14, hath brought herself under another subjection, and the same to her, grievous; and in regard of her husband, often unjust; but in regard of God, always most just; who hath ordained that her desire should be subject to her husband, Gen. iii.16, who by her seduction became subject to sin. And, albeit, many proud women think it a matter of scorn and disgrace, thus to humble themselves to God and their husbands; and even glory in the contrary: yet therein they but glory in their shame, and in their husbands' shame also. And whilst they refuse a cross, choose a sin of rebellion, both against God and their husbands: which shall not escape unpunished from God; though many fond husbands nourish them therein, and by pampering and puffing them up by delicate fare, costly apparel and idleness, teach them to despise both them, themselves, and all others.

Marriage hath divers ends that make it convenient; and one, that makes it necessary, for the most; which is the preventing of that most foul and filthy sin of adultery. And this brand it deserves in special manner; seeing, he who coupleth himself with a harlot becomes one body with her, 2 Cor. vi.16: which cannot be said of him that consorts with a thief or murderer or drunkard in their sins: as also, for that such a one sins against his own body. Not that he sins not against his own soul too; or that all others sinning, sin not against both body and soul; but in regard of that special blot and blemish wherewith this sin stains the body; which never after can be wiped off, though the guilt of the sin may be repentance. "He that committeth adultery lacketh understanding; getteth a wound, and dishonor, and his reproach shall not be wiped away," saith Solomon. Prov. vi.32.

As marriage is a medicine against uncleanness; so adultery is the disease of marriage, and divorce the medicine of adultery; though not properly for the curing of the guilty, but for the easing of the innocent: which remedy he may, but is not simply bound to use, as some are the former. Some have said, that he who conceals the faults of his wife this way, becomes a patron of her filthiness [Chrysostom]: but this is rightly restrained by other to certain cases. The divorce for adultery both under and before the law was to be made by the magistrate's sword. Gen. xxxviii.24; Lev. xx.10. Where that is not drawn, the innocent may use this remedy against the peccant, as directly violating the marriage bond; which other sins, though greater otherwise, do not. In other cases, divorce, though much used amongst the Jews, was never approved the Lord in the court of heaven, as no sin, but permitted only in civil courts, without bodily punishment, Matt. xix.6-9; and only the giving of the bill commanded, and that for the advantage of the divorced, and to testify, that the husband had so freed the wife, as he might not require her after returning unto him, though he would [Josephus]. This permission unto the Jews being only for the hardness of their hearts, may justly by the magistrate be denied to Christians, whose hearts should be more softened by the blood of Christ [Pareus].

As a man may surfeit at his own table or be drunken with his own drink; so may he play the adulterer with his

own wife [Jerome], both by inordinate affection and action. For howsoever the marriage bed cover much inordinateness this way: yet must modesty be observed by the married [Calvin], lest the bed which is honorable, and undefiled, Heb. xiii.4, in its right use, become by abuse hateful, and filthy in God's sight. It hath been by some well observed, that divers of the patriarchs conversed with many wives, whom they took out of a singular desire of a plentiful progeny, more chastely, than many others did and do with their one.

CHAPTER LX: OF CHILDREN AND THEIR EDUCATION

God, that made all things good, and blessed them, Gen. i.28-31, imparted expressly this blessing first to his creatures, capable thereof, that they increase and multiply in their kind. More especially, God created our first parents, male and female, and blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth." This order then set, he hath preserved to this day, and mankind by it. By this, parents when they are dead, live in their children, as parts of them, and imps [grafts] taken from their stock, and in special manner, one with them. This oneness God's gracious covenant with the faithful and their seed confirms, and commends: blessing even the godly dead parents in their living children; and so cursing the wicked in theirs, and that often sundry ages afterwards; as both the Scriptures, common sense, and experience teach. Such parents as leave their seed under God's covenant and blessing, as heirs of their father's piety, as Ambrose said of Theodosius, provide a good inheritance for them, if they afterwards by their own rebellion and unthankfulness disinherit not themselves. And a sweet comfort it is to Christian parents, when they can commend their little ones, living, or dying into Christ's hands in heaven; who being upon earth testified both in word and deed, their interest in his blessing. Matt. xix.13,14. "The generation of the upright shall be blessed: but the posterity of the wicked shall be cut off." Psa. cxii.2. And as we judge of the plant or graft, by the stock whence it was taken, till it be grown able to bring forth its proper fruit, and that the tree be known by the fruit; so do we of children by their parents, till coming to years of discretion they choose their own way. Not that grace is derived by natural generation, but by the supernatural covenant with believers and their seed, confirmed in Christ; and by godly education on the parents' part, Gen. xvii.7-11; Gal. iii.14-22; which promise of blessing, as it is ever effectual in some, according to the election of grace, Rom. xi.5; so where it follows not, usually the negligence and indulgence of the parents, and, always, the parties' proper rebellion is the cause thereof; as we may see, both in the Word of God and daily experience. We read of Dionysius the tyrant, that, meaning to revenge himself upon Dion, who made war against him, he caused his son, whom he had in his power, to be brought up in riot and wantonness [Aemilius Probus]. This labor many save their enemies and do it themselves, and so prove miserable parents of dissolute children. It was an odious thing in the Israelite to sacrifice to devils their sons and daughters which they had borne unto God, and whom he avowed for his children, Ezek. xvi.20; which, in a spiritual sense, we certainly do, if we either neglect instructing them, or praying to God for them, or walking exemplarily, as we ought, before them, or correcting them duly, or any other such means, as by which the seeds of grace may grow and prosper in them. And let us remember, that as brutes bring forth in their kind, and all parents their children; so we, being in the Lord's covenant of grace, bring forth, as by nature ours, so by the supernatural covenant and grace, his children also; and that he trusts us with the bringing them up for him, and in his nurture and instructions, Eph. vi.4; which is a great matter, and wherein we must deal faithfully with him; that so under his blessing, we may fit them for his heavenly inheritance, provided for them with us. It is a [en]during fruit of God's gracious covenant, when good parents by their godly care have gracious children; and that by which our faith is much confirmed.

Children, in their first days, have the greater benefit of good mothers, not only because they suck their milk, but in a sort, their manners also, by being continually with them, and receiving their first impressions from them. But afterwards, when they come to riper years, good fathers are more behoveful for their forming in virtue and good manners, by their greater wisdom and authority: and oftentimes also, by correcting the fruits of their mother's indulgence, by their severity [Aristotle].

They are a blessing great, but dangerous. They come into the world at first with danger, both in respect of themselves, as passing sometimes, from the womb to the grace; sometimes, being born deformed in body; sometimes, incapable of understanding: as also in regard of the mother, the first day of their being in the world, being often her last in it. After their coming into the world through so many dangers, they come even into a world of dangers. In their infancy, how soon is the tender bud nipped, or bruised by sickness or otherwise! In

their venturesome days, into how many needless dangers do they throw themselves, in which many perish, besides those into which God brings them, and that all their life long! Above all other, how great and many are their spiritual dangers, both for nourishing and increasing the corruption which they bring into the world with them; and for diverting them from all goodness, which God's grace, and men's endeavor might work in them! These dangers and difficulties, howsoever they make not God's blessings in giving children to be no blessings, or deserving to be lightly esteemed; yet should they moderate our desire of them, and grief for their want: that none should say either to God or one to another, as Rachel did to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die," Gen. xxx.1: specially if we weigh withal, that though the Lord give us divers towardly, and good; yet one or two proving lewd and wicked will break our tender hearts, more than all the rest will comfort us: like as in the natural body there is more grief by the aching of some one part, though but a tooth, than comfort and ease in the good and sound state of all the rest. If children considered aright of the careful thoughts, sorrows and fears, and sore pains withal of their parents, they would think they owed them more honor, service and obedience, than, for the most part, they do. We seldom consider and prize worthily the cares and pains of parents, till we become parents ourselves, and learn them by experience.

Many bodily diseases are hereditary; and so are many spiritual, in a sort; and that both by natural inclination, and moral imitation much more: that, as the Lord saith of Israel, "Thou art thy mother's daughter," Ezek. xvi.45, so may it be said of many, that they are their fathers' and mothers' sons and daughters in evil. Yet, if it so come to pass, that God vouchsafe grace to the child of a wicked father, and that he see the sins which he hath done, he commonly hates them more vehemently, than if they had been in a stranger; and good reason, considering how they have been his dearest parent's ruin. Yea further, even where grace is wanting, the child, oftentimes, by observing and sometimes by feeling also the evil of his father's sin, is driven, though not from his evil way into a good way, yet into the contrary evil. Thus a covetous father often makes a prodigal son; so doth a prodigal a covetous. the son of the covetous taking knowledge how odious his father's covetousness is to all; and therewith persuading himself, and being persuaded by others about him, that there is enough, and more than enough for him, takes occasion as prodigally to pour out, as his father hath miserly hoarded up: as on the contrary, the son of the prodigal both seeing, and feeling the hurt of his parent's lavishness, is thereby provoked to lay the harder about him, for the repairing of his father's ruins.

Love rather descends, than ascends; as streams of water do; and no marvel, if men love where they live, as parents do in children, and not they in them. Hence also is it, that grandfathers are more affectionate towards their children's children, than to their immediates, as seeing themselves further propagated in them, and by their means proceeding on to a further degree of eternity, which all desire naturally, if not in themselves, yet in their posterity. And hence it is, that children brought up with their grandfathers, or grandmothers, seldom do well, but are usually corrupted by their too great indulgence.

It is much controverted, whether it be better, in the general, to bring up children under the severity of discipline, and the rod, or no. And the wisdom of the flesh out of love to its own, alleges many reasons to the contrary. But say men what they will, or can, the wisdom of God is best; and that saith, that "foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, which the rod of correction must drive out;" and that "he, who spares his rod, hurts his son," Prov. xxii.15; xiii.24; not in the affection of person, but effect of thing. And surely there is in all children, though not alike, a stubbornness, and stoutness of mind arising from natural pride, which must, in the first place, be broken and beaten down; that so the foundation of their education being laid in humility and tractableness, other virtues may, in their time, be built thereon. This fruit of natural corruption and root of actual rebellion both against God and man must be destroyed, and no manner of way nourished, except we will plant a nursery of contempt of all good persons and things, and of obstinacy therein. It is commendable in a horse, that he be stout and stomachful, being never to be left to his own government, but always to have his rider on his back, and the bit in his mouth. But who would have his child like his horse in his brutishness? Indeed such as are of great stomach, being thoroughly broken, and informed, become very serviceable [Erasmus], for great designs: else, of horses they become asses, or worse: as Themistocles' master told him, when he was a child, that either he would bring some great good, or some great hurt to the commonwealth [Plutarch]. Neither is there need to fear, lest by this breaking, the children of great men should prove base-spirited and abject, and so unapt to great employments: for being Adam's sons, whose desire was to have been like unto God, and having those advantages for masterfulness and high thoughts, which great men's children want not, unto whom great affairs are appropriated usually, they will not easily be found unfurnished of stomach and stoutness of mind more than

enough; wherein a little is dangerous, specially for making them unmeet for Christ's yoke, and to learn of him, who was lowly, and meek. Matt. xi.29.

For the beating, and keeping down of this stubbornness parents must provide carefully for two things: first that children's wills and willfulness be restrained and repressed, and that, in time; lest sooner than they imagine, the tender sprigs grow to that stiffness, that they will rather break than bow. Children should not know, if it could be kept from them, that they have a will in their own, but in their parents' keeping: neither should these words be heard from them, save by way of consent, "I will" or "I will not." And, if will be suffered at first to sway in them in small and lawful things, they will hardly after be restrained in great and ill matters, which their partial conceit, and inexperienced youth, with the lusts thereof and desire of liberty, shall deem small and lawful, as the former. And though good education, specially the grace of God, may afterwards purge out much other evil and weaken this also; yet will such unbroken youth most commonly draw after it great disquietness in crosses, when they fall; and in the whole course of life, a kind of unwieldiness, inflexibility and obstinacy, prejudicial to the parties themselves and uncomfortable, at least, to such as converse with them. The second help is an inuring of them from the first, to such a meanness in all things, as may rather pluck them down, than lift them up: as by plain, and homely diet, and apparel; sending them to school betimes; and bestowing them afterwards, as they are fit, in some course of life, in which they may be exercised diligently, and the same rather under than above their estate: by not abetting them one against another, nor against any, specially before their faces, without great cause: nor by making them men and women, before they become good boys and girls. How oft have I observed, that parents, who have neither failed in diligent instructing of their children, nor in giving them good example, nor in correcting them duly, have only by straining too high this way, either endangered, or utterly overthrown their posterity! hereby lifting them up in their vain hearts, and teaching them to despise both mean things and persons; and themselves also, many times, amongst others: thereby drowning them, Icarus like, in a sea of mischief and misery, by their flying too high a pitch. And this must be the more minded, because there is in men an inbred desire, and that inordinate usually, to hoist up their children, as high, as may be: so as they half think they do them wrong, if they set them not higher, or as high, at least, as themselves, almost whether God will or no. Yea what place affords not some such, as make themselves their children's slaves, not caring how basely they themselves grovel in the earth, so they may set them on their tiptoes.

But first of all for children's competent education, specially for their disposing in some particular course, on which all are to settle at last, though some liberty of stepping this way, or that be given them for a while; as a man, though for his pleasure he see many places, yet seeks his abode in some one in the end [Plutarch], there is required in their parents a thorough discerning and right judgment of their disposition; which is as difficult, as necessary. The difficulty ariseth from the partiality of parents towards their own: for that as the crow thinks her own bird fairest, so do they commonly their children towardly, and better than they are, or than any other indifferent judge doth. This partiality in many is so gross, as they not only deem small good things in them, great, and great evils, small; but often account the same things well becoming them and commendable, which in others they would censure as indecent, and, it may be, enormous. This pernicious error ariseth from self-love. For, as in nature, the object cannot be seen, which is either too near the eye, or too far from it; so neither can the disposition of that child be rightly discerned, which lieth too near his father's heart. And yet is the knowledge of this, so necessary, that we build not either upon a vain, or uncertain foundation, with great hazard of loss, both of labor, and expense, in sorting our child to his particular calling and course of life; as all without it, is but a very rash adventure. For as none are fit for every course, nor hardly any for many, in any great degree, so every one is fit for one or other: to which if his ability, and disposition be applied, with any convenient diligence on his part and helps by others; he may easily come to a mediocrity therein, if not to some rareness. Hence was it, that fathers in some places, used to lead their children to the shops of all kind of artificers, to try how they could both handle their tools, and like their works; that so they might bestow them accordingly. Some wise men also have wished, that there might be established, by public authority, a course for the due trial and choice of wits for several sciences. And surely, where there goes not before a natural aptness and moral disposition also for some calling; there will follow nothing but loss: loss of time, loss of labor, loss of charges, and all; as when the seed is cast into the barren ground. And as the midwife how skillful soever in her art, cannot make the woman to be delivered, that was not first with child; so neither can the best servants make their scholars, or servants, to bring forth sciences, unless they have an aptness thereunto first conceived in their brains [Plato].

There is running in the breasts of most parents a strong stream of partial affection towards some one, or other of

their children, above the rest, either for its beauty or wit or likeness to themselves, or some other fancied good in it; which is always dangerous, and oft hurtful. Sometimes the Lord takes away such before the rest, to punish the father's fondness: and most commonly such if surviving, prove the worst of all the rest, as growing hereby proud, and arrogant in themselves, presumptuous upon their father's love and contemptuous of the rest of their brethren, and sisters; as we may see in Esau, Absalom, and Adonijah, their fathers' darlings; and in many more, in our daily experience. And though they in themselves, which they seldom are free from, be not corrupted with pride; yet will the rest seldom, or never escape the infection of envy at it; as is to be seen in Joseph's brethren. It is natural for parents tenderly to love all their children; and best for them to be as equal towards all, as may be; reserving the bestowing of their best and greatest love, till they see, where God bestows his. And if so be they cannot, nor will not command their inordinate affections, as they should, yet it is wisdom to conceal them from their children, whom else they may hurt so many ways; as the ape is said, many times to kill her young ones by too strait embracing them.

The Lord promises and affords long life to such as "honor father and mother," Exod. xx.12; whose days if he shorten in this life for their good, he lengthens out with immortality in glory. On the other side, he cuts off from the earth stubborn and disobedient children suddenly and in sundry ways [Calvin]. And if he give them long life, it is for a curse unto them. They also often die without children themselves; and if not, their children oftener pay them that which is due, and owing them from their parents. The history is note-worthy of the father, who being drawn by his son to the threshold of the house, by the hair of the head; cried to him, to draw him no further, for that he had drawn his father no further [Melancthon]. And how should they expect honor from their children who have dishonored their parents? or a happy life, who despise the author of their life under God? This honor is due not only to them by whom we have our being; but to them also by whom our well-being is furthered.

CHAPTER LXI: OF YOUTH AND OLD AGE

That city, or commonwealth, saith one, flourisheth most, where old men's counsel, and young men's swords are in request [Plutarch]. And little, saith another, avail weapons abroad, and in the hands of young men, if there be not counsel at home, and in the breasts of the aged [Cicero]. And as some fruits are ripe before others, and divers fit for divers seasons of the year: so God and nature hath so ordained, that the bodies of young men should be ripe in their youth, and fittest for bodily employments, by reason of their natural heat and spirits: and the counsels of old men in their age, through their long experience and observation. Things go well, where both do their parts in societies.

It is worthily said of one, that childhood should be manly, that is, not without all wisdom: and age child-like, that is, without pride and arrogancy [Austin]. Yet may the aged above the younger sort, challenge and use a kind of authority and confidence in their words and carriage. So is there to be permitted unto childhood that childishness, which without violence to nature and the God thereof, cannot be driven from it. Many, in pride, striving and straining to have their children men and women too soon, and ere they be full boys and girls, force them above their pace; and either cause them to tire, as discouraged; or occasion them to content themselves, in after time, with certain manly forms, without substance, unreasonably forced upon them, in their childhood. Fruits ripened by art, before their time, are neither toothsome, nor wholesome: so children made men when they should be children, prove children when they should be men. Notwithstanding, stubbornness and corruption cannot too soon be forced out of them: neither is half that liberty to be given to the younger sort, which they would take, not knowing nor being easily brought to believe, how slippery their state is, till they come to feel it by their falls: which if they did, they would not complain with the foolish young man, in the poet, that all parents keeping any hand over their children, though for their good, are injurious unto them [Terence].

As all men are to "honor all men," 1 Pet. ii.17, because they are men, and made after God's image; so should the younger sort specially be trained up to a bashful and modest reverence towards all, and chiefly towards their ancients. Tit. ii.3,4. Which so well becomes their maiden years, as that the philosopher accounts blushing a virtue in young folks, though a fault in the aged [Aristotle]. Many parents desire to have their young ones trained up in such exercises and courses, as may embolden them: but they should, for the most part, provide much better for them, specially in our audacious age, if they got them held constantly in courses of modesty, and shamefacedness; that so Demetrius might have his wish in them, which was, that young folks would

reverence their fathers at home, all men abroad, and themselves being alone [Tertullian].

The apostle writing to Timothy warns him "to fly the lusts of youth." 2 Tim. ii.22. If Timothy, who was brought up in the knowledge of the Scriptures from a child, and who had profited so well therein, and whose place in the church was so eminent for the teaching and governing of others, stood in need of such advertisement and warning; what warning can be sufficient for ordinary young people to eschew and fly from such lusts and vanities, as to follow after them, and unto which the heat and heedlessness of youth carrieth them. It is indeed a great mercy of God, when young persons get over that their slippery and inexperienced state without either such public scandal, or secret wound of conscience, as the scar whereof they carry to their graves with them. How much more and greater a mercy is it, when they receive the grace to consecrate their youth and best days to God in holiness! offering their souls, and bodies as the sacrifices of young lambs unblemished, upon the Lord's altar. Wicked men, who hate goodness both in youth and age, use to say, "young saints, old devils:" but the truth is "young devils, old Beelzebubs," for the most part. To whom yet, if God, in singular grace, vouchsafe repentance in after age; what a corrosive will it be to the heart of such a convert, casting back his eyes to his youth consumed in lusts and vanity, to think how great dishonor he hath brought to God's name, and hindrance to others' salvation; which he may repent of, but cannot redeem! On the contrary, sweet is the remembrance in old age of a youth led in true virtue and godliness.

Some would enjoy both the honor of age, and liberty of youth: but curled grey hair is not comely. Either state hath its benefit and burden allotted of God. He that obtains the benefit must be content to bear the burden.

Young men must be content to want the honor, which is due to the aged of their order otherwise, in regard of the image of God's eternity, which they bear: and so must the aged be content to forbear even the lawful liberty, and delights of youth.

"Multitude of years should teach wisdom," saith young Elihu in Job, to his three ancients. Job. xxxii.4-6. And this, the younger sort should with reverence, and may with good reason look for, at their elders' hands, considering their long experience, and manifold advantages above them, for the getting of wisdom. This wisdom makes their age honorable indeed, and their 'grey head a crown of glory, being found in the way of righteousness," Prov. svi.31; whereas an elementary old man, having no other argument to prove that he hath lived long, but his grey hairs, and wrinkled forehead, is a contemptible, and ridiculous creature [Seneca]. How many such a b c old folks are there in the world, whose grey hairs promise wisdom and knowledge; and to whom opportunity and means of attaining it, hath not been wanting; who, yet being proved and known, will appear very babes in understanding, and such as, for that skill, had need to begin to live again! This is not merely a want of wit in them, or of the love of knowledge either; but withal a curse of God upon them, usually punishing a lustful, and reckless youth with a doltish age: in whom the proverb is true, in another sense: *Ab equis ad asinos*: Such of young horses become old asses.

A wise man should live well in youth, and before old age come, that he may die well in age [Ibid.], if it come; and may be ready for death, as the white regions are for the harvest, John iv.35: and so may both wait for it, and even meet it the more boldly in the way of such virtuous actions, as expose unto it. For though youth and likelihood of long life should make none withdraw from any good duty, or do amiss for fear of danger of loss of life; yet age should, though in course of nature the more fearful, upon ground of good reason, wisdom and grace, make men the more venturesome of that, in a good cause, which God and destiny will deprive them of ere long, though other men let them alone: as Solon was bold upon his old age to oppose himself to Pisistratus the tyrant [Plutarch]. One adviseth to be old betimes, that so we may be old long [Seneca]. But who would desire to be that long, which is but a long infirmity [Austin]; save as age, accompanied with wisdom and godliness, adds authority to the aged for the more effectual enforcing of these and the like virtues upon others.

CHAPTER LXII: OF DEATH

Natural death stands in the separation of the soul from the body: spiritual, of the soul and whole man from God, in respect of grace: eternal, in respect both of grace and glory, with the sense of the contrary evils. "By sin, death," in all three degrees, "came into the world." Rom. v.12. For albeit "God only have immortality," 1 Tim. vi.16, and unchangeableness from and in himself, and that all creatures, and so man, with the rest, in regard of his elementary body, be subject to change, save as they do depend upon him, that uncreated being, and are sustained and upheld by the world of his power, Heb. 1.3, and by a continual influx from him; yet God having

engraven his image in man, did both so temper his body, and order all creatures, under his providence, for him; as that nothing but sin could possibly impeach his life or welfare. By his sin he actually lost spiritual life; and the right both to temporary, and eternal. The first death is a natural evil; the second a spiritual; the third both. For although in regard of the universal and of God's supernatural ends, it be better that a man be, to be continued, though in eternal misery, than that he should cease to be altogether; yet in regard of the person's particular, as better eye out, than ever aching; better never to have been born, Matt. xviii.9, or by death utterly to be abolished, as the brute beasts are, than to live, and continue always accursed and miserable.

By natural death divers men, how like soever they have been in their temporal state, become most unlike in their eternal: the wicked, miserable without hope; and the godly, happy without fear; and by the same death, both they and all other, in other things, altogether alike, how unlike soever they have been in them formerly. After death remains no natural or civil relation; as of father, son, husband, wife, or the like; all these are for this life only. The lifeless earth unto which "the body returns," Eccl. xii.7, is altogether incapable of them: so is the soul, being a spiritual substance, whether in heaven or hell. With them in glory, after the end of the world, "God shall be all in all," 1 Cor. xv.28; and men shall be like the angels, neither taking wives, nor giving in marriage, Matt. xxii.30, nor remaining married. Peter and Paul neither are, nor shall be apostles there; neither is the Virgin Mary, Christ's mother there: but they only remain those persons which sometimes, upon earth, had these states, and relations upon them. If there be any natural, or bodily difference after death, it is, that the bodies of the richer stink the more by reason of their greater fullness, and abundance whilst they lived [Ambrose]. And for the good, and bad, which are mingled together in this life, but cannot agree; death parts them for ever: being hastened of the Lord, that the godly dying may no more be vexed with, or by the wicked: nor the wicked any long persecute the godly [Austin].

If men should live always in the world, or but so long in our age, as did the first patriarchs, to what a height would many come in worldly happiness or misery! How extremely rich would many be! How many extremely poor! How mighty and powerful some! How dejected and depressed many more! But the wise providence of God is to be honored herein: by which it comes to pass, that the more men are set to drive things to extremity, the less time should be allowed them for their courses one or other in the world.

Only man being both mortal and reasonable, can think of his death. Not the angels; for though they can by understanding conceive of death, yet are they by their spiritual state, set without the reach of it: nor brute beasts, though mortal, because it is not perceived by sight or other sense: but being a privation, to wit, of life, is only discernible by understanding [Scaliger]. If a beast see never so many of its own kind slaughtered before its eyes, it fears not death, which it sees not; though it may fear the instrument which it sees, or other terrible and sensible object. And hence it comes to pass, that the more brutish men are, they have the less thoughts or fear of death for the most part.

"It is appointed unto men once to die 'ordinarily;' and after this the judgment." Heb. ix.12. I say, as the apostle means, ordinarily: for "some die not, but are changed only," 1 Cor. xv.51, 52: some die twice, as Lazarus and others. This death, which will certainly once come, and with it eternal and unchangeable happiness or misery, we should always bear in mind; as if Philip's death's-head were set before us. For though the thoughts of death be not sufficient to raise the heart to heavenly things; yet are they so available to draw it from earthly, which is first to be done, as no thing is more, than the frequent and serious meditation thereof [Jerome]. We should think seriously of that part of our life, which remains unfinished, that we may provide things necessary for it; and also of our death, that we may cut off superfluities, and use that moderately, which we must not use long.

The saying, Nothing more certain than death, and yet nothing more uncertain than the hour of death [Bernard], is common, and commonly abused. The certainty of it should teach us moderation in the use of the world and all worldly things, and that "we abuse them not, because the fashion of this world passeth away." 1 Cor. xii.31. But contrariwise many take hereby occasion to lay the faster hold of it, either in the profits thereof for themselves or theirs; or pleasures, saying "Let us eat, and drink; to-morrow we shall die." 1 Cor. xv.32. And whereas God would have us ignorant of our last day and hour [Austin], that suspecting it always, we might always be ready [Gregory]; we are apt, on the contrary, because we know not the certain time, to be the less ready at all times: and which is worse not to take warning neither, as we ought, by any, or all those known messengers of death; which are reckoned three: 1. Casualty, 2. Weakness, and 3. Age: the first showing our death to be doubtful; the second and third to be near, and at hand. Hardly any so old, but thinks he may yet live a year; or so sick, but that he may live a day longer [Hugo Grotius]. Not only the foolish, but even the wise virgins are too prone to slumber, if the

Bridegroom defer his coming a little. Matt. xxv.5. Few regard the good counsel given, to account every day the day of our death [Perkins], and as that, wherein we are, it may be, to appear before the Lord. Few "watch because they know not what hour the Lord will come," as all are warned. But "the servant that so doth, and is ready; blessed is he, whom his Lord when he cometh, finds so doing." Matt. xxiv.24.

Young folk may die shortly; but the aged cannot live long. The green apple may be plucked off or shaken down, by violence; but the ripe will fall of itself. It is wisdom therefore to provide for death in youth, there being many more that die in youth or childhood, than that survive till old age; but madness it is to neglect preparation, when age cometh: though in truth few die well in age, that have not lived well in youth [Seneca]. That we may once die the great death aright and in peace; it is requisite, that we "die daily" many little death, both by outward afflictions and inward mortifyings of our worldly and corrupt lusts. 1 Cor. xv.31.

We should so live, as being content to die, when God calls us hence; and that, upon knowledge of the nature, cause and event of death, and out of a good conscience towards God and men. And not in senseless blockishness, overcoming death, as the most do, by forgetting it; as if a man overcame his enemy, by getting as far from him as he could: nor yet by desperate wearisomeness of life for any troubles in it; but as being willing, yea desirous to live to serve God's providence for good, upon earth. It is ill, saith the wise heathen, to wish death; but worse to fear it [Ibid.]. But godly Christians are to do both in different respects. To desire it, as it stands with God's will, that they may be free from sin and misery; it being "best for them to be dissolved, and to be with the Lord." Phil. i.23. To fear it, as being in itself a fearful punishment of sin; the dissolution of the most excellent creature upon earth; and an end of further praising God in his church, and performing particular offices of goodness and love to men. And in truth, though grace have this effect with them that desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, that they do not die only patiently, but even die with delight, and live patiently [Austin]: yet nature causeth, that not only they, that know they must die, as all do; but they also which believe, that after death they shall enjoy a more happy state, desire the deferring it [Ibid.]; so loath to part are the two old acquaintances, the body and soul. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints," Psa. cxvi.15, when they die for or in faith, and a good conscience: as the gold melting and dissolving in the furnace is as much esteemed by the goldsmith, as any in his shop, or purse. Precious also it is, whilst they live, and that which God will not lightly suffer to befall them. And if he put their tears in his bottle, he will not neglect their blood, nor easily suffer it to be shed: neither doth death, when it comes, part him and them; though it part man and man; yea man and wife; yea man in himself, his soul and body. Friends show themselves faithful in sticking to their friends in sickness, and all other afflictions: but they, how affectionate soever, must leave them in death: and are glad to remove them, and to have "their dead buried out of their sight." Gen. xxiii.4. But the fruit of God's love reacheth unto death itself: in which he doth his beloved ones the greatest good, when friends can do no more for them.

He that said, Before death and the funeral no man is happy, spake the truth, as he meant, of the happiness which can be found in worldly things. But both he and they, who have so admired his saying, should have considered, that he who is not happy before death in worldly things, cannot be happy in them, by it; which deprives him of them all, and of life itself, which is better than they, and for which they are. But miserable indeed is the happiness, whereof a man hath neither beginning, nor certainty, but by ceasing to be a man. The godly are truly happy both in life and death: the wicked in neither.

We are not to mourn for the death of our Christian friends, as they which are without hope, 1 Thess. iv.13: either in regard of them or of ourselves. Not of them, because such as are asleep with Jesus, God will bring with him to a more glorious life, in which we, in our time, and theirs, shall ever remain with the Lord, and them: not of ourselves, as if that, because they had left us, God had left us also. But we should take occasion by their deaths to love this world the less, out of which they are taken; and heaven the more, whither they are gone before us, and where we shall ever enjoy them. Amen.