

F I V E
S E R M O N S

O N T H E
Following SUBJECTS,

V I Z.

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| I. CHRIST the Believer's
Husband. | IV. Walking with GOD. |
| II. The Gospel Supper. | V. The Resurrection of <i>La-</i>
<i>zarus.</i> |
| III. Blind <i>Bartimeus.</i> | |

By GEORGE WHITEFIELD, A. B.
Late of Pembroke-College, Oxford.

With a Preface by the Rev. Mr. GILBERT
TENNENT.

PHILADELPHIA, Printed :

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Year M,DCC,XLVII.

FIVE
SERMONS

ON THE
Following SUBJECTS

NINE

- I. Christ the Lord's Wife and God's Husband.
- II. The Gospel of St. Matthew.
- III. The Lord's Supper.



By GEORGE WHITFIELD, M.A.
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THE
P R E F A C E.

Candid Reader,

HAVING had the Opportunity
of perusing the following Dis-
courses, I do with Pleasure re-
commend them to the World, as found,
seasonable, and solid Compossures. They
appear to me to contain, *The Words of*
Truth and Soberness; and to be well
adapted to *correct the Errors* of the
present Day, as well as to *promote vital*
and practical Godliness.--The Obser-
vations in them are pious, pertinent,
and instructive; and so well suited to
the Times we live in, that they are
like *Apples of Gold in Pictures of Sil-*
ver. The Stile is easy and natural,

and the practical Inferences, affectionate and poignant, equally fitted to alarm Sinners, and comfort the Saints of God amidst the various Miseries that attend their present *Pilgrimage*, thro' this Valley of *Tears*, this uncertain and difficult State of Probation. In a Word, I am humbly of Opinion, that the Discourses aforesaid, are grave and masculine; that they indicate a sober, humble, well-informed Mind, and a warm Heart. I therefore earnestly beseech the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to bless them to those noble Ends for which they are specially adapted, for the Sake of his dear Son!

Upon hearing the Reverend Author of the aforesaid Discourses, preach frequently in this *City*; particularly in his last Visit, and after frequent Conversation with him in private, I find, to my great Satisfaction, that he is clear and sound in the great Doctrines of Religion, and preaches exactly agree-

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able to the *Doctrinal Articles* of the *Church of England*, and our *Westminster Confession of Faith*, between which there is the sweetest Harmony.---

It was likewise peculiarly agreeable to me, to hear the aforesaid Gentleman openly and boldly declare in his publick Discourses, against that detestable and dangerous Error of the *Antinomians*, viz. *That Persons are actually justified before Faith*; which is the *proton pseudos*, or first Rise of all their Abominations.---

And I think it my Duty, having this Opportunity, to inform the Publick, that the Author of the following Discourses, has declared his Sentiments in this City, against that perilous *ignis fatuus*, *Enthusiasm* (particularly in his last agreeable Visit) with equal Zeal; the Quintessence of which, as I conceive, consists in following *Impulses*, or our own *Fancy*, as a Rule of Conduct, without the written Word, while the

the sober Use of *Reason* is rejected: This, the Reverend Mt. WHITEFIELD has expressly opposed and declar'd against. — There are some Things in this faithful Servant of Christ, which I cannot but admire as very uncommon; viz. His continued *burning Zeal* for the *Kingdom* of Christ for so many Years, and with but little Interruptions comparatively: His *indefatigable Labours* for God, especially in preaching the everlasting Gospel daily, for so long a Space of Time: The *Preservation* of his *weak Constitution*, from being entirely ruin'd by such an extraordinary Course of vehement *Labours* and fatiguing *Travels*: The *Preservation* of his *Sense*, from being either quite lifted up, and carried away with *Pride*, in the midst of so much Popularity and Applause; or at times quite sunk in *melancholy Despondency*, under the *Withdrawings* of God's *comfortable Presence*, the *Jealousies* and *Desertions* of

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of their *Friends* and *Enemies*; whereby his *Character* has been with Art and Elegance, exceedingly and unjustly blackened; tho' by *some*, at least in all Probability, with an honest Intention: Add to these Sources of Grief, the Apostacies of divers promising *Professors*; some from the *sound Doctrines* of Religion, and some from Truth and practical Godliness both together; with the *fiery Darts* of *Satan's Temptations*, suited to the aforesaid Circumstances of Distress.

I may add to these, his extraordinary Success in winning poor Sinners to the Lord Jesus Christ, and building up Saints in Knowledge, Faith, Holiness, and Comfort.

Having had more Opportunities to know the *Fruits* of his Labours in the Gospel-Ministry than many others, because of my Travels in America; I can freely and safely declare, that I have that with many who have given a
prudently rational

rational and scriptural Account of their Conversion by *his* Ministry, and do crown their Narrative by a holy Practice. I heartily wish that some ingenious Gentlemen of Figure and Character who have wrote against him, and have possibly been influenced thereto in a Measure, by a wrong Information respecting some Particulars in his Preaching and Conduct, had but the Opportunity of hearing him preach frequently, and pray, not only in publick, but in private, as well as of free Conversation with him about the Things they object; I cannot but think that they would then alter their Sentiments concerning him. Surely their Jealousies would be removed, and their present apparent Aversion turned into Wonder and Love. For my own Part, I must speak honourably of him, for God's Sake, and for Truth's Sake, should it cost me never so dear. -- He comes out so clearly, so boldly and prudently

prudently, for the sweet, sweet, sweet *Truths* of the ever-blessed LORD JESUS, that it charms my Heart into Admiration and Love. If he doth not preach the Gospel of Christ, in my humble
 * Opinion, it is not in the Bible. I believe in my Heart, and I think, with sufficient Reason, that his Designs in travelling are pious and honourable, *viz.* To bring poor Sinners to Christ, and to build them up in him. And he is for the general, uncommonly enlivened and assisted in his blessed Master's Service. He preaches the great Doctrines of the Reformed Churches, *viz.* Original Sin, Justification by Faith alone, Man's Impotency to do spiritual Good, Regeneration, Sanctification and Perseverance.--- These important Points he mainly insists upon, and that with Clearness, Pungency, and Pathos.

Moreover, he is *meeke* and *patient* in *Sufferings*, and treats his Opposers with

with Temper and *Kindness*.----In a Word, his whole Life evidently appears to be devoted to Jehovah, and is filled with Acts of Piety towards God, and Mercy towards Mens Souls and Bodies.

Yea, such is the Vehemence of his Desires to do extensive and manifold Service to the Church of God, that he is in Danger of losing his Life in the Cause, by a Series of extraordinary Labours (to all Appearance quite disproportioned to his bodily Strength.) Now what greater Evidence can we have of the Sincerity of any Man than these? Especially if we add thereto, his peaceable, healing Disposition in respect of the Church of God, and opposing Schisms and Divisions. What tho' there have been some exceptionable, unguarded Expressions, in some of his former Writings? Is this to be wonder'd at, considering his *young Years, strong Passions, Education in Arminian*

Arminian Principles, and the continued *Hurry* of his Labours in Preaching, writing Letters, and Discourſing with People in the Places where he *travell'd*, having withal but little Time for Study and Reflection.

Shou'd not that *Charity*, that *hopes all Things* that are good, as far as there is any Reason for it, induce us to put a favourable Construction on them, at least on his Designs; especially considering that his after Writings set many Things in a better Light?

If every doubtful Expression in the Writings of *Luther*, and many other good and great Men, were put upon the Rack by ingenious Pens, and not compared with other Passages in the same, or other of their Performances, their Principles would appear in a sable Dress, and might be easily burlesqued.

I design to offend no Man by this Preface---I desire to entertain charitable Sentiments of all, as far as I have

Scripture and Reason for it; and I doubt not, but divers who have opposed both the Reverend Mr. WHITEFIELD and myself, have had a pious and honest Intention in so doing.---I only beg leave to express my own Opinion, with all due Deference to such as are otherwise minded.

But I must hasten to the Conclusion, and therefore beseech the Reader to peruse, without Prejudice, the following Discourses; and to consider seriously the Truths contained in them, as well as to apply in particular his own Portion.---In this Way, he will glorify God, and probably receive special Benefit to himself. I add no more, but imploring the Blessings of Heaven upon thy Endeavours, remain thy Servant for Christ's Sake.

Philadelphia, May
30, 1746.

GILBERT TENNENT.

C O N.

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S E R M O N I.

CHRIST the Believer's Husband.

ISAIAH liv. 5.

For thy Maker is thy Husband.

ALTHOUGH Believers by Nature are far from God, and Children of Wrath, even as others, yet it is amazing to think how nigh they are brought to him again by the Blood of Jesus Christ—Eye hath not seen, or Ear heard, neither hath it entered into the Heart of any Man living fully to conceive, the Nearness and Dearness of that Relation, in which they stand to their common Head—He is not ashamed to call them *Brethren*—*Behold*, says the blessed Jesus in the Days of his Flesh, *my Mother and my Brethren*—And again after his Resurrection, *Go tell my Brethren*.—Nay sometimes he is pleased to term Believers his *Friends*—*Henceforth call I you no longer Servants, but Friends—Our Friend Lazarus sleepeth*—And what is a Friend?

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Why

Why "there is a Friend that is nearer than a Brother," nay, as near as one's *own Soul*—And *thy Friend*, says God in the Book of *Deuteronomy*, which is as *thy own Soul*.—Kind and endearing Appellations these, that undoubtedly bespeak a very near and ineffably intimate Union between the Lord Jesus and the true living Members to his mystical Body! But, methinks, the Words of our Text point out to us a Relation, which not only comprehends, but in respect to Nearness and Dearness, exceeds all other Relations whatsoever—I mean that of a *Husband*—For *thy Maker is thy Husband*—The *Lord of Hosts is his Name*, and *thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole Earth shall be called*.—

These Words were originally spoken to the People of the *Jews*, considered collectively as a peculiar People, whom our Lord had betroth'd and married to himself; and they seem to be spoken when Religion was upon the Decline among their Churches; when they had, in a great Measure, lost that Life and Power, which they once experienced; and their Enemies began to insult them with a *Where is now your God?* Such a State of Things must undoubtedly be very afflicting to the true Mourners in *Zion*; and, no doubt, put them upon crying unto the Lord, in this their deep Distress—He hears their Prayer—His Bowels yearn towards them; and in the preceding Verse, he assures them, that tho' the Enemy had broken in upon them like a Flood, yet their Extremity should be his Opportunity to lift up a Standard against him—*Fear not*, says the great Head and King of his Church, *for thou shalt not be ashamed*, that is, finally

finally or totally; neither be thou confounded, *i. e.* dissipated, or dejected; giving up all for gone, as though thou never shouldst see better Days, or another Revival of Religion; for thou shalt not entirely be put to Shame, tho' for a while; for thy Humiliation, and the greater Confusion of thy Adversaries, I suffer them to triumph over thee: For, says the Lord, *thou shalt forget the Shame of thy Youth, and shalt not remember the Reproach of thy Widow-hood any more; i. e.* I will vouchsafe you such another glorious Gale of my blessed Spirit, that you shall quite forget your former troubled Widow-state, and give your Enemies no more Occasion to insult you, on Account of your Infant-condition, but rather to envy you, and gnash their Teeth, and melt away at the Sight of your unthought-of Glory and Prosperity.--And why will the infinitely great and condescending Jesus deal thus with his People? Because the Church is *his Spouse*--For, says he, in the Words just now read to you, *thy Maker is thy Husband, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel*; and therefore he loves thee too well, to let thy Enemies always trample thee under Foot--*The Lord of Hosts is his Name, the God of the whole Earth shall be called*; and therefore he is armed with sufficient Power to relieve his oppressed People, and overcome and avenge himself of all their haughty and insulting Foes.--

This seems to be the prime and genuine Interpretation of the Text and Context, especially if we add, that they may have a further View to the latter-day Glory, and that blessed State of the Church, which the People of God have been looking for in all Ages, and the speedy Approach of

which, we undoubtedly pray for, when we put up that Petition of our Lord's, *viz. Thy Kingdom come.*---

But, tho' the Words were originally spoken to the *Jews*, yet they are undoubtedly applicable to all Believers in all Ages, and, when enlarged on in a proper Manner, will afford us suitable Matter of Discourse both for Sinners and for Saints; for such as know God, as well as such who know him not; and likewise for those, who once walked in the Light of his blessed Countenance, but are now backslidden from him; have their Harps hung upon the Willows, and are afraid that their Beloved is gone, and will return to their Souls no more.-----Accordingly, without prefacing this Discourse any farther, as I suppose a mix'd Multitude of Saints, unconverted Sinners, and Backsliders, are present here this Day, I shall endeavour so to speak from the Words of the Text, that each may have a proper Portion, and none be sent empty away.-----

In prosecuting this Design, I will

I. Endeavour to shew, what must pass between Jesus Christ and our Souls before we can say, *that our Maker is our Husband.*---

II. The Duties of Love which they owe to our Lord, who stand in so near a Relation to him.---

III. The miserable Condition of such as cannot yet say, *their Maker is their Husband.*---

And, IV. I shall conclude with a general Exhortation to all such unhappy Souls, to come and match with the dear Lord Jesus.---And Oh! may that God who blessed *Abraham's* Servant, when he

went

went out to seek a Wife for his Son *Isaac*, bless me, even me also, now I am come, I trust, relying on divine Strength, to invite poor Sinners, and recal Backsliders to my Master Jesus! —

And *First*, I am to shew, what must pass between Jesus Christ and our Souls before we can say, *Our Maker is our Husband.*

But, before I proceed to this, it may not be improper to observe, that if any of you, amongst whom I am now preaching the Kingdom of God, are Enemies to inward Religion, and explode the Doctrine of inward Feelings, as Enthusiasm, Cant and Nonsense, I shall not be surprized, if your Hearts rise against me whilst I am preaching, for I am about to discourse on true vital and internal Piety; and an inspired Apostle hath told us, *that the natural Man discerneth not the Things of the Spirit, because they are spiritually discerned.*— But, however, be noble as the *Bereans* were; search the Scriptures as they did; lay aside Prejudice; hear like *Nataniel*, with a true *Israelitish* Ear; be willing to do the Will of God, and then you shall, according to the Promise of our dearest Lord, *know of the Doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.*---

I would further observe, that if any here expect fine Preaching from me this Day, they will, in all probability, go away disappointed.-- For I came not here to shoot over Peoples Heads; but, if the Lord shall be pleased to bless me, to reach their Hearts. Accordingly, I shall endeavour to cloath my Ideas in such plain Language, that the meanest Negro or Servant, if God is pleased to give a hear-
ing

ing Ear; may understand me; for I am certain, if the Poor and Unlearned can comprehend, the Learned and Rich must.---

This being premised, proceed we to our first general Head, *viz.* To shew what must pass between Jesus Christ and our Souls, before we can say, *our Maker is our Husband.*

Now, that we may discourse more pertinently and intelligibly upon this Point, it may not be amiss, under this Head, to consider, what is necessary to be done, before a Marriage between two Parties amongst our selves, can be said to be valid in the Sight of God and Man---And that will lead us in a familiar Way, to shew, what must be done, or what must pass between us and Jesus Christ, before we can say, *our Maker is our Husband.*-----

And *First*, In all lawful Marriages, it is absolutely necessary, that the Parties to be joined together in that holy and honourable Estate, are actually and legally freed from all Pre-engagements whatsoever.---*A Woman is bound to her Husband, saith the Apostle, so long as her Husband liveth.* The same Law holds good in respect to the Man. And so likewise, if either Party be betrothed and promised, tho' not actually married to another, the Marriage is not lawful, till that Pre-engagement and Promise be fairly and mutually dissolved.---Now, it is just thus between us and the Lord Jesus.---For, we are all by Nature born under, and wedded to the Law, as a Covenant of Works.---Hence it is that we are so fond of, and artfully go about, in order to establish a Righteousness of our own---It is as natural for us to do this,

as it is to breathe---Our first Parents, *Adam* and *Eve*, even after the Covenant of Grace was revealed to them in that Promise, *the Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's Head*, reached out their Hands, and would again have taken hold of the Tree of Life, which they had now forfeited, had not God drove them out of Paradise, and compelled them, as it were, to be saved by Grace---And thus all their Descendants naturally run to the Tree of Life, and want to be saved, partly at least, if not wholly, by their Works. And even gracious Souls, who are inwardly renewed, so far as the Old Man abides in them, find a strong Propensity this way.---Hence it is, that natural Men are generally so fond of *Arminian* Principles.---*Do and live*, is the native language of a proud, self-righteous Heart.---But before we can say, *our Maker is our Husband*, we must be divorced from our old Husband the Law; *i. e.* we must renounce our own Righteousness, our own Doings and Performances, in Point of Dependence; either in Whole or Part, as Dung and Dross, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.---For thus speaks the Apostle *Paul* to the *Romans*, Ch. vii. 4. *Ye also are become dead to the Law (i. e. as a Covenant of Works) by the Body of Christ, that ye should be married to another; even to him, who is raised from the Dead.*---As he also speaketh in another Place, *I have espoused you, as a chaste Virgin to Jesus Christ.* This was the Apostle's own Case---Whilst he depended on his being *a Hebrew of the Hebrews*, and thought himself secure, because, as to the outward Observation of the Law, *he was blameless*; he was an entire Stranger to the divine Life;

Life : But when he began to experience the Power of Jesus Christ's Resurrection, we find him, in his Epistle to the *Philippians*, absolutely renouncing all his external Privileges, and all his *Pbarisaical* Righteousness ; *Yea*, says he, *doubtless, and I count all Things but Loss, nay but Dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Jesus Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith.* And thus it must be with us, e're we can say, *our Maker is our Husband.*—Tho' we may not be wrought upon in that extraordinary Way in which the Apostle was, yet we must be dead to the Law, we must be espoused as chaste Virgins, to Jesus Christ, and count all external Privileges, and our most splendid Performances (as was before observed) only as Dung and Dross, *for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord.*

But further, before a Marriage among us can stand good in Law, both Parties must not only be freed from all Pre-engagements, but there must be a mutual Consent on both Sides—We are not used to marry People against their Wills.—This is what the *Jews* called Betrothing, or Espousing, a Thing previous to the Solemnity of Marriage.—Thus we find, the Virgin *Mary* is said to be espoused to *Joseph*, before they actually came together, *Mat. i. 18.* And thus it is among us—Both Parties are previously agreed, and as it were, espoused to each other, before we publish, what we call the Banns of Marriage concerning them. And so it will be in the spiritual Marriage, between Jesus Christ and our Souls—Before we are
actually

actually married or united to him by Faith; or, to keep to the Terms of the Text, before we assuredly can say, that *our Maker is our Husband*, we must be made willing People in the Day of God's Power, we must be sweetly and effectually persuaded by the Holy Spirit of God, that the glorious *Emanuel* is willing to accept of us, just as we are, and also that we are willing to accept of him upon his own Terms, yea, upon any Terms.—And when once it comes to this, the spiritual Marriage goes on apace, and there is but one Thing lacking to make it compleat.—And what is that? An actual Union.

This is absolutely necessary in every lawful Marriage among Men.—There must be a Joining of Hands before Witnesses, ere they can be deemed lawfully joined together.—Some Men indeed of corrupt Minds, are apt to look upon this as a needless Ceremony, and think it sufficient to be married, as they term it, in the Sight of God.—But whence Men get such Divinity, I know not.—I am positive, not from the Bible; for we there read that even at the first Marriage in Paradise, there was something of outward Solemnity; God himself (if I may so speak) being there the Priest.—For we are told, *Gen. ii. 22.* that, after God had made the Woman, *he brought her unto the Man.*—And indeed, to lay aside all Manner of outward Ceremony in Marriage, would be to turn the World into a Den of brute Beasts—Men would then take, or forsake as many Wives as they pleased, and we should soon sink into as bad and brutal State, as those Nations are now in, amongst whom such Practices are allowed of, and who are
C utterly

utterly destitute of the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—Whoever has experienced the Power of his Resurrection, I am persuaded will never plead for such a licentious Practice—For the Terms made use of in Scripture, to represent the mystical Union between Christ and his Church, such as, our being *joined to the Lord*, and *married to Jesus Christ*, are all metaphorical Expressions, taken from some analagous Practices amongst Men.—And as Persons when married, tho' before twain, are now one Flesh; so those that are joined to the Lord, and can truly say, *our Maker is our Husband*, in the Apostle's Language, are one Spirit.—This was typified in the original Marriage of our first Parents.—When God brought *Eve* to *Adam*, he received her with Joy at his Hands, and said, *this is Bone of my Bone, and Flesh of my Flesh*.—They had there, primarily, but one Name—For thus speaks the sacred Historian, *Gen. v. 1, 2.*—*In the Day that God created Man, he blessed them, and called their Name Adam*—And why? because they were *one Flesh*, and were to have but *one Heart*.—The self-same Terms are made use of in Scripture, to express the Believer's Union with Jesus Christ—We are called *Christians*, after Christ's Name, because made Partakers of Christ's Nature—Out of his Fulness, Believers receive Grace for Grace—And therefore, the Marriage State, especially by the Apostle *Paul*, is frequently made use of, to figure out to us the real, vital Union, between Jesus Christ and regenerate Souls.—This is termed by the Apostle, *Eph. v. 32. A great Mystery*.—But great as it is, we must all experience it, before we can say assuredly, that *our Maker is our Husband*.

---For

—For what says our Lord, in that Prayer he put up to his Father before his bitter Passion? *Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me, shall be where I am, that they may be one with thee, even as thou, O Father, and I are one, I in them, and they in me, that we all may be made perfect in One.*--- O infinite Condescension? Oh ineffable Union! Hence it is, that Believers are said to be Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones--- Hence it is, that the Apostle, speaking of himself, says, *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* What an Expression is *that*? How much does it comprehend? And, that we might not think this was something peculiar to himself, he puts this close Question to the *Corinthians*; *Know ye not, that Christ is in you, unless you be Rebobates?* Agreeable to what he says in his Epistle to the *Colossians*, *Christ in you, the Hope of Glory.*---And hence it is, that our Church, in the Communion-office, directs the Minister to acquaint all those that receive the Sacrament worthily, that they are one with Christ, and Christ with them; that they dwell in Christ, and Christ in them---Words that deserve to be written in Letters of Gold, and which evidently shew, what our Reformers believed all Persons must experience, before they could truly and assuredly say, that *their Maker is their Husband.*---

From what then has been delivered, may not the poorest and most illiterate Person here present easily know, whether or not he is really *married to Jesus Christ*. Some indeed, I am afraid, are so presumptuous as to affirm, at least to insinuate, that there is no such Thing as knowing, or being fully

fully assured, whilst here below, whether we are in Christ or not---Or at least, if there be such a Thing, it is very rare, and only the Privilege of the primitive Believers.---Part of this is true, and Part of this absolutely false.---That this glorious Privilege of a full Assurance is very rare, is too, too true.---And so it is equally too true, that real Christians, comparatively speaking, are very rare also.---But that there is no such Thing, or that this was only the Privilege of the first Followers of our blessed Lord, is directly opposite to the Word of God.---*We know*, says St. *John*, speaking of Believers in general, *that we are his, by the Spirit which he hath given us*; and, *He that believeth hath the Witness in himself*; *Because you are Sons*, saith St. *Paul*, *God hath sent forth his Spirit into your Hearts*, even the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, *Abba Father*.---Not that I dare affirm, that there is no real Christian, but what has this full Assurance of Faith, and clearly knows, that *His Maker is his Husband*.---In speaking thus, I should undoubtedly condemn some of the Generation of God's dear Children, who thro' the Prevalence of Unbelief, indwelling Sin, spiritual Sloth, or it may be, for Want of being informed of the Privileges of Believers, may walk in Darkness, and see no Light.---therefore, tho' I dare not affirm, that a full Assurance of Faith is absolutely necessary for the very Being, yet I dare assert, that it is absolutely necessary, for the Well-being of a Christian.---And for my own Part, I cannot conceive, how any Persons, that pretend to Christianity, can rest satisfied or contented without it.---This is indeed stopping short, on this Side *Jordan*, with a Witness---

ness--And gives others too much Reason to suspect, that such Persons, however high their Profession may be, have, as yet, no true saving Grace at all.--Men, whose Hearts are set on this World's Goods, or, to use our Lord's Language, *the Children of this World*, act not so--I suppose there is scarce a single Merchant in this great Congregation, especially in these troublous Times, that will venture out either his Ship or Cargo, without first ensuring both against the Violence of an Enemy, or a Storm--And I suppose there is scarce a single House, of any considerable Value, in any populous Town or City, but the Owner has taken out a Policy from the Fire-Office, to insure it, in Case of Fire--And can I be so irrational as to think, that there is such a Thing as securing my *Goods*, and my *House*, and that there is no such Thing as insuring, what is infinitely more valuable, my precious and immortal Soul? Or if there be such a Thing, as undoubtedly there is, what Foolishness of Folly must it needs be in Men, that pretend to be Men of Parts, of good Sense, and solid Reasoning, to be so anxious to secure their Ships against a Storm, their Houses against a Fire, and at the same Time, not to be unspeakably more solicitous, to take a Policy out of the Assurance-Office of Heaven; even the Seal and Witness of the blessed Spirit of God, to ensure their Souls against that Storm of divine Wrath; and that Vengeance of eternal Fire, which will at the last decisive Day come upon all those, that know not God, and have not obeyed his gracious Gospel? To affirm therefore, that there is no such Thing as knowing that *our Maker is our Husband*; or that it is a
Privilege

Privilege peculiar only to the first Christians, to speak in the mildest Terms, is both irrational and unscriptural. Not that all who can say, *their Maker is their Husband*, can give the same clear and distinct Account of the *Time, Manner, and Means* of their being spiritually united and married by Faith to the blessed Bridegroom of the Church--- Some there may be now, as well as formerly, sanctified from the Womb---And others, in their Infancy and Non-age, as it were silently converted--- Such perhaps may say, with a little *Scotch Maiden*, now with God, when I asked her, whether Jesus Christ had taken away her old Heart, and given her a new one? *Sir, It may be*, said she, *I cannot directly tell you the Time and Place, but this I know*, it is done.---And indeed it is not so very material, tho' no doubt it is very satisfactory, if we cannot relate all the minute and particular Circumstances, that attended our Conversion; if so be we are truly converted now, and can say, the Work is done, and that, *Our Maker is our Husband*.---And I question, whether there is one single adult Believer, now on Earth, who lived, before Conversion, either in a Course of secret or open Sin, but can, in a good Degree, give an Account of the Beginning and Progress of the Work of Grace in his Heart.--- What think ye? Need I tell any married Persons in this Congregation, that they must go to the University, and learn the Languages, before they can tell whether they are married or not? Or, if their Marriage was to be doubted, could they not, think you, bring their Certificates, to certify the Time and Place of their Marriage; and the Minister that joined them together in that holy State? And

And if you are adult, and are indeed married to Jesus Christ, tho' you may be unlearned, and what the World terms illiterate Men, can not you tell me the Rise and Progress, and Consummation of the spiritual Marriage, between Jesus Christ and your Souls? Know you not the Time, when you were first under the Drawings of the Father, and Jesus began to woo you for himself? Tell me, O Man, Tell me, O Woman, knowest thou not the Time, or at least, knowest thou not, that there was a Time, when the blessed Spirit of God stripped thee of the Fig-leaves of thy own Righteousness, hunted thee out of the Trees of the Garden of thy Performances, forced thee from the Embraces of thy old Husband the Law, and made thee to abhor thy own Righteousness, as so many filthy Rags? Canst thou not remember when, after a long Struggle with Unbelief, Jesus appeared to thee, as altogether lovely, One mighty and willing to save? And canst thou not reflect upon a Season, when thy own stubborn Heart was made to bend; and thou wast made willing to embrace him, as freely offered to thee in the everlasting Gospel? And canst thou not, with Pleasure unspeakable, reflect on some happy Period, some certain Point of Time, in which a sacred Some-thing (perhaps thou could'st not then well tell what) did captivate, and fill thy Heart, so that thou could'st say, in a Rapture of holy Surprize, and Extacy of divine Love, *My Lord and my God; my Beloved is mine, and I am his; I know that my Redeemer liveth; or, to keep to the Words of our Text, My Maker is my Husband.*—Surely, amidst this great and solemn Assembly, there are many that can answer these

Questions

Questions in the Affirmative—For these are Transactions, not easily to be forgotten; and the Day of our Espousals is, generally, a very remarkable Day; a Day to be had in everlasting Remembrance.

And can any of you indeed, upon good Grounds say, *that your Maker is your Husband?* May I not then (as it is customary to wish Persons Joy, who are just entered into the Marriage State) congratulate you upon your happy Change, and wish you Joy, with all my Heart? Sure am I, that there was Joy in Heaven on the Day of your Espousals: And why should not the blessed News occasion Joy on Earth? May I not address you in the Language of our Lord to the Women that came to visit his Sepulchre, *All hail!* for ye are highly favoured.—Blessed are ye among Men, blessed are ye among Women! ---All Generations shall call you blessed. ---What? *Is your Maker your Husband?* The Holy One of *Israel* your Redeemer? Sing, O Heavens, and rejoice, O Earth! What an amazing Stoop is this! What a new Thing has God created on the Earth! Do not your Hearts, O Believers, burn within you, when meditating on this unspeakable Condescension of the high and lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity? Whilst you are musing, does not the sacred Fire of divine Love kindle in your Souls? And, out of the Abundance of your Hearts, do you not often speak with your Tongues, and call upon all that is within you, to laud and magnify your Redeemer's holy Name? Is not that God-exalting, Self-abasing Expression frequently in your Mouths, *Why me, Lord, why me?* And are you not often constrained to break out into that devout

devout Exclamation of *Solomon*, when the Glory of the Lord filled the Temple, *And will God indeed dwell with Man?* Ungrateful, rebellious, ill, and Hell-deserving Man! Oh, my Brethren, my Heart is enlarged towards you! Tears, while I am speaking, are ready to gush out---But they are Tears of Love and Joy---How shall I give it vent? How shall I set forth thy Happiness, O Believer, thou Bride of God! ---And is *thy Maker thy Husband?* Is his Name the *Lord of Hosts?* Whom then shouldst thou fear? And is thy Redeemer the Holy One of *Israel*, the God of the whole Earth shall he be called? Of whom then shouldst thou be afraid? He that toucheth thee, toucheth the very Apple of God's Eye---*The very Hairs of thy Head are all numbered, and it is better, that a Man should have a Millstone tied round his Neck, and be drowned in the Sea, than that he should justly offend thee.*---All hail, (I must again repeat it) thou Lamb's Bride! For thou art all glorious within, and comely, thro' the Comeliness thy heavenly Bridegroom hath put upon thee---Thy Garment is indeed of wrought Gold; and, ere long, the King shall bring thee forth with a Raiment of Needlework, and present thee blameless before his Father, without Spot, or Wrinkle, or any such Thing.---In the mean while, well shall it be with you, and happy shall you be, who are married to Jesus Christ---For all that Christ has is yours---He is made of God to you, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and eternal Redemption---Whether *Paul*, or *Cephas*, or the World, or Life, or Death, or Things present, or Things to come; all are yours.---All his Attributes are engaged for your

Preservation, and all Things shall work together for your Good, who love God, and, by being thus married to the Lord Jesus, give an evident Proof that you are called according to his Purpose.--What say you? When you meditate on these Things, are you not frequently ready to cry out, what shall we render unto the Lord for all these Mercies, which of his free unmerited Grace, he hath been pleased to bestow upon us? For, tho' you are dead to the Law, as a Covenant of Works, yet you are alive to the Law as a Rule of Life, and are in, or under the Law (for either Expression seems to denote the same Thing) to your glorious Husband, Jesus Christ.

Pass we on therefore to the *Second General Head*, under which I was to shew, what *Duties* of Love they owe to Jesus Christ, who are so happy as to be able to say, *My Maker is my Husband*.

I say, *Duties of Love*--For being now married to Jesus Christ, you work not *for* Life, but *from* Life.--The Love of God constrains you, so that, if there was no written Law, or supposing Jesus would set you at Liberty from his Yoak, so far as Grace prevails in your Hearts, you would say, we love our blessed Bridegroom, and will not go from him.--

And now then, what does the Lord require of you? That we may speak on this Head, as plainly as may be, we shall pursue the Method we begun with; and, by carrying on the Allegory, and examining, what is required of truly Christian Wives, under the Gospel, infer what our Lord may justly demand of those, who are united to him

SER. I. *Christ the Believer's Husband.*

19

him by Faith, and can therefore say, *our Maker is our Husband.*---

And here let us go to the Law and to the Testimony,---What says the Scripture? *Let the Wife,* says the Apostle, *see that she reverence her Husband.*---It is, no doubt, the Duty of married Women, to think highly of their Husbands,---From whom may Husbands justly command Respect, if not from their Wives? The Apostle's Expression is Emphatical---Let the Wife *see,* that she reverence her Husband; thereby implying, that Women, some of them at least, are too prone to disrespect their Husbands; as *Michael,* Saul's Daughter, despised *David* in her Heart, when she tauntingly said, *2 Sam. vi. 20. How glorious was the King of Israel to Day, who uncovered himself to Day in the Eyes of the Hand-maids of his Servants, as one of the vain Fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself.*---

This is a Source and Fountain, from whence many domestick Evils frequently flow,---Women should remember the Character Husbands sustain in Scripture,---They are to them what Christ is to the Church,---And it is mentioned to the Honour of *Sarah,* that she called *Abraham, Lord.*---*Shall I have a Child who am old, my Lord being old also?* It is remarkable, that there are but two good Words in that whole Sentence, *my Lord* (for all the others are the Language of Unbelief) and yet those two Words the Holy Ghost mentions to her eternal Honour, and buries, as it were, the rest in Oblivion,---*Even as Sarah,* says *St. Peter,* *obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord.*---An evident Proof how pleasing it is in the Sight of God, for Women in the married State, to reverence and respect their

Husbands.—Not that Husbands therefore should *Lord it* over their Wives, or require too much Respect at their Hands—This would be unchristian, as well as ungenerous, indeed.—They ought rather, as God has taken such Care to keep up their Authority, commanding their Wives to reverence and respect them; they ought, I say, to be doubly careful, that they live so holy and unblameable, as to lay their Wives under no Temptation to despise them.—But to return from this Digression.—Does the Apostle say, *Let the Wife see that she reverence her Husband?*—May I not pertinently apply this Caution to you, who are married to Jesus Christ? See to it, that you reverence and respect your Husband—I say, *see to it.*—For the Devil will be often suggesting to you hard and mean Thoughts against your Husband.—It was thus he beset our Mother *Eve*, even in a State of Innocence.—He would fain persuade her to entertain hard Thoughts of her glorious Benefactor.—*What,* says he, *has God said, ye shall not eat of the Trees of the Garden?* Has he been so cruel to put you here in a beautiful Garden, only to vex and teize you? This he made use of as an Inlet to all his succeeding Insinuations.—And this Trade he is still pursuing, and will be pursuing, till the very End of Time.—Besides, in the Eyes of the World, Jesus Christ has no Form or Comeliness, that they should desire him; and therefore, unless you *watch and pray*, you will be *led into Temptation*, and not keep up such high Thoughts of your blessed Jesus, as he justly deserves.—In this you can never exceed.—Women, perhaps, may sometimes think too highly of, and, through Excess of Love, idolize

idolize their earthly Consorts.---But it is impossible for you to think too highly of your heavenly Husband, Jesus Christ.---

Further, what says the Apostle, in his Epistle to the *Ephesians*? speaking of the Marriage State, he says, *The Wife is the Glory of her Husband*; as tho' he had said, a Christian-Wife should so behave, and so walk, as to be a Credit to her Husband.---As *Abigail* was an Honour to *Nabal*, and by her sweet Deportment, made up, in some Degree, for her Husband's Churlishness.---This is to be a Help-meet indeed.---Such a Woman will be praised in the Gate; and her Husband get Glory, and meet with Respect on her Account. And ought a Woman to be the Glory of her Husband? How much more ought you, that are the Lamb's Bride, so to live, and so to walk, as to bring Glory, and gain Respect, to the Cause and Interest of your Husband Jesus? This is what the Apostle every where supposes, when he would draw a Parallel between a temporal and spiritual Marriage.---*The Woman*, says he, *is the Glory of her Husband, even as the Church is the Glory of Christ*.---Agreeably to this, he tells the *Corinthians*, *Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the Glory of God*; and as he also bespeaks the *Thessalonians*, *I Thess. II. 11, 12. As you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every One of you (as a Father doth his Children) that ye would walk worthy of God who hath called you to his Kingdom, and his Glory*.---What an Expression is here! That ye would walk worthy of God.---Oh! How ought this, and such-like Texts, to stir up your pure Minds, O Believers, so to have your Conversation

in this World, that you may be, what the Apostle says some particular Persons were, even *the Glory of Christ*—You are his Glory; he rejoices over you with singing; and you should so walk, that all, who know and hear of you, may glorify Christ in you.---

Subjection, is another Duty, that is enjoined married Women in the Word of God--- They are to be subject to their own Husbands in every Thing, *i. e.* every lawful Thing--- *For*, says the Apostle, *the Husband is the Head of the Wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church*: And knowing how unapt some base Minds would be, to submit to the Husband's Authority; he takes Care to enforce this Duty of Subjection, by many cogent and powerful Arguments—*For Adam was first made, and not Eve—Neither was the Man made for the Woman, but the Woman for the Man—And again, The Man was not first in the Transgression, but the Woman—* Upon which Accounts, Subjection was imposed on her, as Part of her Punishment—*Thy Desire*, says God, *shall be to thy Husband, and he shall rule, tho' not tyrannize, over thee*--- So that, to use the Words of pious Mr. Henry, *Those, who attempt to usurp Authority over their Husbands, not only contradict a divine Command, but thwart a divine Curse*--- And if Women are to be subject to their own Husbands in every Thing, how much more ought Believers, whether Men or Women, to be subject to Jesus Christ--- For he is the Head of the Church--- He has bought her by his Blood--- Believers therefore are not their own, but are under the highest Obligations to glorify and obey Jesus Christ, in their Bodies, and their Souls, which are his--- Add to this,

this, that his Service, as it is admirably expressed in one of our Collects, is perfect Freedom--His Commandments, holy, just, and good--And therefore, it is your highest Privilege, O Believers, to submit to, and obey them---Earthly Husbands may be so mean, as to impose some Things upon their Wives, merely, to shew their Authority; but it is not so, with Jesus Christ---He can and does impose nothing, but what immediately conduces to our present, as well as future Good---In doing, nay, in suffering for Jesus Christ, there is a present unspeakable Reward--- And therefore I may say to Believers, as the blessed Virgin said to the Servants, at the Marriage of *Cana*; *Whatsoever he says unto you, do it*--For his Yoke is easy, and his Burden is light.---And I believe, it might easily be proved in a few Minutes, that all the Disorders, that are now in the World, whether in Church or State, are owing to a Want of being universally, unanimously, cheerfully, and perseveringly conformed to the Laws and Example of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Again, *Faithfulness* in the Marriage State, is strictly enjoined, in the Scriptures of Truth---*Marriage*, saith the Apostle, *is honourable in all, and the Bed undefiled*--But *Whoremongers and Adulterers, God will judge*--Nay, Adultery is an Iniquity to be punished by the Earthly Judges; it dissolves the Marriage Relation---For the Man has not Power over his own Body, but the Woman; neither has the Woman Power over her own Body, but the Man---The Heathens themselves have been taught this by the Light of Nature; and Adultery, among some of them, is punished with immediate Death---

And

And ought married Persons to be thus careful, to keep the Marriage-Bed undefiled, how carefully then ought Believers to keep their Souls chaste, pure and undefiled, now they are espoused to Jesus Christ? For there is such a Thing as spiritual Adultery--*O ye Adulterers, and Adulteresses,* saith St. James--And God frequently complains of his People's playing the Harlot--Hence it is, that St. John, in the most endearing Manner, exhorts Believers to keep themselves from Idols--For the Lust of the Eye, the Lust of the Flesh, and Pride of Life, are always ready to steal away our Hearts from Jesus Christ. And every Time we place our Affections upon any Thing more than Christ, we do undoubtedly commit spiritual Adultery--For we admit a Creature to rival the Creator, *who is God over all, blessed for evermore--Little Children, therefore, keep yourselves from Idols.*---

But it is Time for me to draw towards the Close of this Head--*Fruitfulness* was a Blessing promised by God to the First happy Pair: *Entcrease and multiply,* says God, *and replenish the Earth--Lo Children, and the Fruit of the Womb,* says the Psalmist, *are a Gift and Heritage, which cometh of the Lord--*And so, if we are married to Jesus Christ, we must be fruitful--In what? In every good Word and Work--For thus speaks the Apostle, in his Epistle to the Romans,--*Wherefore, my Brethren, ye also are become dead to the Law, by the Body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the Dead--* What follows? *That we should bring forth Fruit unto God--* Glorious Words, and proper to be considered in a peculiar Manner, by such who would explode the Doctrine of
Free

Free Justification, as an *Antinomian* Doctrine, as tho' it destroyed good Works---No, it establishes, and lays a solid Foundation, whereon to build the Superstructure of good Works---*Timothy* is therefore commanded to exhort Believers, to be careful to maintain good Works---And *herein*, says our Lord, *is my Father justified, that ye bring forth much Fruit---Let your Light shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and glorify your Father, which is in Heaven*; with a Multitude of Passages to the same Purpose.——

Moreover it is required of Wives, that they not only love and reverence their Husbands, but that they also love and respect their Husband's *Friends*---And if we are married to Jesus Christ, we shall not only reverence the Bridegroom, but we shall also love and honour the Bridegroom's *Friends*—*By this shall all Men know*, says our Lord, *that ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another*—*By this we know*, says his beloved Disciple, *that we have passed from Death to Life, because we love the Brethren*---Observe, *the Brethren*, indefinitely, of whatever Denomination---And this Love must be without Dissimulation, with a pure Heart fervently---This was the Case of the primitive Christians---They were all of one Heart, and of one Mind---It was said of them (Oh that it could be said of us!) *See how these Christians love one another!* They were of the same Spirit, as a good Woman in *Scotland* was, who, when she saw a great Multitude, as is customary in that Country, coming from various Parts, to receive the blessed Sacrament, saluted them with a *Come in, ye Blessed of the Lord, I have a House that will hold a Hundred of you, and a Heart*

that will hold Ten Thousand———Let us go and do likewise.———

Once more---Persons that are married take one another for *better or for worse*, for richer or for poorer, to love and to cherish each other in Sickness and in Health.---And if we are married to Jesus Christ, we shall be willing to bear his *Cross*, as well as wear his *Crown*---*If any Man*, says our Lord, *will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his Cross and follow me*.---Neither will they be compelled to do this, as *Simon of Cyrene* was, but they will be *Voluntiers* in his Service, they will cry out, *Crown him, Crown him*, when others are crying out, *Crucify him, Crucify him*.---They will never leave or forsake him, but willingly follow the Captain of their Salvation, tho' it be thro' a Sea of Blood.———

I might run the Parallel still further, and also enlarge upon the Hints already given———But I fear I have said enough already, to reproach most Believers; I am sure I have said more than enough, to abash and upbraid myself---For alas! how vilely, treacherously, and ungratefully, have we behaved towards our spiritual Husband, the dear Lord Jesus, ever since the Day of our Espousals? Had our Friends, or even the Wives of our own Bosoms, behaved to us as we have behaved to our great and best Friend, our glorious Husband, we should have broke off our Friendship, and sued for a Bill of Divorcement long ago.---Under our first Love, what Promises did we make to him? But how frowardly have we behaved our selves in his Covenant? How little have we revered him? How often has our Beloved been to us no more than
than

than another Beloved? How little have we lived to his Glory? Have we not been a Shame and Reproach to his Gospel? Have we not crucified him afresh, and has he not been sorely wounded in the House of his Friends? Nay, has not his holy Name been blasphemed thro' our Means? For alas! how little have we obeyed him? How careless and indifferent have we been, whether we pleased him or not? We have often said indeed, when commanded by him to go work in his Vineyard, We go, Lord; but alas! we went not---Or if we did go, with what Reluctance has it been? How unwilling to watch with our dear Lord and Master only one Hour? And of his Sabbaths how often have we said, What a Weariness is this? As for our Adulteries, and spiritual Fornications, how frequent, how aggravated have they been? Have not Idols of all Sorts been suffered to fill up the Room of the ever blessed Jesus in our Hearts? You that love him in Sincerity, will not be offended, if I tell you, that the 16th Chapter of *Ezekiel* gives, in my Opinion, a lively Description of our Behaviour towards our Lord---We were like base-born Children, cast out in the Field to the Loathing of our Persons, no Eye pitied or had Compassion on us---Jesus passed by, saw us polluted in our own Blood, and said unto us, *Live; i. e.* preserved us, even in our natural State, from Death---And when his Time of Love was come, he spread the Skirt of his imputed Righteousness over us, and cover'd the Nakedness of our Souls, entered into Covenant with us, and we became his---He washed us also with Water, even in the Laver of Regeneration, and thoroughly washed us by his precious Blood,

from the Guilt and Dominion of all our Sins---He cloathed us also with broidered Work, and decked us with Ornaments, even with Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost.—We did eat fine Flour and Honey at one Ordinance and another, and we feed on Jesus Christ in our Hearts by Faith, with Thanksgiving. In short, we were made exceeding beautiful, and the Kingdom of God was erected in our Hearts.—We were renowned among our Neighbours for our Love to God, and all that knew us took Knowledge of us, that we had been with Jesus.—But alas! how have we fallen, who were once Sons of the Morning! How have we trusted in our own Beauty, grown spiritually Proud, and provoked our patient, and unspeakably long-suffering Lord, to Anger? Where is that ardent Love we spake of, when we told him, that, tho' we should die for him, we would not deny him in any wise? How desperately wicked, and deceitful above all Things, have we proved our Hearts to be, since we have done all these Things, even the Work of an imperious Woman? These are great and numerous Charges; but great and numerous as they are, there is not a single Believer here present, but, if he knows his own Heart, may plead guilty to some, or all of them. But this is a tender Point—I see you concerned: Your Tears, O Believers, are a Proof of the Anguish of your Souls.—And can any of us give any Reason, why Jesus Christ should not give us a Bill of Divorcement, and put us away? May he not justly speak to us, as he did to his Adulteress *Israel*, in the forementioned 16th of *Ezekiel*; *Wherefore, O Harlot, bear the Word of the Lord; I will judge thee*

thee as Women that break Wedlock, and shed Blood, are judged.— I will give thee Blood in Fury and Jealousy, because thou hast not remembered the Days of thy Youth, but hast fretted me in all these Things.— Behold therefore, I also will recompence thy Way upon thy Head—I will even deal with thee, as thou hast done, which hast despised the Oath, in breaking the Covenant, the Marriage-Contract that was between us.—This, I am persuaded, you will confess to be the Treatment, which we all most justly deserve.— But be not overwhelmed with over-much Sorrow— For tho' the Lord our God is a jealous God, and will certainly visit our Offences with a Rod, and our Backslidings with a spiritual Scourge, yet his Loving-kindness will he not utterly take from us, nor suffer his Truth to fail. Tho' we have changed, yet He changeth not—He abideth faithful.—His Loving-kindness abideth for evermore.— Hark! how sweetly he speaks to his backsliding People of old; O Israel, thou hast destroyed thy self, but in me is thy Help— I will heal their Backsliding, and love them freely— And in the Verses immediately following the Words of the Text, how comfortably does he address his espoused People! In a little Wrath, I bid my Face from thee for a Moment; but with everlasting Kindness will I have Mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.— For this is as the Waters of Noah unto me: For as I have sworn, that the Waters of Noah should no more go over the Earth; so have I sworn, that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.— For the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed, but my Kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath Mercy on thee—

Oh

Oh that this Goodness may lead us to Repentance !
 Oh that this unparallel'd, infinite, unchangeable
 Love, may constrain us to an universal, uniform,
 chearful, unanimous, persevering Obedience, to all
 the Commands of God !

Brethren, my Heart is enlarged towards you,
 and I could dwell a long while upon the many
 great and precious Invitations that are made to
 Backsliders, to return to their first Love, and do
 their first Works : But its high time for me, if, as
 was propos'd, I give every one their proper Portion,
 to speak to those poor Souls, who know nothing of
 this blessed Bridegroom of the Church, and con-
 sequently cannot yet say, *My Maker is my Hus-
 band.*—

Ah dear Hearts ! I pity you from my inmost
 Soul, I could weep over, and for you, tho' perhaps,
 you will not weep for yourselves—But surely you
 wou'd weep, and howl too, did you know the mi-
 serable Condition those are in, who are not married
 to Jesus Christ.—Will ye give me leave, I think I
 speak it in much Love, to inform you, as was pro-
 pos'd under the *Third* General Head, that if you
 are not married to Jesus Christ, you are married
 to the Law, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil,
 neither of which can make you happy ; but all,
 on the contrary, concur to make you miserable.—
 Hear ye not, ye that are married to the Law, and
 seek to be justified in the Sight of God, partly at
 least, if not wholly, by your own Works, what
 the Law saith to those that are under it, as a Co-
 venant of Works? *Cursed be the Man, that conti-
 nueth not in all Things that are written in the Book of
 the Law, to do them.*—Every Word breathes
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Threatning and Slaughter to poor, fallen Creatures.—Curfed, both here, and hereafter, be the Man, every Man, naturally engendered of the Offspring of *Adam*, without Exception, that continueth not, even to the very End of Life, in all Things; not only in *some*, or *many*, but in *all* things, that are written in the Book of the Law, to do them, *viz.* in the utmost Perfection; For he *that offendeth in one Point, is guilty of all.*—So that, according to the Tenor of the Covenant of Works, whosoever is guilty of one wicked Thought, Word, or Action, is under the Curse of an angry Sin-avenging God. *For as many as are under the Law, are under the Curse.* And do you know what it is to be under the Curse of God, and to have the Wrath of God abide upon you? If you did, I believe, you wou'd not be so unwilling to be divorced from the Law, and be espoused, as chaste Virgins, to Jesus Christ? And why are ye so wedded to the World? Did it ever prove faithful or satisfactory to any of its Votaries? Has not *Solomon* reckoned up the Sum total of worldly Happiness? And what does it amount to? *Vanity, Vanity, saith the Preacher, all is Vanity,* nay he adds, *Vexation of Spirit.*—And has not a greater than *Solomon* inform'd us, that a Man's life, *viz.* the Happiness of a Man's Life, doth not consist in the Things which he possesseth? Besides, know you not that the Friendship of this World is Enmity with God, so that whosoever will be a Friend to the World, *i. e.* to the corrupt Customs and Vices of it, is an Enemy to God? And what better Reasons can you give for being wedded to your Lusts? Might not the poor Slaves in the Gallies, as reasonably be wedded to their Chains? For
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do not your Lusts fetter down your Souls from God? Do they not *lord it*, and have they not Dominion over you? Do not they say, Come, and ye come; Go, and ye go; Do this, and ye do it? And is not he, or she, that liveth in Pleasure, dead whilst he liveth? And above all, how can ye bear the Thoughts of being wedded to the Devil, as every natural Man is—For thus speaks the Scripture, *He now ruleth in the Children of Disobedience.*—And how can you bear to be ruled by one, who is such a professed, open Enemy, to the most high and holy God? who will make a Drudge of you, whilst you live, and be your Companion in endless and extreme Torment, after you are dead? For thus will our Lord say to those on the left Hand, *Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*—

Will you permit me, O Sinners, that I may draw towards a Close of this Discourse, to propose a better Match to your Souls—This is a Part of the Discourse which I long to come to, it being my Heart's Desire, and earnest Prayer to God, that your Souls may be saved—*And now, O Lord God Almighty, thou Father of Mercies, and God of all Consolations, thou God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has promised to give thy Son the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for his Possession, send me good Speed this Day, O Lord, send me now Prosperity—Behold I stand here without the Camp, bearing a little of thy dear Son's sacred Reproach! Hear me, O Lord, hear me, and according to thy Word let thy dear, thine only begotten Son, see of the Travel of his Soul, and be satisfied! O help*

help me so to speak, that many may believe on, and cleave unto thy blessed, thine holy Child, Jesus.---

But who am I, that I should undertake to recommend the blessed Jesus to others, who am myself altogether unworthy to take his sacred Name into my polluted Lips! Indeed, my Brethren; I do not count myself worthy of such an Honour; but since it has pleased him, in whom all Fullness dwells, to count me worthy, and put me into the Ministry; the very Stones wou'd cry out against me, did I not attempt, at least, to lisp out his Praise, and earnestly recommend the ever blessed Jesus to the Choice of all.---

Thus *Abraham's* faithful Servant behaved; when sent out to fetch a Wife for his Master *Isaac*---He spake of the Riches and Honours, which God had conferred on him---But what infinitely greater Honours and Riches, has the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, conferred on his only Son, to whom I now invite every Christless Sinner.---To you therefore I call, O ye Sons of Men, assuring you, there is every Thing in Jesus, that your Hearts can desire, or hunger and thirst after.---Do People in disposing of themselves or their Children in Marriage, generally covet to be matched with Persons of *great Names*? Let this Consideration serve as a Motive to stir you up to match with Jesus.---For God the Father has given him a *Name above every Name*; he has upon his Vesture; and upon his Thigh, a Name written, *The King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*; and here in the Text we are told; *The Lord of Hosts is his Name*.---Nor has he an empty Title, but Power equivalent.---For he is a Prince, as well as a Saviour.---*All Power is given unto him, both in*
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Heaven

Heaven and on Earth—The God of the whole Earth,
 says our Text, *he shall be called—The Government*
 of Men, the Church, and Devils, is put upon his
 Shoulders—*Thrones, Principalities and Powers, are*
made subject unto him—By him Kings reign, and
Princes decree Justice—He setteth up one, and he put-
teb down another—And of his Kingdom there shall be
no End— Will Riches be an Inducement unto you
 to come and match with Jesus? Why then I can
 tell you, the Riches of Jesus are infinite—For unto
 me, who am less than the least of all Saints, is
 this Grace given, that I should preach to poor
 Sinners, the unsearchable Riches of Jesus Christ—
 I appeal to you that are his Saints, whether you
 have not found this true, by happy Experience;
 and tho' some of you, may have been acquainted
 with him, thirty, forty, fifty Years ago, do you
 not find his Riches are yet unsearchable, and as
 much past finding out, as they were the very first
 Moment in which you gave him your Hearts?—
 Would you match with a *wise* Husband? Haste
 then Sinners, come away to Jesus—He is the Foun-
 tain of Wisdom, and makes all that come unto
 him wise unto Salvation; 'He is the Wisdom of
 ' the Father—The Lord possessed him in the
 ' Beginning of his Way, before his Works of old—
 ' When he prepared the Heavens, he was there;
 ' when he appointed the Foundations of the Earth,
 ' then was he with him, as one brought up with
 ' him; he was daily his Delight, rejoicing always
 ' before him.'—As he is wise so is he *holy*, and
 therefore, in the Words of our Text, he is stiled,
The Redeemer, the holy One of Israel— And by the
Angel Gabriel, that holy Thing— The Apostles, ad-
 dressing

drinking God the Father, stile him his *holy Child* Jesus; and the Spirits of just Men made perfect, and the Angels in Heaven, cease not Day and Night, saying, *holy, holy, holy.*—Nor is his *Beauty* inferior to his Wisdom or Holiness; the Seraphs veil their Faces, when they appear before him—He is the Chiefest among Ten Thousand, nay, he is *altogether lovely.*—And as he is altogether lovely, so is he *altogether loving*; his Name and his Nature is Love.—God, God in Christ is Love—Love in the Abstract— And in this has he manifested his Love, in that, whilst we were yet Sinners, nay open Enemies, Jesus, in his own due Time, died for the Ungodly—He loved us, so as to give himself for us—Oh what Manner of Love is this! What is *Jacob's* Love to *Rachel*, in Comparison of the Love which Jesus bore to a perishing World! He became a Curse for us—For it is written, *Cursed is every Man that hangeth upon a tree.*—What *Zipporah* said to her Husband improperly, Jesus may say *properly* to his Spouse the Church, *a bloody Wife* hast thou been unto me, because of the *Crucifixion*—For he has purchased her with his own Blood—And having once loved his People, he loves them *unto the End*—His Love, like himself, is from everlasting to everlasting—He hates *putting away*—Tho' we change, yet he changeth not—He abideth faithful—When we are married here, there comes in that shocking Clause, to use the Words of *holy Mr. Boston*, *till Death us doth part*; but *Death itself* shall not separate a true Believer from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus his Lord—For he will never cease loving her, 'till he has loved her to Heaven, and presented her before his

Father without Spot or Wrinkle, or any such Thing—Nay, His Love will, as it were, but be beginning, thro' the endless Ages of Eternity.

And now, Sirs, what say you? Shall I put that Question to you, which *Rebecca's* Relations, upon a Proposal of Marriage, put to her? *Will ye go with the Man,* with the God-man, this infinitely great, this infinitely powerful, this all-wise, all-holy, altogether lovely, ever-loving Jesus? What Objection have you to make against such a gracious Offer? One wou'd imagine, you had not a single One; but 'tis to be feared, thro' the Prevalency of Unbelief, and the Corruption of your desperately wicked deceitful Hearts, you are ready to urge several—*Me thinks I hear some of you say within yourselves, We like the Proposal, but alas! we are poor—* Are you so? If that be all, you may notwithstanding be welcome to Jesus—For has not God chosen the Poor of this World, to make them rich in Faith, and Heirs of his everlasting Kingdom? And what says that Saviour, to whom I am now inviting you? *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven—* And what says his Apostle concerning him? *Tho' he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we thro' his Poverty might be made rich.* But say you, *We are not only poor; but we are in debt; we owe God Ten Thousand Talents, and have nothing to pay—* But that need not keep you back—For God the Father, from the Lord Jesus, his dearly beloved Son, has received double for all Believers Sins—The Blood of Jesus cleanseth from them all.—*But you are blind, and miserable, and naked; to whom then should you fly for Succour, but to Jesus,*

Jesus, who came to *open* the Eyes of the *Blind*, to seek and save the *Miserable* and *Lost*, and *cloath* the *Naked* with his perfect and spotless Righteousness? And now, what can hinder your Esponsals with the dear and ever-blessed Lamb of God! I know but of one Thing, *viz.* that dreadful Sin of *Unbelief*—But this is my Comfort, Jesus died for *Unbelief*, as well as other Sins, and has promised to send down the holy Ghost, to convince the World of *this Sin* in particular.—*If I go not away*, saith he, *the Comforter will not come unto you—But if I go away, I will send the Comforter, and he will convince the World of Sin—What Sin? Of Unbelief—Because they believe not on me.*—Oh that this Promise may be so fulfilled in your Hearts, and Jesus may so become the Author of divine Faith in your Souls, that you may be able to send me the same Message, a good Woman in *Scotland* on her dying Bed sent me by a Friend, “Tell him,” says she, “for his Comfort, that at such a Time he married me to the Lord Jesus.”—This would be Comfort indeed—Not that we can marry you to Christ—No, the Holy Ghost must tie the Marriage Knot.—But such Honour have all God's Ministers; under *Him*, they espouse poor Sinners to Jesus Christ.—*I have espoused you*, says St. Paul, *as a chaste Virgin, to Jesus Christ*—Oh that you may say, *we will go with the Man*—Then will I bow my Head, as *Abram's* Servant did, and go with Joy and tell my Master, that he has not left his poor Servant destitute this Day.—Then I shall rejoice in your Felicity—For I know, my Master will take you into the Banquetting-house of his

Ser. II. (39) 10
And however hard the saying may
seem to you at this hearing, yet I can assure
you that it is not so hard as it seems.
I will do my utmost to explain it to you.

S E R M O N II.

The GOSPEL SUPPER.

LUKE xiv. 22, 23.

And the Lord said unto the Servant, Go out into the High-ways and Hedges, and compel them to come in, that my House may be filled---For I say unto you, that none of those which were bidden, shall taste of my Supper.

THOUGH here is a large and awful Assembly, yet I suppose, you are all convinced, that you are not to live in this World always—May I not take it for granted, that even the most Prophane amongst you, do in your Hearts believe, what the sacred Oracles have most clearly revealed, viz.—*That as it is appointed for all Men once to die, so after Death comes the Judgment?* Yes, I know that you believe, that nothing is more certain, than that we are to appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, to be rewarded according to the Deeds done in the Body, whether they have been good, or whether they have
been

been Evil—And, however hard the Saying may seem to you at the first Hearing, yet I cannot help informing you, that I am thoroughly persuaded, that as many will be driven from that Judgment-seat, with a *Depart ye cursed into everlasting Fire,* for pursuing things in themselves lawful, out of a *wrong Principle,* and in *too intense a Degree,* as for Drunkenness, Adultery, Fornication, or any other gross Enormity whatsoever—Bad as the World is, blessed be God, there are great numbers yet left amongst us, who either thro' the Restraints of a religious Education, or Self-love, and outward Reputation, both abstain from gross Sin themselves, and look with Detestation and Abhorrence upon others, that indulge themselves in it—But then, thro' an over-eager Pursuit after the Things of Sense and Time, their Souls are insensibly lulled into a spiritual Slumber, and by Degrees become as dead to God, and as deaf to all the gracious Invitations of the Gospel, as the most abandoned Prodigals.—It is remarkable, therefore, that our Saviour, knowing how desperately wicked and treacherous the Heart of Man was in this, as well as other Respects, after he had cautioned his Disciples, and us in them, to take heed that their Hearts were not at any time *overcharged with Superstition and Drunkenness,* immediately adds, and *the Cares,* (i. e. the immoderate anxious Cares) *of this Life.*—For they are of a distracting, intoxicating Nature, and soon overcharge and weigh down the Hearts of the Children of Men.—To prevent or remedy this Evil, our Lord, during the Time of his tabernacling here below, spake many Parables but not one more pertinent, not one, in which, the
Freness

Freeness of the Gospel-Call, the frivolous Pretences Men frame to excuse themselves from embracing it, and the dreadful Doom they incur by so doing, is more displayed, or set off in livelier Colours, than that to which the Words of the Text refer: *And the Lord said unto the Servant, go out into the Highways and Hedges, and compel them to come in, that my House may be filled: For I say unto you, that none of those that were bidden, shall taste of my Supper.*—In order to have a clear View of the Occasion, Scope, and Contents of the Parable, to which these Words belong, it is necessary for us to look back to the very Beginning of this Chapter.—*And it came to pass,* says the Evangelist, *Verse 1st, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat Bread, on the Sabbath Day, that they watched him.* The Person here spoken of, as going into this Pharisee's House, is our blessed Saviour—For as he came eating and drinking, agreeable to his Character, he was free, courteous and affable to all;—And therefore, tho' it was on the Sabbath Day, he accepted an Invitation, and went into the House of one of the chief Pharisees to eat Bread, notwithstanding he knew the Pharisees were his professed Enemies, and that they watched him, hoping to find some Occasion to upbraid him, either for his Discourse or Behaviour.—If the Pharisee, into whose House our Lord went, was one of this Stamp, his Invitation bespeaks him to be a very ill Man, and may serve to teach us, that much Rancour and Heart-enmity against Jesus Christ, may be concealed and cloaked under a great and blazing Profession of Religion. However, our Saviour was more than a Match for all his Enemies,
 — TO HIS ENEMIES AND

and by accepting this Invitation, hath warranted his Ministers and Disciples, to comply with the like Invitations, and converse freely about the Things of God, tho' those who invite them, may not have real Religion at heart.---For how knowest thou, O Man, but thou mayest drop something, that may benefit their Souls, and make them religious indeed? And supposing they should watch thee, watch thou unto Prayer, whilst thou art in their Company, and that same Jesus, who went into this Pharisee's House, and was so faithful and edifying in his Conversation when there, will enable thee to go and do likewise.---That our Lord's Conversation was not trifling, but such as tended to the Use of Edifying, and that he behaved among the Guests as a faithful Physician, rather than as a careless, indifferent Companion, is evident from the 7th Verse of this Chapter, where we are told, that *he marked how they chose the chief Rooms*; or, to speak in our common Way, were desirous of sitting at the upper End of the Table---For whether we think of it or not, the Lord Jesus takes notice of our Behaviour, even when we are going to sit down only at our common Meals.---And would to God, all that make a Profession of real Christianity, considered this well!--Religion then would not be so much confined to Church, or Meeting, but be brought home to our private Houses, and many needless unchristian Compliments be prevented.---Pop! (with Grief I speak it) is it not too true, that abundance of Professors love, and are too fond of the uppermost Places in Houses, as well as Synagogues? And are not many, who cry out against all Ceremonies in the Church, too studious of Ceremony

remony in their Parlours? This was what our Lord blamed in the Guests where he now was.---*He marked,* he took notice, he looked before he spake (as we should always do, if we would speak to the Purpose) how they chose out *the chief Rooms.*— Therefore, tho' they were rich in this World's Goods, and were none of his Guests, yet unwilling to suffer the least Sin upon them, or lose any Opportunity of giving Instruction, he gave them a Lecture upon Humility, saying unto them, that is, directing his Discourse to all in general, tho' probably he spake to one in particular, that sat near him, and whom it may be, he took notice of, as more than ordinarily solicitous in choosing a chief Room, or Couch, on which they lay at Meals after the Custom of the Romans; *When thou art bidden (Verse 8.) of any Man to a Wedding,* (which seems to intimate that this was a Wedding-feast) *sit not down in the highest Room, lest a more honourable Man than thou be bidden of Him; And he that bade thee and him (Verse 9th) come and say to thee, give this Man place, and thou begin with Shame to take the lowest Room. But when thou art bidden (Verse 10th) go and sit down in the lowest Room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up bigger; then shalt thou have Worship (or Respect) in the Presence of them that sit at Meat with thee.* O glorious Example of Faithfulness and Love to Souls! How ought Ministers especially to copy after their blessed Master, and, with Simplicity and godly Sincerity, mildly and opportunely rebuke the Faults of the Company they are in, tho' superior to them in outward Circumstances? What rightly informed Person, after reading this Passage, can think

think they teach right and agreeable to the Word of God in this Respect, who say, we must not, at least need not, reprove natural Men? Surely such Doctrine cometh not from above! For are we not commanded, in any wise, to reprove our Neighbour (whether he be a Child of God or no) and not to suffer Sin upon him? Is it not more than probable, that all these Guests were natural Men? And yet our Lord reprov'd them.---“ Help us then, O Saviour, in this and every other Instance of thy Moral Conduct, to walk as thou hast set us an Example.” — Neither did our Lord stop here; but observing that none but the Rich, the Mighty, and the Noble, were called to the Feast, he took occasion also from thence, to give even his Host (for the best Return we can make our Friends for their Kindness, is to be faithful to their Souls) one of the chief Pharisees, a wholesome Piece of Advice --- *Then said he also to him that bade him (Verse 12th) when thou makest a Dinner or a Supper, call not thy Friends, nor thy Brethren, neither thy Kinsmen, nor thy rich Neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a Recompence be made thee.---But when thou makest a Feast (Verse 13th) call the Poor, the Maimed, the Lame, the Blind: And thou shalt be blessed; (Verse 14th) for they cannot recompence thee: For thou shalt be recompenced at the Resurrection of the Just.* — Thus did our Lord entertain the Company. Words spoken in such due Season, how good are they! Would Christ's Followers thus exert themselves, and, when in Company, begin some useful Discourse for their great Master, they know not what Good they might do, and how many might be influenced by their good Example, to second them

them in it! An Instance of this we have in the 14th Verse of this Chapter---*And when one of them, says the Evangelist, that sat at Meat with him, heard these Things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat Bread in the Kingdom of God.* Happy they that shall be recompenced at that Resurrection of the Just, which thou hast been speaking of,--- A very pertinent Saying this! Every way suitable to Persons sitting down to eat Bread on Earth, which we should never do, without talking of, and longing for that Time, when we shall sit down and eat Bread in the Kingdom of Heaven---This opened to our Lord a fresh Topick of Conversation, and gave Birth to the Parable, which is to be the more immediate Subject of your present Meditation---As tho' he had said to the Person that spoke last, Thou sayest right; blessed are they indeed, who shall sit down to eat Bread in the Kingdom of God: But alas! most Men, especially you Pharisees, act as if you did not believe this, and therefore (*ver. 16.*) he said unto him, *A certain Man made a great Supper, and bad many;* by the certain Man making a great Supper, we are to understand God the Father, who has made Provision for perishing Souls, by the Obedience and Death of his beloved Son Christ Jesus---This Provision is here represented under the Character of a *Supper*, because the *Cena* or Supper, among the Ancients, was their grand Meal: It is here said that a *certain* Man made it, to shew that it is God and not Man, that has made a Way, for the Salvation of Sinners; Men could never have made it for themselves, or Angels for them---No, our Salvation is all from God, from the Beginning to the
End--

End---He made it, and not we our selves; and it is wholly owing to the divine Wildom, and not our own, that we are become God's People, and the Sheep of his Pasture.--This Provision for perishing Souls, may be justly called *Great*, because it was made by the *Great God*, the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords--It is also called *Great*, because there is a *rich* and ample Provision, made in the Gospel, for a *great many* Souls--- For however Christ's Flock may be but a little Flock, when asunder, yet when they come altogether, they will be a Multitude, which no Man can number.---And it is especially called *Great*, because it was purchased at so *great a Price*, viz. The Price of Christ's most precious Blood--And therefore, when the Apostle would exhort the Christians to glorify God in their Souls and Bodies, he makes use of *this* glorious Motive, viz. *That they were bought with a Price*--- He does not say what Price, but barely *a Price*, emphatically so called; as tho' all the Prices in the World were nothing (as indeed they are not) when compared to this Price of Christ's most precious Blood--For these Reasons, Jesus said in the Parable, *A certain Man made a great Supper, and bade many, and sent his Servant at Supper-time (verse 17.) to say to them that were bidden, Come, for all Things are now ready.*---*He bade many, i. e.* The eternal God took the *Jews* to be his peculiar People, under the *Mosaick* Dispensation; and by Types, Shadows, and Prophecies of the Old Testament, invited them to partake of the glorious Privileges of the Gospel.---*But at Supper-time, i. e. In the Fulness of Time, which God the Father had decreed from Eternity, in*
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the Evening of the World (for which Reason the Gospel Times are called the last Times) he sent his Servant, i. e. Christ his Son, here called his Servant, because acting as Mediator, he was inferior to the Father---Therefore says the Prophet *Isaiab*, *Behold my Servant whom I have chosen*---To them that were bidden, viz. To the professing Jews, called by St. *John*, his own, that is, his peculiar professing People---With this Message, *Come*---Repent and believe the Gospel. Nothing is required on Man's part, in order to convey a Title to Salvation; but to come and accept of the Gospel Offer. It is not according to the Old Covenant, *Do and live*; but only *Come, Believe, and thou shalt be saved*---All Things are ready---Nothing is wanting on God's Part---*All Things are now ready*---There seems to be a particular Emphasis to be put upon the Word *now*, implying, this was an especial Season of Grace, and God was now exerting his last Efforts, to save lost Man.---Well then! If the great God be at so great an Expence, to make so great a Supper, for perishing Creatures, and sends so great a Person as his own Son, in the Form of a Servant, to invite them to *come* to it; one would imagine, that all who heard these Glad Tidings, should readily say, *Lord, Lo we come*---But instead of this, (*verse 18.*) we are told, *They all, i. e. the greatest Part of the Jews, with one Consent began to make Excuse*---Conscience told them they ought to come, and, in all Probability, they had some faint Desire to come; and they had nothing, as we hear of, to object either against the Person that prepared the Supper, the Person that invited them, or the Entertainment itself; neither do we hear that they

treated

treated either with Contempt, as is the Custom of too many in the Days wherein we live. In all Probability, they acknowledged all was very good, and that it was kind in that certain Man, to send them such an Invitation---But being very busy, and as they thought very lawfully engaged, they *began to make Excuse*---But the Excuses they made, rendered their Refusal most inexcusable---*The First said unto him, I have bought a Piece of Ground, and I must needs go and see it*: Thou Fool, buy a Piece of Ground, and then go see it! A prudent Man would have gone and seen the Ground first, and bought it afterwards---“ I have bought a Piece of Ground, “ and I *must needs go see it.*” Why must he *needs go*? At least, why must he *needs go now*? The Land was his own, and could he not therefore have accepted the Invitation to Day, and gone and seen his Estate, or Plantation, on the Morrow? Now he had bought it, he need not fear losing his Bargain, by another’s buying it from him---But notwithstanding all this, there is a *needs must* for his going, and therefore says he, *I pray thee, have me excused,* and improve thy Interest with thy Master in my behalf---This was a bad Excuse. The second was rather worse---For what says the Evangelist, Verse 19th? *And another said, I have bought five Yoke of Oxen, and I go to prove them*: One, it seems, had been buying an Estate; another, Cattle, to stock an Estate already bought; and both equally foolish in making their Bargains. For here, this Second had bought five Yoke of Oxen, which must needs cost him a considerable Sum, perhaps all he had in the World, and now he must go and prove them. —

them.---A wise Dealer would have proved the Oxen first, and bought them afterwards: But our Saviour speaks this to shew us; that we will trust one another, nay I may add, the Devil himself, more than we will trust God.---The Excuse which the third makes is worst of all.---*I have married a Wife,* (says he, Verse 20th) *and therefore I cannot come.*---Had he said, I will not come, he had spoken the real Sentiments of his Heart; for it is not so much Mens Impotency, as their Want of a Will, and Inclination, that keeps 'em from the Gospel-feast.---But why cannot he come? He has married a Wife.---Has he so? Why then, by all Means he should come.---For the Supper, to which he was invited, as it should seem, was a Wedding-supper, and would have saved him the Trouble of a nuptial Entertainment. It was a great Supper, and consequently there was Provision enough for him, and his Bride too.---And it was made by a great Man, who sent out his Servant to bid *many*, so that he need not doubt of meeting with a hearty Welcome, tho' he bring his Wife with him.---Or supposing his Wife was unwilling to come, yet as the Husband is the Head of the Wife, he ought to have laid his Commands on her, to accompany him.---For we cannot do better for our Yoak-fellows, than to bring them to the Gospel-feast.---Or, supposing after all, she would not be prevailed upon, he ought to have gone without her; for those that have Wives, must be as tho' they had none, and we must not let carnal Affection get such an Ascendancy over us, as to be kept thereby from spiritual Entertainments.---*Adam* paid dear for hearkening to the Voice of his Wife; and sometimes, unless we for-

fake Wives, as well as Houses and Lands; we cannot be the Lord's Disciples.---This then was the Reception the Servant met with, and such were the Excuses, and Answers, that were sent back---And what was the Consequence? *So that Servant came* (Verse 21st, no doubt with a sorrowful Heart) *and shewed his Lord these Things.* For however little it be thought of, yet Ministers must shew the Lord, of what Success their Ministry meets with---We must shew it to our Lord *here*---We must spread the Case before him in Prayer.---We must shew it to our Lord *hereafter*, before the General Assembly of the whole World--But Oh! how dreadful it is when Ministers are obliged to go upon their Knees, crying, Oh! my Leanness, my Leanness! and *Elias*-like, to intercede as it were, against those, to whom they would not only have imparted the Gospel, but even their own Lives.--It is a Heart-breaking Consideration--But thus it must be; *The Servant came and shewed the Lord these Things*; so must we.--Well, and what says the Lord?--Why we are told, Verse 21st, that the Master of the House was *angry*; as well he might, to see himself, his Son, and Supper, thus trampled under Foot.--But with whom was he angry? Not with the Servant; for tho' *Israel* be not gathered, yet shall Christ be glorious; and faithful Ministers shall be rewarded, whether People obey the Gospel or not.--*We are a sweet Savour unto God, whether the Word be a Savour of Life unto Life, or a Savour of Death unto Death.*--The Master of the House therefore was angry, not with the Servant, but with these-worldly-minded, pleasure-taking Refusers of his gracious Invitation, who, in all probability, went to see and stock their

their Estates, and attend upon their Brides; not doubting, but their Excuses would be taken, because they were lawfully employed.---And indeed, in one Sense, their Excuses were accepted.---For I do not hear that they were ever invited any more---God took them at their Word, tho' they would not take him at his---They begged to be excused, and they were excused, as we shall see in the Sequel of this Parable---Let us not therefore harden our Hearts, as in the Day of Provocation; *Now is the accepted Time, now is the Day of Salvation*---But must the Feast want Guests? No, if they cannot, or will not come, others shall, and will---The Master of the House therefore being angry, sent the Servant upon a second Errand---*Go out quickly into the Streets, and Lanes of the City, and bring in hither the Poor, and the Maimed, and the Halt, and the Blind.* Every Word bespeaks a Spirit of Resentment and Importunity---*Go out quickly* make no Delay, dread no Attempt or Danger, *into the Streets, and Lanes of the City, and bring in hither,* not only call them, but *bring* them in (for the Master here, to encourage the Servant, assures him of Success) *the Poor, and the Maimed, and the Halt, and the Blind.*---This was fulfilled, when Jesus Christ, after the Gospel was rejected by the *Jews*, went, and called, and invited the Gentiles, and when the Publicans and Harlots took the Kingdom of God, by a holy Violence, whilst the Self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees rejected the Kingdom of God against themselves.---This was also a Home-Reproof to the rich Pharisee, at whose House the Lord Jesus now was, as well as a cutting Lesson to the other Guests---For our Saviour would hereby shew them, that

God took a quite different Method from his Host, and was not above receiving the Poor, and Halt, and Blind, and Maimed, to the Gospel-Supper, tho' He had called none such to sit down at his Table.---Whether the Guests resented it or not, we are not told---But if they were not quite blind, both Host and Guests might easily see that the Parable was spoken against them. But to proceed—The Servant, Verse 22d, again returns, but with a more pleasing Answer than before, *Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is Room.* The Words bespeak the Servant to be full of Joy at the Thoughts of the Success he had met with—For none can tell, but those that experience it, what Comfort Ministers have in seeing their Labours blest.---*Now I live,* says the Apostle, *if you stand fast in the Lord.*—Ye are our Joy and Crown of Rejoicing in the Day of the Lord Jesus---*Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded—* The Poor, and Maimed, and Halt, and Blind, have been called, and have obeyed the Summons, and I have brought them with me; yet, Lord, thy House, thy Supper is so great, there is room for more.”—Hereby he would insinuate, that he wanted to be employed again, in calling more Souls: For the more we do, the more we may do for God: *To him that bath, shall be given;* and present Success is a great Encouragement to future Diligence. Such Hints are pleasing to our Saviour.---He delights to see his Ministers ready for new Work, and waiting for fresh Orders.—The Lord, therefore, we are told, Verse 23d, *said unto his Servant, i. e. the same Servant, Go out into the Highways, and Hedges, and compel them to come in, that my House may be filled;* 24th, *For*
I say

I say unto you, that none of those which were bidden, shall taste of my Supper. Oh cutting Words to those that sat at Meat, if they had Hearts to make the Application! But glad Tidings of great Joy to the Publicans, Harlots, and Gentiles, who were rejected by the proud Pharisees, as Aliens to the Common-Wealth of *Israel*, and strangers to the Covenant of Promise! This was fulfilled, when our Lord sent the Apostles, not only into the Streets, and Lanes of the City, and Places bordering upon *Jerusalem* and *Judea*, but when he gave them a Commission to go out into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature, *Gentile* as well as *Jew*; and not only gave them a Command, but blessed their Labours with such Success, that Three Thousand were converted in one Day—And I am not without Hopes, that it will be still further fulfilled, by the Calling of some of you home this Day: For however this Parable was spoken originally to the *Jews*, and upon a particular Occasion here at a Feast, yet it is applicable to *us*, and to our Children, and to as many as are afar off; yea, to as many as the Lord our God shall call---It gives a Sanction, methinks, to preaching in the *Fields*, and other Places, besides the *Synagogues*; and points out the Reception the Gospel meets with in these Days, in such a lively Manner, that one wou'd think it had a particular Reference to the present Age—For is it not too, too plain, that the Gospel-Offer, and Gospel-Grace, have been slighted, and made light of, by many Professors of this Generation?—We have been in the Churches, telling them, again and again, that the great God has made a great Supper (and has invited many, even them)

them) and sent us by his Providence and his Spirit, *to say unto them that were bidden, Come, for all Things are now ready*—Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved—But the Generality of the Laity have made light of it, they have given us the Hearing, but are too busy in their Farms and their Merchandizes, their marrying and giving in Marriage, to come and be blessed in the Lord of Life. We have told them, again and again, that we do not want them to hide themselves from the World, but to teach them how they may live in, and yet not be of it—But all will not do—Many of the Clergy also (like the Letter-learned Scribes and Pharisees in our Saviour's Time) reject the Kingdom of God against themselves, and deny us the Use of the Pulpits, for no other Reason, but because we preach the Doctrine of Justification in the Sight of God by *Faith alone*, and invite Sinners to come and taste of the Gospel-feast freely, without Money and without Price—Whatever they may think, we are persuaded, the Great Master of the House is angry with *them*, for being angry with *us* without a Cause—He therefore now, by his Providence, bids us *Go out quickly into the Streets, and Lanes of the City, and bring in the Poor, and the Maimed, and the Halt, and the Blind, i. e.* Call in the Publicans, and Harlots, the common Cursers and Swearers, and Sabbath-Breakers, and Adulterers, who, perhaps, never enter'd a Church Door, or heard that Jesus Christ died for such Sinners as they are.—We, thro' Grace, have obeyed the Command, we have gone out, tho' expos'd to much Contempt for so doing, and, blessed be God, our Labour has not been in vain in the Lord. For many have been made wil-
ling,

ling, in the Day of God's Power: And we would speak it with Humility, we can go cheerfully to our Saviour, and say, *it is done, Lord, as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.*—He is therefore pleased, in spite of all Opposition from Men or Devils, to continue, and renew, and enlarge our Commission, and send us *literally* into the Highways and Hedges; and, I trust, has given us a Commission to compel Sinners to come. For, could we speak with the Tongues of Men and Angels, yet if the Lord did not attend the Word with his Power, and sweetly incline Men's Wills to comply with the Gospel-call, we should be as *a sounding Brass, or a tinkling Cymbal.* And this we believe our Saviour will do.—For his House must be filled: Every Soul for whom he has shed his Blood, shall finally be saved, *and all that the Father hath given him shall come unto him, and whosoever cometh unto him he will in no wise cast out.*—This comforted our Lord, when his Gospel was rejected by the Jews. As tho' he had said; Well, tho' you despise the Offers of my Grace, yet I shall not shed my Blood in vain; *for all that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me.*—Supported by this Consideration, I am not ashamed to come out this Day into the Highways and Hedges, and to confess, that my Business is to call the Poor, and the Maimed, and the Halt, and the Blind, self-condemned, helpless Sinners, to the Marriage-feast of the Supper of the Lamb.—My cry is, come, believe on the Lord Jesus; throw yourselves at the Footstool of his Mercy, and you shall be saved; for all Things are now ready.—God the Father is ready, God the Son is ready, God the Holy Ghost is ready; the blessed Angels
above

above are ready, and the blessed Saints below are ready, to welcome you to the Gospel-feast.--- A perfect and everlasting Righteousness is now wrought out by Jesus Christ--God, now, upon honourable Terms, can acquit the Guilty-- God can now be Just, and yet justify the Ungodly-- For he hath made Christ to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him. The fatted Calf is now killed, and Christ our Passover, is sacrificed for us--Come Sinners, and feed upon him in your Hearts by Faith, with Thanksgiving--For Jesus Christ's Sake, do not with one Consent begin to make Excuse.--Do not let a Piece of Ground, five Yoke of Oxen, or even a Wife, keep you from this great Supper--These you may enjoy, as the Gifts of God, and make use of them for the Mediator's Glory, and yet be present at the Gospel-Feast.--True and undefiled Religion does not take away, but greatly enhance the Comforts of Life; and our Lord did not pray, that we should be taken out of the World, but that we should be delivered from the Evil of it.--Oh then that you would all, with one Consent, say, Lo! we come--Assure yourselves there is Provision enough--For it is a great Supper.--In our Father's House there is Bread enough, and to spare.--And tho' it is a great God, that makes the Supper, yet he is as Good and Condescending, as he is Great. Tho' he be the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, yet he will dwell with the humble and contrite Heart, even with the Man that trembleth at his Word. Neither can you complain for Want of Room; for yet there is Room. *In our Father's House are many*

many Mansions. If it was not so, our Saviour would have told us. The Grace of Christ is as rich, as free, and as powerful as ever—He is the same Yesterday, to Day, and for ever: He is full of Grace and Truth, and out of his Fulness, all that come to him may receive Grace for Grace—He giveth liberally, and upbraideth not—He willeth not the Death of a Sinner, but that he should rather Believe and Live.—Come then, all ye Halt, Poor, Maimed, and Blind Sinners; take Comfort, the Lord Jesus has sent his Servant to call you—It is now Supper-time, and a Day of uncommon Grace. It may be, the Day may be far spent—Haste, therefore, and away to the Supper of the Lamb—If you do not come, I know the Master will be angry.—And who can stand before him, when he is angry? *Harden not therefore your Hearts, as in the Day of Provocation, as in the Day of Temptation in the Wilderness—Do not provoke the Lord to say, none of those that were bidden shall taste of my Supper.—Oh dreadful Words!* Much more is implied in them than is expressed.—It is the same with that in the Psalms—*I swear in my Wrath, that they should not enter into my Rest—* And if you do not enter into God's Rest, if you do not taste of Christ's Supper, you must lift up your Eyes in Torments, where you will have no Rest, but must sup with the damned Devils for evermore.—Knowing therefore the Terrors of the Lord, we persuade you to haste away, and make no more frivolous Excuses—For there is no Excuse against Believing.—Perhaps you may say—You call to the Halt, and Maimed, and Blind, and Poor—But if we are *Halt, and Maimed,* how can we

come? If we are *Blind*, how can we *see our Way*?
 If we are *Poor*, how can we expect Admission to
 so great a Table? Ah! dear Hearts---Happy are
 ye, if you are sensible, that you are *Halt*, and
Maimed.---For if you feel your selves so, and are
 lamenting it, who knows but whilst I am speaking,
 God may send his Spirit with the Word, and
 fetch you home? Tho' you are *Blind*, Jesus has
Eye-salve to anoint you---Tho' you are *Poor*, yet
 you are welcome to this rich Feast---It cost Jesus
 Christ a great Price, but you shall have it *gratis*---
 For such as you was it designed---*Blessed are the Poor*
in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven---*Rich*,
 and *Self-righteous*, *Self-sufficient* Sinners, I know,
 will scorn both the Feast, and its great Provider---
 They have done so already, therefore the Lord
 has sent us into the *Highways*, and *Hedges* to
 bring such poor Souls as you are in---Venture
 then, my dear Friends, and honour God, by taking
 him at his Word---Come to the *Marriage-Feast*---
 Believe me, you will there partake of most delicious
 Fare---Tell me, ye that have been made to taste,
 that the Lord is gracious, will you not recommend
 this Feast to all? Are you not, whilst I am speak-
 ing, ready to cry out, come all ye that are without,
 come ye, obey the Call, for we have sat under the
 Redeemer's Shadow with great Delight, and his
 Fruit has been pleasant to our Taste---Whilst I am
 speaking, does not the Fire kindle, do not your
 Hearts burn with a Desire that others may come
 and be blessed too? If you are Christians indeed,
 I know you will be thus minded, and the Language
 of your Hearts will be, Lord, whilst he is calling,
 let thy Spirit compel them to come in.---Oh that
 the

the Lord may say, *Amen!* ---And why should we doubt? Surely our Saviour will not let me complain this Day, that I have laboured in vain, and spent my Strength for nought---Methinks I see many desiring to come---O how shall I compel you to come forwards---I will not use Fire, or Sword, as the *Papists* do, by terribly perverting this Text of Scripture---But I will tell you of the Love of God, the Love of God in Christ, and surely *that* must compel you, *that* must constrain you, whether you will or not.---Sinners, my Heart is enlarged towards you---I could fill my Mouth with Arguments---Consider the Greatness of *the God*, that makes the Supper---Consider the Greatness of *the Price*, wherewith it was purchased---Consider the Greatness of *the Provision* made for you---What would you have more? ---Consider God's infinite *Condescension*, in calling you now, when you might have been in Hell, *where the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched.*---And that you might be without Excuse, he has sent his Servant into the *Highways* and *Hedges*, to invite you there---Oh that you only tasted what I do now! I am sure, you would not want Arguments to induce you to come in: No, you would fly to the Gospel-Feast, as Doves to the Windows.---But, poor Souls! many of you, perhaps, are not hungry---You do not feel your selves *Halt*, or *Maimed*, or *Blind*, and therefore you have no Relish for this spiritual Entertainment.---Well, be not angry with me for calling you; be not offended, if I weep over you, because you know not the Day of your Visitation; If I must appear in Judgment as a swift Witness against you, I must---But Oh that Thought fills

my Blood! --- I cannot bear it; I feel that I could lay down my Life for you--- But Oh! I am not willing to go without you.--- What say you, my dear Friends? I would put the Question to you once more--- Will you taste of Christ's Supper, or will you not? You shall all be welcome. There is Milk at this Feast for Babes, as well as Meat for strong Men, and Persons of riper Years.--- There is Room and Provision for High and Low, Rich and Poor, one with another; and our Saviour will thank you for coming--- Amazing Condescension! --- Astonishing Love! --- The Thought of it quite overcomes me--- Help me, help me, O Believers, to bless and praise him--- And Oh! that his Love may excite us to come afresh to him, as tho' we had never come before! For, tho' we have been often feasted, yet our Souls will starve, unless we renew our Acts of Faith, and throw ourselves, as lost, undone Sinners, continually at the Feet of Christ.--- Feeding upon past Experiences will not satisfy our Souls any more, than what we eat Yesterday will sustain our Bodies to Day.--- No, Believers must look for fresh Influences of divine Grace, and beg of the Lord, to water them every Moment--- The Parable therefore speaks to Saints, as well as Sinners.--- Come ye to the Marriage-feast; you are as welcome now as ever--- And may God set your Souls a longing for that Time, when we shall sit down and eat Bread in the Kingdom of Heaven! --- There we shall have full Draughts of Heaven--- There we shall have full Draughts of divine Love, and enjoy the glorious Emanuel, without Interruption, for evermore.--- Even so Lord Jesus, *Amen.*

S E R M O N III.

Blind BARTIMEUS.

M A R K X. 52.

And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy Faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his Sight, and followed Jesus in the Way.

WHEN the Apostle Peter was recommending Jesus of Nazareth, in one of his Sermons to the Jews, he gave him a short, but withal a glorious and exalted Character, viz. *That he went about doing Good.*—He went about, i. e. He sought Occasions of doing Good—It was his Meat and Drink to do the Works of him that sent him, whilst the Day of his publick Administration lasted.—Justly was he stiled by the Prophet, the Son of Righteousness—For, as the Sun in the natural Firmament, diffuses his quickening and reviving Beams through the Universe, so wherever this Sun of Righteousness, the blessed

bleſſed Jeſus aroſe, he aroſe with Healing under his Wings.—He was indeed a Prophet like unto *Moſes*, and proved, that he was that Meſſiah which was to come into the World, by the Miracles which he wrought ; tho' with this material Difference, the Miracles of *Moſes*, agreeable to the Old Teſtament Diſpenſation, were Miracles of Judgment ; the Miracles of Jeſus, who came to bear our Sickneſſes, and heal our Infirmities, were Miracles of Mercy ; and were wrought not only for the Cure of Peoples Bodies, but alſo for the Conversion of their precious and immortal Souls,--- Sometimes one and the ſame Perſon was the Subject of both theſe Mercies--A glorious Proof of this, we have in the miraculous Cure wrought upon a poor blind Beggar, named *Bartimeus*, who is to be the Subject of the following Diſcourſe, and to whom the Words of the Text refer.---*Jeſus ſaid unto him, Go thy Way ; thy Faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his Sight, and followed Jeſus in the Way.*

My Deſign is, *Fiſt*, to make ſome Obſervations on the Matter of Fact, as recorded by the Evangelists. And then,

Secondly, To point out the Improvement that may be made of it. May Jeſus ſo bleſs it, that every ſpiritually blind Hearer, may receive his Sight, and after the Example of *Bartimeus*, follow *Jeſus in the Way!*

If we would take a View of the whole Story, we muſt go back to the 46th Verſe of this Chapter ---*And they, i. e.* our Lord and his Diſciples (who,

we

we find by the Context, had been conversing together) *came to Jericho*-- A Place devoted by *Josua* to the Curse of God---And yet, even this Place yields Converts to Jesus---*Zaccheus* had been called out of it formerly; and *Bartimeus*, as we shall hear by-and-by, in all Probability, was called now---For some Good may come even out of *Nazareth*--Christ himself was born there, and his sovereign Grace can reach, and overcome the worst of People, in the very worst of Places---*Jesus came to Jericho*---Let not his Ministers, if Providence points out their Way, shun going to seemingly the most unlikely Places to do Good---Some chosen Vessels may be therein---Jesus and his Disciples came to *Jericho*---They were *Itinerants*; and, as I have frequently observed, seldom stayed long in a Place---Not that this is any Argument against the stated Settlement of particular Pastors over particular Parishes---But however, our Lord's Practice, in this Respect, gives a Kind of a Sanction to *itinerant* Preaching, when Persons are properly called to, and qualified for, such an Employ---And I believe we may venture to affirm (tho' we would by no means prescribe, or dictate to the Holy One of *Israel*) that, whenever there shall be a general Revival of Religion in any Country, *itinerant* Preaching will be more in Vogue---And it is to be feared, that those who condemn it now, merely on Account of the Meanness of its Appearances, would have joined with the Self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees, in condemning even the Son of God himself, for such a Practice.---

And as he went out of Jericho with his Disciples, says the Evangelist, and a great Number of People,

ἐχθροὶ αὐτοῦ,

ἑξῆς αὐτῶν; a great Number of Mob, or Rabble, as the High-Priests of that Generation termed them--- For these were the constant Followers of Jesus of *Nazareth*---It was the Poor that received his Gospel, the common People that heard him gladly, and followed him from Place to Place.---Not that all who followed him, were his true Disciples---No, some followed him only for his Loaves, others out of Curiosity; tho' some undoubtedly followed to hear, and be edified by the gracious Words that proceeded out of his Mouth. Jesus knew this, and was also sensible, how displeasing this crowding after him was to some of the Rulers of the *Jewish* Church; who, upon every Occasion, were ready to say, *have any of the Scribes and Pharisees believed on him?* But notwithstanding, I do not hear of our blessed Lord's sending them Home but once; and that was, after they had been with him three Days, and had nothing left to eat---No; he saw they were as Sheep, having no Shepherd, and therefore had Compassion on them, and taught them.---A sufficient Warrant this, for Gospel-Ministers to preach to poor Souls, that follow to hear the Word, whatever Principle their coming may proceed from.---At the same Time, they should caution People against thinking themselves Christians, *because* they follow Christ's Ministers---This our Lord frequently did.---For there are many that followed Jesus, and now follow his Ministers, and hear them gladly; nay, perhaps, do many Things, as *Herod* did, who, it is to be feared, will never follow them into the Kingdom of Heaven.---Much People followed Jesus here out of *Jericho*, but how many of them were offended in him; and afterwards, it may be, cried out,

out, *Crucify him, Crucify him.*—Who would depend on Popularity? It is like the Morning Cloud, or early Dew, that passeth away—But what a Press, and seemingly continued Hurry of Business, did the blessed Jesus live in! —He could not be hid—Go where he would, much People followed him—He had scarce Time to eat Bread—Happy is it for such, who are called out to act in a publick Station in the Church, and to be more abundant in Labours, that their Jesus has trod in this dangerous Path before them—Popularity is a fiery Furnace—And no one but he, that kept the three Children amidst *Nebuchadnezzar's* Flames, can preserve popular Ministers from being hurt by it—But we can do all Things, thro' Christ strengthening us—And I have often thought, that there is one Consideration sufficient to extinguish, or moderate at least, any Excess of Joy, and Self-complacence, which the most popular Preacher may feel, when followed even by the greatest Multitudes; and that is this, *viz.* “How many of these Hearers will go away, “without receiving any saving Benefit by my “Preaching; may, how many, it may be, will “only have their Damnation increased by it!”—As we find many shall say at the great Day, *Hast thou not taught in our Streets,* to whom Jesus shall answer, *Verily, I know you not.*—But to proceed—As our Lord went out of *Jericho* with his Disciples, and a great Number of People, *blind Bartimeus; i. e.* the Son of *Timus,* sat by the Highway-side, begging. It should seem that he was a noted, tho' by no means what we commonly call, a sturdy Beggar; having no other Way, as he had lost his Sight, to get his Bread—His Case was still the more pitiable,

pitiable, if he was, as some think the Name imports, the blind Son of a blind Father. It may be, he begged for his Father, and himself too. And if so, then this may give us Light into that Passage of *Matthew* xx. 22. where we are told, that *two Men spake to Jesus*—It might be Father and Son, tho' only one is made mention of here, because he only followed Jesus in the Way—Thus that holy, judicious, and practical Expositor of Holy Writ, Mr. *Henry*—But however this be, he is not blamed for *Begging*—Neither should we discommend others for so doing, when Providence calls to it. It was the unjust Steward that said, *to beg I am ashamed*. It is our Pride, that lester makes us unwilling to be beholden—Jesus was not thus minded—He lived, as it were, upon Alms—The Women that followed him, ministered to him of their Substance.—*Bartimæus* not being able to dig, begs for his Living, and in order to make a better Trade of it, sat by the Highway-side, in all Probability, without, or near the Gate of the City, where People must necessarily pass in and out: But tho' he had lost his Sight, he had his *Hearing* perfect—And it should comfort us, if we have lost one Sense, that we have the Use of another, and that we are not deprived of the Benefit of all.—Happy was it for *Bartimæus*, that he could bear, tho' not see. For in all Probability, upon hearing the Noise and Clamour of the much People, that followed after our Lord, his Curiosity set him upon enquiring into the Cause of it, and some one of another told him, that *Jesus of Nazareth* was passing by—*Jesus of Nazareth*—Called so, because he was bred there—Or out of Contempt—*Nazareth* being

Being either a very mean, or very wicked Place, or both; which made guileless Nathaniel say, *Can any Good come out of Nazareth?* And what does Bartimeus do, when he hears of Jesus? We are told, Verse 47th; *And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out*---This plainly denotes, that tho' the Eyes of his Body were shut, yet the Eyes of his Mind, were, in some Degree, opened; so that he saw, perhaps, more than most of the Multitude that followed after Jesus---For, as soon as he heard of him, he began to cry out; which he would not have done, had he not heard of him before, and believed also, that he was both able and willing to restore Sight to the Blind.---*He began to cry out.*---This implies, that he had a deep Sense of his own Misery, and the Need which he had of a Cure---His Prayers did not freeze as they went out of his Lips---*He began to cry out,* that Jesus might hear him, notwithstanding the Noise of the Throng---And he began to cry out, *as soon as* he heard he was passing by, not knowing whether he might ever enjoy such an Opportunity any more---*He began to cry out,* *Jesus, thou Son of David, have Mercy upon me.*---The People called him, *Jesus of Nazareth.*---Bartimeus styles him, *Jesus, thou Son of David.*---Thereby evidencing, that he believed him to be the Messiah which was to come into the World, unto whom the Lord God was to give the Throne of his Father David, and of whose Kingdom there was to be no End.---*Jesus, thou Son of David;* or, as it is in the parallel Place of St. Matthew xx. 30. *O Lord, thou Son of David;* of whom it had been long foretold, *Isaiah xxxv.* that when he should come, *the Eyes of the Blind*

*should be opened---Have Mercy upon me---*The native Language of a Soul brought to lie down at the Feet of a Sovereign God---Here's no laying Claim to a Cure by Way of Merit; no proud, Self-righteous, *God I thank thee* that I am not as other Men are: No bringing in a *Reckoning* of Performances, nor any *doubting* of Jesu's Power or Willingness to heal him---*But out of the Abundance of the Heart, his Mouth speaketh,* and, in the Language of the poor, broken-hearted Publican, he cries out, *Jesu, thou Son of David, have Mercy on me.*--- "Jesu, thou Friend of Sinners, thou Saviour, who, tho' thou be the true God, wast pleased to become the Son of *David*, and to be made Man, that thou mightest seek, and save those that were lost, have Mercy upon me; let thy Bowels yearn towards a poor, miserable, blind Beggar"---One would have thought, that such a moving Petition as this, would have melted the whole Multitude that heard his piteous Cry, into Compassion, and induced some at least to turn Suitors in his Behalf, or help to carry him to the blessed Jesu.--But instead of that, we are told, Verse 48th, that *many charged him*---The Word in the Original seems to imply, a Charge attended with *Threatning*, and Spoken in an angry Manner.--They charged him to hold his Peace; and it may be, threatned to beat him if he did not. They looked upon him beneath the Notice of Jesu of *Nazareth*, and were ready enough to ask, whether he thought Jesu Christ had nothing else to do, but to wait upon him.--This was, no doubt, very discouraging to blind *Bartimeus*.--For, Opposition comes closest, when it proceeds from those who are

are esteemed Followers of the Lamb!—The Spouse complains as of something peculiarly afflicting, that her own Mother's Children were angry with her.—But Opposition only serves to whet the Edge of true Devotion, and therefore *Bartimeus*, instead of being silenced by their Charges and Threatnings, *cried out the more a great deal, thou Son of David, have Mercy on me.*—Still he breaks out into the same humble Language, and, if Jesus the Son of *David* will have Mercy on him, he cares not much, what some of his peevish Followers said of, or did unto him.—This was not a vain Repetition, —but a devout Reiteration of his Request. We may sometimes repeat the same Words, and yet not be guilty of that *Barrologia*, or *vain speaking*, which our Lord condemns. For our Lord himself, prayed in his Agony, and said the same Words—*Father if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me.*—Thus *Bartimeus*—*Jesus, thou Son of David, have Mercy upon me.*—And how does the Son of *David* treat him? Does he join Issue with the Multitude, and charge him to hold his Peace? Or, does he go on, thinking him beneath his Notice? No; for says *St. Mark*, Verse 49th, *And Jesus stood still, tho' he was on a Journey, and it may be in halts (for it is not losing Time, to stop now and then on a Journey, to do a good Office by the Way) and commanded him to be called.*—Why so? To teach us to be condescending and kind even to poor, if real Beggars, and tacitly to reprove the blind, misguided Zeal of those who had charged him to hold his Peace—By this also our Lord prepares the Multitude the better, to take the more notice of the blind Man's Faith, and his Mercy and Power exerted

anted in the Healing of him. — For there are Times and Seasons, when we are called to perform Acts of Charity in the most publick Manner, and that too very consistently with the Injunction of our Saviour's *not to let our right Hand know, what our left Hand doth*. — For there is a great deal of difference between giving Alms, and exercising Acts of Charity, that are seen of Men, and doing them, that they may be seen. — The one is always sinful. — The other often becomes our Duty. — Jesus commanded Bartimews to be called. — *And they called him*, says the Text. — Who called him? It may be, those who a little before charged him to hold his Peace. — For it often happens, that our Opposers and Discouragers, afterwards, become our Friends. — When a Man's Ways please the Lord, he makes his Enemies be at Peace with him. — And it is to be wished, that all who have charged poor Souls, that are crying after Jesus, to hold their Peace, spare themselves and not be Righteous over much, would imitate the People here, and encourage those they once persecuted and malign'd. — *They call the blind Man, saying unto him, Be of good Comfort, rise, he calls thee.* — The Words, and Manner of speaking them, implies Haste, and a Kind of Sollicitude for the blind Man's Relief. — Oh! that we might hereby learn to be patient, and long suffering, towards Opposers. — For it may be, that many may oppose awaken'd Souls, not out of Enmity, but thro' Prejudice and Misinformation, thro' Ignorance and Unbelief, and a real, tho' perhaps false, Persuasion, that their Relations are going in a wrong way. — By and by they may be convinced, that Christ is indeed calling them, and then they may become real and open

Friends to the Cause and Work of God-- If not, it
 is your Duty so to behave with Meekness towards all,
 and not to render Railing for Railing, but contrary-
 wise Blessing, knowing that we are thereunto galled,
 that we may inherit a Blessing-- Jesus did not break
 out into harsh Language against these Opposers,
 neither did *Bartimeus*-- Our Lord only stood still,
 and commanded him to be called; and they call the blind
 Man, saying unto him, be of good Comfort, rise; he
 calleth thee-- And he (verse 50) casting away his Gar-
 ment, rose, and came to Jesus-- Had *Bartimeus* not
 been full of Faith when he cried, *Jesus thou Son of*
David have Mercy upon me, he might have said,
 Why do you mock me? Why bid ye me arise?
 Rise indeed I can, but after I am risen, how can I,
 being blind, find my Way unto him? If he will
 come to me it is well; if not, all your calling avail-
 eth nothing, in being impossible for me to find my
 Way-- Thus Thousands now-a-days object to Evan-
 gelical Preachers, saying, why do you bid us come
 to and believe on Jesus Christ, when you tell us it
 is impossible of our selves to turn to God, or to do
 good Works; and that no one can come unto him,
 unless the Father draw him-- Is not this like the
 Peoples calling upon *Bartimeus*, to arise and come
 to Jesus, when he could not possibly see his Way be-
 fore him? True it is so-- And would to God, that
 all who make this Objection would imitate *Bartimeus*,
 and put forth the Strength they have! What if we
 do call you to come and to believe on the Lord Jesus
 Christ, that you may be saved? Does this imply,
 that you have a Power in yourselves to do so? No,
 in no wise-- No more than Jesus Saying unto *Laza-
 rus's* dead and stinking Carcase, *Come forth*, implied,

ed,

ed, that *Lazarus* had a Power to raise himself from the Grave. We call to you, being commanded to preach the Gospel to every Creature, hoping and praying, that Christ's Power may accompany the Word, and make it effectual to the quickening and raising of your dead Souls. We also call to you to believe, upon the same Account as Jesus said unto the Lawyer, *do this, and thou shalt live, viz.* That you seeing your utter Inability to come, might thereby be convinced of your Unbelief, and be led to ask for Faith of him, whose Gift it is, and who is therefore in Scripture emphatically stiled the *Author*, as well as *Finisher* of our Faith. Add to this, that it is your Duty to wait at the Pool, to make Use of the Strength you have, in the earnest and steady Performance of all commanded Duty. For tho' you cannot do what is spiritually Good, because you want spiritual Principles of Action, yet ye may do what is morally and materially Good, inasmuch as ye are reasonable Creatures, and tho' your doing Duty as you can, no Ways deserves Mercy, nor entitles you to it, yet it is the Way in which you are required to walk, and the Way in which God is usually found. While you are attempting to stretch out your withered Arm, peradventure it may be restored, and who knows but Jesus may work Faith in you, by his almighty Power? *Bartimeus* has set before such Objectors an Example. Oh that they would once submit to be taught by a poor blind Beggar! For he, casting away his Garment, rose, and blind as he was, came to Jesus. *Casting away his Garment*. This seems to be a large Coat or Cloak, that he wore to screen himself from the Rain and Cold—undoubtedly, it was

was the most necessary and valuable Vestment he had; and one wou'd have thought, that he should have taken this along with him—But he knew very well that if he did so, it might hang about his Heels, and thereby his reaching Jesus be retarded at least, if not prevented intirely—Valuable therefore as it was to him, he cast it away—The Word implies, that he *threw it* from off his Shoulders, with great Precipitancy and Resolution, knowing that if he got a Cure, which he now hoped for by Christ's calling him, he should never want his Garment again--And thus will all do that are in earnest about coming to Jesus here, or seeing and enjoying him in his Kingdom eternally hereafter.--They will cut off a Right Hand, they will pluck out a Right Eye, they will leave Father and Mother, Husband and Wife, yea, and their own Lives also, rather than not be his Disciples—The Apostle *Paul* therefore exhorts Christians to lay aside every Weight, and the Sin that doth most easily beset them, or hang about their Heels, as the Word in the Original imports; alluding to the Custom of the *Romans*, who wore long Garments—Such a One was this, which *Bartimeus* had wrapped round him—But he, to shew that he sincerely desired to recover his Sight, casting it away, *arose and came to Jesus*—And what Treatment did Jesus give him? Did he say, Come not nigh me, thou impudent noisy Beggar? No, he *answered* (verse 51) *and said unto him, What wilt thou, that I should do unto thee?* An odd Question this, seemingly. For did not our Lord know what he wanted? Yes he did—But the Lord Jesus dealt with him, as he deals with us—He will make us acknowledge our Wants ourselves,

that we thereby may confess our Dependance upon him, and be made more sensible of the Need we stand in, of his divine Assistance—*The Blind Man* immediately replies, *Lord*, thereby intimating his Belief of Christ's Divinity, *that I might receive my Sight*—Methinks, I see the poor Creature listening to the Voice of our Saviour, and with Looks and Gestures bespeaking the inward Earnestness of his Soul, he tries out, *Lord that I may receive my Sight*. As tho' he had said, "I believe thou art that Messiah which was to come into the World---I have heard of thy Fame, O Jesus! and hearing the long-wish'd-for Glad-tidings of thy coming this Way, I cry unto thee, asking not for Silver and Gold, but what thou, thou alone canst give me, *Lord, that I might receive my Sight.*" No sooner does he ask, but he receives—For Verse 52d, *Jesus said unto him, Go thy Way; thy Faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his Sight.*--- With the Word there went a Power; and he that spake Light out of Darkness, saying, *Let there be Light, and there was Light*, commanded Light into this poor blind Beggar's Eyes, *and behold there was Light*—The Miracle was instantaneous---*Immediately*, he received his Sight—And next to a Miracle it was, that by breaking into open Light all at once, he was not struck blind again: But he that gave the Sight, preserved it when given—Oh! happy *Bartimeus!* Thy Eyes are now opened, and the very first Object thou dost behold, is the ever-loving, altogether-lovely Jesus.—Methinks I see thee transported with Wonder and Admiration, and all the Disciples, and the Multitude, gazing around thee! And now, having received thy Sight, why dost thou

thou not obey the Lord's Command, and go thy way? Why dost thou not haste to fetch thy Garment, that thou just now in a Hurry didst cast away? No, no! — With his bodily Eyes, I believe he received also a fresh Addition of spiritual Sight, and tho' others saw no Form or Comeliness in the blessed Jesus, that they should desire him; yet he by an Eye of Faith discovered such transcendent Excellencies in his Royal Person, and felt at the same time, such a divine Attraction towards his all-bountiful Benefactor, that instead of going his Way to fetch his Garment, *he followed Jesus in the Way*; and by his Actions, says with faithful, honest-hearted *Ruth*, *entreat me not to leave thee—For whither thou goest, I will go; where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy People, shall be my People; and thy God, my God—He followed Jesus in the Way*—The narrow Way, the Way of the Cross; and, I doubt not, but long since, he has followed him to his Crown, and is at this Time sitting with him at the Right Hand of his Father. —

And now, my dear Hearers, how find you your Hearts affected at the Relation of this notable Miracle which Jesus wrought? Are you not ready to break out into the Language of the Song of *Moses*, and to say, 'Who is like unto thee, O Lord, glorious in Holiness, fearful in Praises, continually doing Wonders! Marvellous are thy Works, O Jesus, and that our Souls know right well! But we must not stop here, *viz.* in admiring what the Lord did for *Bartimeus*—This, no doubt, as well as other Parts of Scripture, was written for our Learning, upon whom the Ends of the World are come. — Consequently, as was proposed in the

Second Place, we should see what Spiritual Improvement can be made of this History, upon which we have already been making some Remarks.—

A natural Man, indeed, goes no further than the outward Court of the Scripture, and reads this, and the other Miracles of our blessed Saviour, just in the same Manner as he reads *Homer's* Battles, or the Exploits of *Alexander*—But God forbid, that we shou'd rest in only hearing this Matter of Fact—For I tell thee, O Man, I tell thee, O Woman, whoever thou art, that sittest this Day under a preached Gospel, that if thou art in a natural State, thou art as blind in thy Soul, as *Bartimeus* was in his Body; a blind Child of a blind Father, even of thy Father *Adam*, who lost his Sight when he lost his Innocence, and entailed his Blindness, justly inflicted, upon thee, and me, and his whole Posterity.—Some think indeed, that they see—But alas! such talk only like Men in their Sleep, like Persons besides themselves—The Scriptures every where represent Fallen-Man, not only as Spiritually Blind, but dead also; and we no more know, by Nature, savingly the Way of Salvation by Jesus Christ, than *Bartimeus*, when he was blind, knew the Colours of the Rainbow—This, I trust, some of you begin to feel—I see you Concerned—I see you Weeping—And, was I to ask some of you, what you want to be done unto you? I know your Answer wou'd be, *that we may receive our Sight*—And God forbid, that I should charge you to hold your Peace, as tho' Jesus wou'd not regard you!—No, your being made sensible of your natural Blindness, and crying thus earnestly after Jesus, is a Sign at least,

least, that you are awakened by his Holy Spirit (tho' it is possible, that you may cry with an exceeding bitter Cry, as *Esau* did, and be lost at last—) however, Christian Charity induces me to believe and hope the best—I will therefore, in the Language of those who afterwards encouraged *Bartimeus*, say unto you, *arise, take Comfort*; for I trust Jesus is calling you—Follow therefore the Example of *Bartimeus*, *cast away your Garment*; *lay aside every Weight*, and the Sin which doth most easily beset you, arise, and come to Jesus—He commands me, by his written Word, to call to you and say, *Come unto him, all ye that are weary, and heavy laden*, and he will refresh you—He will give you rest—Be not afraid—Ye seek Jesus of *Nazareth*—Behold, he comes forth to meet you—Ye are now on the Highway Side, and Jesus, I trust, is passing by—I feel his Presence—I hope, many of you feel it too—Oh then, cry mightily to him, who is Mighty and Willing to save you—Lay yourselves at the Feet of Sovereign Grace—Say unto him, *Jesus, thou Son of David, have Mercy on me*, in the same Frame as *Bartimeus* did, and Jesus will answer you—He will not cast out your Prayer—According to your Faith, so shall it be done unto you. Blind as you are, you shall notwithstanding receive your Sight—Satan indeed, and Unbelief will suggest many Objections to you—Your carnal Relations will also join Issue with them, and charge you to hold your Peace—One will tell you, that your Blindness is too inveterate to be cured; another, that it is too late; a third, that tho' Jesus can, yet he will not have Mercy upon such poor, blind, despicable Beggars, as ye are—But, the more they charge you to hold your

Peace,

Peace, do you cry out so much the more a great deal, *Jesus, thou Son of David, have Mercy on us.*—*Jesus, thou Saviour, thou Friend of Sinners, Thou Son of David,* and therefore a Son of Man—Oh gracious Words! Oh endearing Appellations! Be encouraged by them, to draw nigh unto him—Tho' *David's LORD*, yet he is become *David's SON*, *after the Flesh, that ye through him may be made the Sons of God*—No matter, what thou art, O Woman, what thou art, O Man—Tho' thou art literally a poor Beggar, think not thy Condition too mean for Jesus to take Notice of—He came into the Highways and Hedges, to call such poor Beggars in—Or, if you are Rich, think not yourselves too high to stoop to Jesus—For he is the King of Kings; and you never will be truly rich, until you are made rich in Jesus—Fear not being despised, or losing a little worldly Honour: One Sight of Jesus will make amends for all: You will find something so inviting, so attracting, so satisfying, in the altogether lovely Lamb of God, that every sublunary Enjoyment will sicken, and die, and vanish before you; and you will no more desire your former vain and trifling Amusements, than *Bartimeus* after he had received his Sight, desired to go back again and fetch his Garment—Oh that there may be many such blind Beggars among you this Day! Here is a great Multitude of People following me, a poor Worm, this Day—I rejoice to see the Fields thus white, ready unto Harvest, and to spread the Gospel-Net amidst so many—But alas! I shall return home with a heavy Heart, unless some of you will arise and come to my Jesus—I desire to preach HIM, and not *myself*—Rest not in hearing
and

and following *me*.—Behold, behold, believe on, and follow the *Lamb of God*, who came to take away the Sins of the World.—Indeed, I do not despair of any of you, neither am I discouraged, on account of my preaching in the Highways and Hedges—Jesus calling *Zaccheus*; Jesus called *Bartimeus*, as he passed thro' *Jericbo*, that cursed, that devoted Place—And why may he not call some of you, out of these despised Fields? Is his Arm shortened, that he cannot save? Is he not as mighty now, and as willing to save, even to the uttermost, all that come to the Father thro' him, as he was seventeen Hundred Years ago? Assuredly he is—He hath said, and he also will do it—*Whosoever cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*—In no wise, or by no means—Oh encouraging Words! Sinners, believe ye this? Arise then, be of good Comfort—For Jesus is indeed calling you.—Some of you, I trust, have obeyed this Invitation, and have had a Sight of him long ago—I know then you will bless and love him; and if he shou'd say unto you, as he did unto *Bartimeus*, Go you your way; your Answer wou'd be, We love our Master, and will not go from him.—But suffer ye the Word of Exhortation: Suffer me to stir up your pure Minds by way of Remembrance, to shew, that you have indeed seen him, and that you do indeed love him, by following him in the Way; I mean, in the Way of the *Cross*,—the Way of his *Ordinances*, and in the Way of his holy *Commandments*—For alas! *The Love of many waxeth cold*; and few there are, that follow Jesus rightly in the Way—Few there are, that cast away their Garments so heartily as they should—Some Idol or another hangs about us, and hinders

us in running the Race that is set before us—Awake therefore ye sleepy, tho' it may be, wise Virgins—Awake, awake, put on Strength—Shake yourselves from the Dust; arise and follow Jesus more closely in the Way, than ever you did yet—Lift up the Hands that hang down, and strengthen the feeble Knees—Provide right Paths for your Feet, that that which is lame be not turned out of the Way, but rather be healed—For tho' the Way be narrow, yet it is not long; ' tho' the Gate be straight, (to use the Words of pious Bishop Beveridge) yet it opens into everlasting Life—Oh that ye may get a fresh Sight of him again this Day! That wou'd be like Oyl to the Wheels of your Graces, and make your Souls like the Chariots of *Aminadab*—It is only owing to your losing Sight of him, that you go so heavily from Day to Day—A Sight of Jesus, like the Sun rising in the Morning, dispels the Darkness and Gloominess that lies upon the Soul—Take therefore a fresh View of him, O Believers, and never rest till you are translated to see him as he is, and live with him for evermore, in the Kingdom of Heaven.—Even so, Lord Jesus, Amen, and Amen.

SER.

S E R M O N IV.

Walking with GOD.

GENESIS v. 24.

And Enoch walked with God, and he was not; for God took him.

VARIOUS are the Pleas and Arguments which Men of corrupt Minds frequently urge against yielding Obedience to the just and holy Commands of God—But perhaps, one of the most common Objections that they make is this, *viz.* That our Lord's Commands are not practicable, because contrary to Flesh and Blood; and consequently, that he is an hard Master, *v* *reaping where he has not sown; and gathering where he has not sowed*—These we find were the Sentiments that were entertained by that wicked and slothful Servant mentioned in the 25th of St. *Matthew*; and are undoubtedly the same with many which obtain in the present wicked and adulterous Generation—The Holy Ghost foreseeing this, hath taken care to

inspire holy Men of Old, to record the Examples of many holy Men and Women; who, even under the Old Testament Dispensation, were enabled cheerfully to take Christ's Yoke upon them, and counted his Service perfect Freedom.—The large Catalogue of Saints, Confessors, and Martyrs, drawn up in the 11th Chapter to the Hebrews, abundantly evidences the Truth of this Observation — What a great Cloud of Witnesses have we there presented to our View? All eminent for their Faith, but some shining with a greater Degree of Lustre than the others.—The Proto-Martyr *Abel*, leads the Van—And next to him, we find *Enoch* mentioned, not only because he was next in Order of Time, but also on account of his exalted Piety.—He is spoken of in the Words of the Text in a very extraordinary Manner.—We have here a short, but very full and glorious Account, both of his Behaviour in this World, and in the triumphant Manner of his entering into the next.—The former is contained in these Words, *And Enoch walked with God.* The latter in these, *and he was not: for God took him.* *He was not found, he was not taken away in the common Manner, he did not see Death, but for He, God had translated him.* Who this *Enoch* was does not appear so plainly.—But he seems to have been a Person of excellent Character.—I suppose, like *Noah*, a Preacher of Righteousness.—And if we may credit the Apostle *James*, he was a flaming Preacher.—For he quotes one of his Prophecies, wherein he saith, *Behold I will come with my Thousand of his Saints, and will execute Judgment upon all, and will consume all that are Ungodly among them, of all their ungodly*

ungodly Deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their bad Speeches, which ungodly Sinners have spoken against him—But whether a publick or private Person, he has a noble Testimony given him in the lively Oracles. The Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews saith, that before his Translation he had this Testimony, *that he pleased God*; and his being translated, it was a Proof of it beyond all Doubt—And I wou'd observe by the by, that it was wonderful Wisdom in God to translate *Enoch* and *Elijah* under the Old Testament Dispensation, that hereafter when it should be asserted, that the Lord Jesus was carried into Heaven, it might not seem a Thing altogether incredible to the Jews; since they themselves confessed, that two of their own Prophets had been translated several hundred Years before—But it is not my Design to detain you any longer, by Enlarging, or making Observations on *Enoch's* short, but comprehensive Character—The Thing I have in view, being to give a Discourse as the Lord shall enable, upon a weighty and very important Subject, I mean, *Walking with God—And Enoch walked with God*—If so much as this can be truly said of you and me after our Decease, we shall not have any Reason to complain, that we have lived in vain.

In handling my intended Subject, I shall, *First*, endeavour to shew, what is implied in these Words, *Walked with God*—*Secondly*, I shall prescribe some Means, upon the due Observance of which, Believers may keep up and maintain their *Walk with God*—And, *Thirdly*, Offer some Motives to stir us up, if we never walked with God before, to

come and walk with God now—The Whole shall be closed with a Word or two of Application.—

And, *First*, I am to shew what is implied in these Words, *Walked with God*; or in other Words, what we are to understand by this Term, *Walking with God*.—

And *First*, *Walking with God*, implies, that the prevailing Power of the Enmity of a Person's Heart, be taken away by the blessed Spirit of God.—Perhaps it may seem a hard Saying to some, but our own Experience daily proves what the Scriptures in many Places assert, that the carnal Mind, the Mind of the unconverted, natural Man, nay, the Mind of the Regenerate, so far as any Part of him remains unrenewed, is Enmity, not only an Enemy, but *Enmity itself against God*; so that it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can it be—Indeed one may well wonder that any Creature, especially that lovely Creature Man, made after his Maker's own Image, should ever have any Enmity, much less a prevailing Enmity against that very God in whom he lives, and moves, and hath his Being—But alas! so it is—Our first Parents contracted it when they fell from God by eating the forbidden Fruit, and the bitter and malignant Contagion of it, hath descended to, and quite overspread their whole Posterity—This Enmity discovered itself in *Adam's* endeavouring to hide himself in the Trees of the Garden—When he heard the Voice of the Lord God, instead of running with an open Heart, saying, Here am I; alas! he now wanted no Communion with God; and still more discovered his lately contracted Enmity

mity by the Excuse he made to the Most High—*The Woman*, or *This Woman thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the Tree, and I did eat*—By saying thus, he in Effect lays all the Fault upon God; as tho' he had said, If thou hadst not given me this Woman, I had not sinned against thee, so thou mayst thank thyself for my Transgression—In this same Manner this Enmity works in the Hearts of *Adam's Children*—They now and again find something rising against God, and saying even unto God, What doest thou? "It scorns any meaner Competitor (says the learned Dr. *Owen* in his excellent Treatise on *Indwelling Sin*) than God himself"—Its Command is like that of the *Assyrians* in respect to *Abab*, shoot only at the King—And it strikes against every Thing that has the Appearance of real Piety, as the *Assyrians* shot at *Jehosaphat* in *Abab's* Clothes—But its Opposition ceases when it finds that it is only an Appearance, as the *Assyrians* left off shooting at *Jehosaphat*, when they perceived it was not *Abab* they were shooting at—This Enmity discover'd itself in accursed *Cain*; he hated and slew his Brother *Abel*, because *Abel* loved, and was peculiarly favoured by his God—And this same Enmity rules and prevails in every Man that is naturally engendered of the Offspring of *Adam*—Hence that Averseness to Prayer and holy Duties, which we find in Children, and very often in grown Persons, who have notwithstanding, been blessed with a religious Education—And all that open Sin and Wickedness, which like a Deluge has overflowed the World, are only so many Streams running from this dreadful, contagious Fountain; I mean the Enmity of Man's desperately wicked and deceitful Heart—

Heart—He that cannot set his Seal to this, knows nothing yet, in a saving Manner, of the holy Scriptures, nor of the Power of God—And all that do know this, will readily acknowledge, that before a Person can be said to walk with God, the prevailing Power of this Heart-Enmity must be destroyed—For Persons do not use to walk and keep Company together, who entertain an irreconcilable Enmity and Hatred against one another—Observe me, I say, the prevailing Power of this Enmity must be taken away—For the Inbeing of it will never be totally removed, till we bow down our Heads and give up the Ghost—The Apostle Paul, I no doubt, speaks of himself, and that too not when he was a Pharisee, but a real Christian; when he complains, *that when he would do Good, Evil was present with him*; not having Dominion over him; but opposing and resisting his good Intentions and Actions, so that he could not do the Things which he would, in that Perfection which the new Man desired—This is what he calls Sin dwelling in him—⁵⁵ And this is ⁵⁶ that *opponit carnos*, which, to use the Words of the ⁵⁷ Ninth Article of our Church, some do expound ⁵⁸ the Wisdom, some Sensuality, some the Affecta- ⁵⁹ tion, some the Desire of the Flesh, which doth ⁶⁰ remain, yea, in them that are regenerated—But as for its prevailing Power, it is destroyed in every Soul that is truly born of God, and gradually more and more weakened as the Believer grows in Grace, and the Spirit of God gains a greater and greater Ascendancy in the Heart.

But *secondly*, Walking with God not only implies, that the prevailing Power of the Enmity of a Man's Heart be taken away, but also that a Per-
son

son is actually reconciled to God the Father, in and thro' the all-sufficient Righteousness and Attonement of his dear Son—*Can two walk together, says Solomon, unless they are agreed?* Jesus is our Peace, as well as our Peace-maker—When we are justified by Faith in Christ, then, but not till then, we have Peace with God; and consequently cannot be said till then, to walk with him—Walking with a Person, being a Sign and Token that we are Friends to that Person, or at least, tho' we have been at Variance, yet now we are reconciled and become Friends again—This is the great Errand that Gospel Ministers are sent out upon—To us is committed the Ministry of Reconciliation; as Ambassadors for God, we are to beseech Sinners, in Christ's Stead to be reconciled unto God; and when they comply with the gracious Invitation, and are actually by Faith brought into a State of Reconciliation with God, then, and not till then, may they be said so much as to begin to walk with God.

Further—Walking with God implies, a settled, abiding Communion and Fellowship with God, or what in Scripture is called, *The Holy Ghost dwelling in us*—This is what our Lord promised when he told his Disciples, that *the holy Spirit should be in, and with them*; not to be like a Wayfaring-Man, to stay only for a Night, but to reside and make his Abode in their Hearts—This I am apt to believe is what the Apostle John would have us understand, when he talks of a Person abiding in him, viz. in Christ, *and walking as he himself also walked*—And this is what is particularly meant in the Words of our Text—*And Enoch walked with God, i. e. He kept up and maintained a holy, settled, habitual, tho'*

undoubtedly not altogether uninterrupted Communion and Fellowship with God, in and thro' Christ Jesus-- So that to sum up what has been said on this Part of the first General Head, *Walking with God* consists especially in the fixed habitual Bent of the Will for God, in an habitual Dependence upon his Power and Promise, in an habitual voluntary Dedication of our All to his Glory, in an habitual Eyeing of his Precept in all we do, and in an habitual Complacency in his Pleasure in all we suffer. ---

Fourthly, and Lastly, Walking with God implies our making Progress or Advances in the divine Life. *Walking*, in the very first Idea of the Word, seems to suppose a progressive Motion--- A Person that walks, tho' he move slowly, yet he goes forwards and does not continue in one Stay--- And so it is with those that walk with God--- They go on, as the Psalmist says, *from Strength to Strength*; or, in the Language of the Apostle Paul, *they pass from Glory to Glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord*--- Indeed in one Sense, the divine Life admits of neither Increase or Decrease--- When a Soul is born of God, to all Intents and Purposes he is a Child of God; and, tho' he should live to the Age of *Methuselah*, yet he would then be only a Child of God, after all.--- But in another Sense, the divine Life admits of Decays and Additions--- Hence it is, that we find the People of God charged with Backslidings, and losing their first Love--- And hence it is, that we hear of Babes, young Men and Fathers in Christ; and upon this Account it is, that the Apostle exhorts *Timothy*, to let his Progress be made known to all Men--- And what is here required

required of *Timothy* in particular by *St. Peter*, is enjoined all Christians in general--*But grow in Grace*, says he, *and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*--For the new Creature increases in spiritual Stature; and tho' a Person can but be a new Creature, yet there are some that are more conformed to the divine Image than others, and will, after Death, be admitted to a greater Degree of Blessedness--For want of observing this Distinction, even some gracious Souls that have better Hearts than Heads (as well as Men of corrupt Minds, Reprobates concerning the Faith) have unawares run into downright *Antinomian* Principles, denying all Growth of Grace in a Believer, or any Marks of Grace to be laid down in the Scriptures of Truth--From such Principles, and more especially from Practices naturally consequent on such Principles, may the Lord of all Lords deliver us!

From what then has been said, we may now know what is implied in these Words, *walked with God*, viz. Our having the prevailing Enmity of our Hearts taken away by the Power of the Spirit of God; our being actually reconciled and united to him by Faith in Jesus Christ; our having and keeping up a settled Communion and Fellowship with him; and our making a daily Progress in this Fellowship, so as to be conformed to the divine Image more and more.

How this is done, or in other Words, by what Means Believers keep up and maintain their Walk with God, comes to be considered under our *Second General Head*...

And, *First*, Believers keep up and maintain their Walk with God, by reading of his Holy Word--- *Search the Scriptures*, says our blessed Lord, *for these are they that testify of me*--- And the royal Psalmist tells us, *that God's Word was as a Light unto his Feet, and a Lantern unto his Paths*; and he makes it one Property of a good Man, *that his Delight is in the Law of the Lord, and that he exercises himself therein Day and Night*--- *Give thy self to Reading*, says Paul to Timothy; *And this Book of the Law*, says God to Joshua, *shall not go out of thy Mouth: For whatsoever was written afore time, was written for our Learning*--- And the Word of God is profitable for *Reproof, Correction, and Instruction in Righteousness*, and every Way sufficient to make every true Child of God thoroughly furnished to every good Work--- If we once get above our Bibles, and cease making the written Word of God our sole Rule, both as to Faith and Practice, we shall soon lie open to all Manner of Delusion, and be in great Danger of making Ship-wreck of Faith and a good Conscience--- Our blessed Lord, tho' he had the Spirit of God without Measure, yet always was governed by, and fought the Devil with an, *It is written*. This the Apostle calls the *Sword of the Spirit*--- We may say of it as David said of Goliath's Sword, *None like this*--- The Scriptures are called the lively Oracles of God--- Not only because they are generally made use of to beget us into new Life, but also to keep up and increase it in the Soul--- The Apostle Peter, in his 2d Epistle, prefers it even to seeing Christ transfigured upon the Mount--- For after he had said, Chap. i. 18.

That

That the Voice which came from Heaven we heard, when we were with him in the Holy Mount.—He adds, Verse 19. We have also a more sure Word of Prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a Light shining in a dark Place, until the Day dawn, and the Day-star arise in your Hearts: i. e. Till we shake off these Bodies, and see Jesus Face to Face—Till we must see and converse with him through the Glass of his Word.—We must make his Testimonies our Councillors, and daily, with Mary, sit at Jesu's Feet, by Faith hearing his Word. We shall then by happy Experience find, that they are Spirit and Life, Meat indeed, and Drink indeed to our Souls.—

Secondly, Believers keep up and maintain their Walk with God by secret Prayer—The Spirit of Grace is always accompanied with the Spirit of Supplication—It is the very Breath of the New-Creature, the Fan of the divine Life, whereby the Spark of holy Fire kindled in the Soul by God, is not only kept in, but raised into a Flame—A Neglect of secret Prayer, has been frequently an Inlet to many spiritual Diseases, and has been attended with fatal Consequences.—Origen observed, “ That “ the Day he offered Incense to an Idol, he went “ out of his Closet without making use of secret “ Prayer”—It is one of the most noble Parts of the Believer's spiritual Armour—Praying always, says the Apostle, with all Manner of Supplication—And watch and pray, says our Lord, that ye enter not into Temptation—And he spake a Parable, that his Disciples should pray, and not faint—Not that our Lord would have us always upon our Knees, or in our Closets, to the Neglect of our other rela-

tive Duties—But he means that our Souls should be kept in a Praying-Frame, so that we might be able to say, as a good Man in *Scotland* once said to his Friends on a Death-bed, “ Could these Curtains, or could these Walls speak, they would tell you what sweet Communion I have had with my God here.”—Oh Prayer, Prayer! It brings and keeps God and Man together—It raises Man up to God, and brings God down to Man.—If you would therefore, O Believers, keep up your Walk with God; pray, pray without ceasing—Be much in secret, set Prayer—And when you are about the common Business of Life, be much in ejaculatory Prayer, and send, from time to time, short Letters post to Heaven upon the Wings of Faith—They will reach the very Heart of God, and return to you again loaded with spiritual Blessings.

Holy and frequent Meditation is another blessed Means of keeping up a Believer's Walk with God—“ Prayer, Reading, Temptation, and Meditation,” says *Luther*, “ make a Minister”—And they also make, and keep a Christian—Meditation to the Soul, is the same as Digestion to the Body—Holy *David* found it so, and therefore he was frequently employed in Meditation, even in the Night Season.—We read also of *Isaac's* going out into the Fields to meditate in the Evening; or, as it is in the Margin, to pray—For Meditation is a kind of silent Prayer, whereby the Soul is frequently, as it were, carried out of it self to God, and in a Degree made like unto those blessed Spirits, who by a Kind of immediate Intuition always behold the Face of our heavenly Father—None but those happy Souls that have been accustomed to this divine
Employ,

Employ, can tell what a blessed Promoter of the divine Life Meditation is—*Whilst I was musing*, says *David, the Fire kindled*—And whilst the Believer is musing on the Works and Word of God; especially that Work of Works, that Wonder of Wonders, that Mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the Flesh, the Lamb of God slain for the Sins of the World: He frequently feels the Fire of divine Love kindle, so that he is obliged to speak with his Tongue, and tell of the Loving-kindness of the Lord to his Soul—Be frequent therefore in Meditation, all ye that desire to keep up and maintain a close and uniform Walk with the most High God.

Fourthly, Believers keep up their Walk with God, by watching and noting his providential Dealings with them—If we believe the Scriptures, we must believe what our Lord hath declared therein, *viz. That the very Hairs of his Disciples Heads are all numbered*; and that *a Sparrow does not fall to the Ground*, either to pick up a Grain of Corn, or when shot by a Fowler, *without the Knowledge of our heavenly Father*—Every Cross has a Call in it, and every particular Dispensation of divine Providence, has some particular End to answer in those to whom it is sent—If it be of an afflictive Nature, God does thereby say, “My Son, keep thy self from Idols:” If prosperous, he does it as it were by a small, still Voice, say, “My Son, give me thy Heart”—If Believers therefore would keep up their Walk with God, they must from time to time hear what the Lord has to say concerning them in the Voice of his Providence—Thus we find *Abraham’s* Servant, when he went to fetch a Wife for

for his Master *Isaac*, eyed and watched the Providence of God, and by that Means found out the Person that was design'd for his Master's Wife—
 “For a little Hint from Providence,” says pious *Bishop Hall*, “is enough for Faith to feed upon.”
 —And as I believe it will be one Part of our Happiness in Heaven, to take a View of, and look back upon, the various Links of the Golden-Chain which drew us there; so those that enjoy most of Heaven below, I believe will be most minute in remarking God's various Dealings with them, in respect to his providential Dispensations here on Earth.—

Fifthly, In order to walk closely with God, his Children must not only watch the Motions of God's Providence without them, but the Motions also of his blessed Spirit in their Hearts—As many as are the Sons of God, are led by the Spirit of God, and give up themselves to be guided by the Holy Ghost, as a little Child gives its Hand to be led by a Nurse or Parent. It is no doubt in this Sense, that we are to be converted, and become like *little Children*—And tho' it is the Quintessence of Enthusiasm, to pretend to be guided by the Spirit without the written Word; yet it is every Christian's bounden Duty to be guided by the Spirit, in Conjunction with the written Word of God—Watch therefore, I pray you, O Believers, the Motions of God's blessed Spirit in your Souls, and always try the Suggestions or Impressions that you may at any time feel, by the unerring Rule of God's most holy Word—And if they are not found to be agreeable to that, reject them as diabolical and delusive—
 By observing this Caution, you will steer a middle Course

Course between the two dangerous Extremes many of this Generation are in Danger of running into I mean, Enthusiasm, on the one Hand, and Deism, and downright Infidelity, on the other. —

Sixtly, Those that would maintain a holy Walk with God, must walk with him in Ordinances as well as Providences, &c. It is therefore recorded of *Zachary and Elizabeth*, that *they walked in all God's Ordinances as well as Commandments, blameless.* --- And all rightly informed Christians will look upon Ordinances not as *beggarly Elements*, but as so many Conduit-Pipes, whereby the infinitely condescending Jehovah conveys his Grace to their Souls— They will look upon them as *Childrens Bread*, and as their highest Privileges—Consequently they will be glad when they hear others say, *Come let us go up to the House of the Lord*—They will delight to visit the Place where God's Honour dwelleth, and be very eager to embrace all Opportunities to *shew forth the Lord Christ's Death till he come.* —

Sevently, and *Lastly*, If you would walk with God, you associate and keep Company with those that do walk with him—*My Delight*, says holy *David*, *is in them that do excel in Virtue*—They were in his Sight the excellent Ones of the Earth—And the primitive Christians no doubt kept up their Vigour and first Love, by continuing in Fellowship one with another—The Apostle *Paul* knew this full well, and therefore exhorts the Christians to *see to it*, that they did not *forsake the Assembling of themselves together*—For how can one be warm alone? And has not the wisest of Men told us, that *as Iron sharpeneth Iron, so doth the Countenance of a Man his Friend*? If we look therefore into
Church

Church History, or make a just Observation of our own Times, I believe we shall find, that as the Power of God prevails, Christian Societies, and Fellowship Meetings, prevail proportionably—And as one decays, the other has insensibly decayed and dwindled away at the same time—So necessary is it for those that would Walk with God, and keep up the Life of Religion, to meet together as they have Opportunity, in order to provoke one another to Love and good Works.

Proceed we now to the *third* general Thing proposed, *viz.* To offer some Motives to excite all to come and *walk with God.*—

And *First*, Walking with God is a very honourable Thing—This generally is a prevailing Motive to Persons of all Ranks, to stir them up to any important Undertaking—Oh that it may have its due Weight and Influence with you, in respect to the Matter now before us! I suppose you would all think it a very high Honour to be admitted into an Earthly Prince's Privy Council, to be trusted with his Secrets, and to have his Ear at all Times, and at all Seasons—It seems *Haman* thought it so, when he boasted, that besides his being advanced, *Esther* v. 11. *above the Princes and Servants of the King*—*Yea, moreover, said he, Verse 12, Esther the Queen did let no Man come in with the King unto the Banquet that she had prepared, but myself, and To-morrow am I invited unto her also with the King*—And when afterwards a Question was put to this same *Haman*, *Chap. vi. 6. What shall be done unto the Man whom the King delighteth to honour?* He answered, *Verse 8. Let the Royal Apparel*
be

be brought which the King used to wear, and the Horse that the King rideth upon, and the Crown Royal which is set upon his Head; And Verse 9. Let this Apparel and Horse be delivered to the Hand of one of the King's most noble Princes, that they may aray the Man withal whom the King delights to honour, and bring him on Horse-back thro' the Street of the City, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the Man whom the King delighteth to honour.—This was all then it seems that an ambitious *Haman* could ask, and the most valuable Thing that he thought *Abasuerus*, the greatest Monarch upon Earth, could give—But alas, what is this Honour in Comparison of that which the meanest of those enjoy, that walk with God! Think ye it a small Thing, Sirs, to have the Secret of the Lord of Lords with you, and to be called the Friends of God? And such Honour have all God's Saints: *The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and Henceforth, says the blessed Jesus, call I you no longer Servants, but Friends; for the Servant knoweth not the Will of his Master.*—Whatever you may think of it, holy *David* was so sensible of the Honour attending a Walk with God, that he declares *he had rather be a Door-keeper in his House, than to dwell even in the Tents of Ungodliness*—Oh that all were like-minded with him!—

But, *secondly*, As it is an honourable, so it is a pleasing Thing to walk with God—The wisest of Men has told us, that *Wisdom's Ways are Ways of Pleasantness; and all her Paths Peace*—And I remember pious *Mr. Henry*, when he was just about to expire, said to a Friend, “You have heard many
“ Mens dying Words, and these are mine, A Life
“ spent in Communion with God, is the pleasantest

“Life in the World.” I am sure I can set to my Seal that this is true.—Indeed I have been lifted under Jesu’s Banner only for a few Years; but I have enjoyed more solid Pleasure in one Moment’s Communion with my God, than I should or could have enjoyed in the Ways of Sins, tho’ I had continued to have went on in them for Thousands of Years—And may I not appeal to all you that fear and walk with God, for the Truth of this? Has not one Day in the Lord’s Courts, been better than a Thousand? In keeping God’s Commandments, Have you not found a present and very great Reward? Has not his Word been sweeter to you than the Honey, or the Honey-comb? Oh what have you felt, when *Jacob*-like you have been wrestling with your God? Has not Jesus often met you when meditating in the Fields, and been made known to you over and over again in Breaking of Bread? Has not the Holy Ghost frequently shed the divine Love abroad in your Hearts abundantly, and filled you with Joy unspeakable, even Joy that is full of Glory? I know you will answer all these Questions in the Affirmative, and freely acknowledge the *Yoke* of Christ to be *easy*, and *his Burden light*; or (to use the Words of one of our Collects) “That his Service is perfect Freedom”—And what need we then any further Motive to excite us to walk with God?

But, methinks, I hear some among you say, “How can these Things be? For, if Walking with God, as you say, is such an honourable and pleasant Thing, whence is it, that the Name of the People of this Way is cast out as Evil, and every where spoken against? How comes it to pass that they are frequently afflicted, tempt-
ed,

“ed, destitute, and tormented? Is this the Honour, this the Pleasure that you speak of?” I answer, Yes. Stop a while, be not over-hasty. Judge not according to Appearance, but judge righteous Judgment, and all will be well—It is true, we acknowledge the People of this Way, as you and *Paul* before you, when a Persecutor called them, have their Names cast out as Evil, and are a Sect every where spoken against—But by whom? Even by the Enemies of the most High God—And do you think it a Disgrace to be spoken Evil of then by them? Blessed be God we have not so learnt Christ—Our Royal Master has pronounced those *blessed*, who are *Persecuted*, and *have all Manner of Evil spoken against them falsely*—He has commanded them to *rejoice and be exceeding glad*—For it is a Mark of their Discipleship, and that their Reward will be great in Heaven—He himself was thus treated—And can there be a greater Honour put upon a Creature, than to be conformed to the ever-blessed Son of God? And further, it is equally true, that the People of this Way are frequently afflicted, tempted, destitute and tormented. But what of all this? Does this destroy the Pleasure of Walking with God? No, in no wise—For those that walk with God, are enabled, thro’ Christ strengthening them, to joy even in Tribulation, and to rejoice when they fall into divers Temptations.—And I believe I may appeal to the Experience of all true and close Walkers with God, Whether or not their Suffering Times, have not frequently been their sweetest Times, and they enjoyed most of God, when most cast out and despised by Men? This we find was the Case of Christ’s

primitive Servants, when threatened by the *Jewish* Sanhedrim, and commanded to preach no more in the Name of Jesus; they rejoiced, that they were accounted worthy to suffer Shame for the sake of Jesus.--*Paul* and *Silas* sang Praises even in a Dungeon---And the Face of *Stephen*, that glorious Proto-Martyr of the Christian Church, shone like the Face of an Angel---And Jesus is the same now, as he was then, and takes care so to sweeten Sufferings and Afflictions with his Love, that his Disciples find, by happy Experience, that as Afflictions abound, Consolations do much more abound.---And therefore these Objections, instead of destroying, do only more enforce the Motives before urged to excite you to walk with God.-----

But supposing the Objections were just, and Walkers with God were as despicable and unhappy as you would represent them to be; yet I have a third Motive to offer, which, if weighed in the Ballance of the Sanctuary, will over-weigh all Objections, viz. That there is a Heaven at the End of this Walk -- For to use the Words of pious Bishop *Beveridge*, "Tho' the Way be narrow, yet it is not long; and tho' the Gate be strait, yet it opens into everlasting Life"---*Enoch* found it so---He walked with God on Earth, and God took him to sit down with him for ever in the Kingdom of Heaven---Not that we are to expect to be taken away as he was---No---I suppose we shall all die the common Death of all Men---But after Death, the Spirits of those that have walked with God, shall return to God that gave them; and at the Morning of the Resurrection, Soul and Body shall be for ever with the Lord---Their Bodies shall be fashioned like

like unto Christ's glorious Body, and their Souls filled with all the Fulness of God---They shall sit on Thrones---They shall judge Angels---They shall be enabled to sustain an exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory, even that Glory which Jesus Christ enjoyed with the Father before the World began---“*O gloriam quantam et qualem,*” says the learned and pious *Arndt*, just before he bowed down his Head, and gave up the Ghost---The very Thought of it is enough to make us “Wish to leap “our seventy Years,” as good Doctor *Watts* expresses himself, and to make us break out into the earnest Language of the Royal Psalmist; *My Soul is a-thirst for God, yea even for the living God. When shall I come to appear in the immediate Presence of my God?* I wonder not that a Sense of this, when under a more than ordinary Irradiation and Influx of divine Life and Love, causes some Persons even to faint away, and for a time lose the Power of their Senses---A less Sight than this, even a Sight of *Solomon's* Glory, made *Sheba's* Queen; and a still lesser Sight than that, even a Sight of *Joseph's* Waggons, made holy *Jacob* faint, and for a while, as it were, die away---*Daniel*, when admitted to a distant View of this excellent Glory, fell down at the Feet of the Angel as one Dead---And if a distant View of this Glory be so excellent, what must the actual Possession of it be? If the first Fruits are so glorious, how infinitely must the Harvest exceed in Glory?

And now what shall I, or indeed what can I well say more, to excite you, even you that are yet Strangers to Christ, to come and walk with God? If you love Honour, Pleasure, and a Crown of Glory, come

come seek it where alone it can be truly found--
 Come, put ye on the Lord Jesus--Come, haste ye
 away and walk with God, and make no longer
 Provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the Lust thereof--
 Stop, stop, O Sinner!--Turn ye, turn ye, O ye
 unconverted Men--For the End of that Way you
 are now walking in, however right it may seem
 in your blinded Eyes, will be Death, even eternal
 Destruction both of Body and Soul--Make no long
 tarrying, I say: At your Peril I charge you, stop
 not one Step further on in your present Walk--
 For how knowest thou, O Man, but the next Step
 thou takest may be into Hell?--Death may seize
 thee, Judgment find thee, and then the great
 Gulph will be fixed between thee and endless Glory,
 for ever and ever--Oh think of these Things, all ye
 that are unwilling to come and walk with God--
 Lay them to heart--Shew yourselves Men, and in
 the Strength of Jesus say, Farewel Lust of the
 Flesh, I will no more walk with thee! Farewel Lust
 of the Eye, and Pride of Life! Farewel carnal Ac-
 quaintance, and Enemies of the Cross, I will no
 more walk and be intimate with you! Welcome
 Jesus, welcome thy Word, welcome thy Ordinances,
 welcome thy Spirit, welcome thy People, I will
 henceforth walk with you--Oh that there may be
 in you such a Mind! God will set his Almighty *fiat*
 to it, and seal it with the Broad Seal of Heaven,
 even the Signet of his Holy Spirit--Yes he will,
 tho' you have been walking with, and following
 after, the Devices and Desires of your desperately
 wicked Hearts, ever since you have been born--*I*
the High and Lofty One, says the great Jehovah,
that inhabiteth Eternity, will dwell with the humble
and

and contrite Heart, even with the Man that trembleth at my Word---The Blood, even the precious Blood of Jesus Christ, if you come to the Father in and thro' him, shall cleanse you from all Sin.-----

But the Text leads me to speak to you that are Saints, as well as to you that are open or unconverted Sinners---I need not tell you that walking with God is not only honourable, but pleasant and profitable also---For ye know it by happy Experience, and will find it more and more so every Day---Only give me leave to stir up your pure Minds by Way of Remembrance, and to beseech you by the Mercies of God in Christ Jesus, to take heed to yourselves, and walk closer with your God, than you have in Days past---For the nearer you walk with God, the more you will enjoy of him whose Presence is Life, and be the better prepared, for being placed at his Right Hand, where are Pleasures for evermore---Oh do not follow Jesus afar off!---Oh be not so formal, so dead and stupid in your Attendance on holy Ordinances!---Do not so shamefully forsake the Assembling yourselves together, or be so niggardly, and so indifferent about the Things of God---Remember what Jesus says of the Church of *Laodicea*-- *Because thou art neither hot nor cold, I will spew thee out of my Mouth*---Think of the Love of Jesus, and let that Love constrain you to keep near unto him; and tho' you die for him, do not deny him, do not keep at a Distance from him in any wise.-----

One Word to my Brethren in the Ministry that are here present, and I have done---You see, my Brethren, my Heart is full---I could almost say it is too big to speak, and yet too big to be silent, without

out dropping a Word to you---For does not the Text speak in a particular Manner to those who have the Honour of being stiled the Ambassadors of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God? I observed at the Beginning of this Discourse, that *Enoch* in all Probability was a publick Person, and a flaming Preacher---Tho' he be dead, does he not yet speak to us, to quicken our Zeal, and make us more active in the Service of our glorious and ever blessed Master? How did *Enoch* preach? How did *Enoch* walk with God, tho' he lived in a wicked and adulterous Generation? Let us then follow him as he followed J^esus Christ, and e're long where he is there shall we be also---He is now enter'd into his Rest---Yet a little while and we shall enter into ours, and that too, much sooner than he did---He sojourned here below Three Hundred Years; but blessed be God, the Days of Man are now shorten'd, and in a few Days our Work will be over.---The Judge is before the Door---He that cometh will come, and will not tarry---His Reward is with him---And we shall all (if we are zealous for the Lord of Hosts) e're long, shine as the Stars in the Firmament, in the Kingdom of our heavenly Father, for ever and ever.---To him, the blessed Jesus, and eternal Spirit, be all Honour and Glory, now, and to all Eternity. *Amen, and Amen.*

S E R-

 S E R M O N V.

 The Resurrection of *Lazarus*.

JOHN xi. 43, 44.

And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud Voice, Lazarus come forth. And he that was dead, came forth, bound Hand and Foot with Grave-cloaths: And his Face was bound about with a Napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

WHEN Jesus Christ, the Eternal Word, was pleased to make all Things by the Word of his Power, his last Works were the best—When he looked back upon, and beheld the first Products of his Almighty Power, he pronounced them *good*, but when that last, that lovely Creature Man, was formed, he pronounced them *very good*—So likewise, the same Jesus, when he came to tabernacle among us, and begin and carry on a new and second Creation, tho' all his Works were Miracles of Wonder, and manifested forth

the Glory of his eternal Godhead, yet the nearer he came to the End of his publick Ministrations, the greater and more noble did the Miracles which he wrought appear—The Resurrection of *Lazarus*, that is to be the Subject of the following Discourse, I think, is a sufficient Proof of this—To an Eye of Sense, it seems to be one of the greatest, if not the very greatest Miracle of all which our blessed Lord performed. When our Saviour bid *John's* Disciples go and tell their Master what Things they had seen and heard, he commands them to inform him, that by his divine Power *the Dead were raised*; alluding no doubt to the Ruler's Daughter, who was raised immediately after her Decease; and the Widow's Son, who at the Command of Jesus, rose out of his Coffin, as they were carrying his Corpse to the Burial: These were pregnant Proofs that Jesus was indeed that Messiah that was to come into the World—But his raising of *Lazarus* from the Dead, after he had lain four Days dead, and stank, and saw Corruption, is still, if possible, a greater Miracle; and consequently, a stronger Proof of his being the Anointed, the Christ of God.—The Evangelist *John* is very particular in giving us an Account of this Miracle; even so particular, as to spend a whole Chapter in relating the Circumstances which preceded, attended, and follow after it—And as he was undoubtedly directed herein by the all-wise, unerring Spirit of God, does it not point out unto us, that this Miracle with all its respective Circumstances, calls for our particular and most serious Meditation?—It appears to me in this Light; and therefore, as the Lord shall be pleased to assist me, I shall

shall go back to the Beginning of this Chapter, follow the Evangelist Step by Step, and consider the Particulars of this wondrous Miracle, make some practical Observations as I go along, and shut up all with some suitable Instructions and Exhortations which will naturally arise from the Body of the Discourse.—

The Evangelist in the first Verse, makes mention of the Sicknes of *Lazarus*—Now, says he, *a certain Man was sick, named Lazarus of Bethany, the Town of Mary, and her Sister Martha.* Some think these Sisters were very wealthy, so as to own good Part of the Town; or as the original Word seems to imply, the Village—But then it is probable the Evangelist would have said the Town of *Lazarus*, Estates usually descending, as with us, in the Male Line: It means therefore no more, than that *Martha* and *Mary* lived in *Bethany*—The Holy Ghost pointing out to us hereby, that nothing makes a Town so worthy of a gracious Soul's Remark or Esteem, as its having many of God's dear Children for its Inhabitants!—*Bethany*, tho' a little Place, is more famous because it was the Town of *Martha* and *Mary*, than if *Alexander* had fought in it one of his greatest Battles—— Both these Women loved Jesus in Sincerity, and were as good as they were great—But *Mary*, tho' the younger Sister, seems to be most eminent—The Evangelist in the second Verse, speaks of her in a very distinguishing Manner—*It was that Mary, that never-to-be-forgotten Mary, which anointed the Lord with Ointment (expensive as it was) and wiped his Feet, after she had washed them with Tears of Love, with her*

Hair, even the Hair of her Head---What Notice is taken of this Action! With what an Eulogy, and in what a high Strain of Commendation is it here spoken of? And such are the Honours of all God's Saints---Tho' all our good Works are not recorded as *Mary's* were, yet God is not unmindful that he should forget our Works of Faith and Labours, which have proceeded of Love---Every Tear we shed, every Sigh we fetch, every Alms we give, tho' it be only a Cup of cold Water, are all recorded in the Lamb's Book of Remembrance, and shall be brought out to our eternal Honour, rewarded with a Reward of Grace, tho' not of Debt, at the great and terrible Day of the Lord---*I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink, naked, and ye clothed me, sick and in Prison, and ye came unto me.*---What Reason have we then to be *stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, forasmuch as we are assured, that our Labours will not be in vain or forgotten by the Lord?* It was that *Mary* that anointed the Lord with Ointment, and wiped his Feet with her Hair!---And what follows? *Whose Brother Lazarus was sick*---So that being related to Christ, or Christ's Disciples, will not exempt Persons from Sickness---In this Life Time and Chance happen to all, only with this material Difference, *viz.* Those Afflictions, which harden the obstinately Impenitent, soften and purify the Heart of a true Believer. My Son, therefore despise not the Chastening of the Lord on one Hand, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him on the other---*For whom the Lord loveth he Chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth*---Jesus loved *Lazarus*, and yet *Laza-*

rus was sick--And what do his Sisters do for him now he is sick? No doubt they applied to a Physician, for it is tempting God to neglect making use of Means for the Recovery of our Health, when it is impaired---But then they were not guilty of *Asa's Crime, who sought to the Physician, but not to the Lord*--No! they knew the most skilful *Recipes* would be of no Effect, unless attended with a Blessing from Jesus the great and Almighty Physician; and *Therefore* (Verse 3.) *his Sisters sent unto him,* it should seem at the Beginning of their Brother's Illness--Alas how unlike is their Conduct to that of the Generality of People, especially the Rich and Great! How unfashionable is it Now-a-days, for Persons to send to Jesus in Behalf of their sick Relations! It is so very uncustomary, that in some Places, if a Minister be sent for to a sick Person, it is a sad Symptom that the Patient is almost past Hopes of Recovery---Thus did not *Martha* and her Sister *Mary*--They sent unto Jesus, tho' he was now *beyond Jordan* (Chap. x. 40.) where *he abode*, or made his chief Place of Residence for some Time--Hence it was that they knew where to send to him--But what Kind of Message did they send? A very humble and suitable One--*Lord, Verse 3. behold, he whom thou lovest is sick*--They might have said, Lord, he who loveth thee is sick--But they knew that our Love was not worth mentioning, and that we love Jesus only because he first loved us--Besides, here is no prescribing to our Lord what he should do, or what Means he should make use of--They do not so much as say, we pray thee come, only speak the Word, and our sick Brother shall be restored--They only simply tell

tell Jesus the Case, knowing it was sufficient barely to lay it before an infinitely compassionate Redeemer, and leave it to him to act according to his own sovereign Good-Will and Pleasure---*Lord, behold he whom thou lovest is sick*--Oh how sweet is it when the Soul is brought to this! And with what a holy Confidence may we pray to, and intercede with the holy Jesus, when we have Reason to hope, that those we pray and intercede for, are Lovers of, and are beloved of *Him*! For his Eyes are in a peculiar Manner over the Righteous, and his Ears always open to their Prayers---This was their Message, and it soon reached Jesus Christ---And how does he receive it? We are told, Verse 4. *For when Jesus heard that, viz. That he whom he loved was sick, He said, this Sickness is not unto Death, but unto the Glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby*--To whom these Words were spoken is not certain--In all Probability Jesus spake them to the Persons that deliver'd *Martha's* and *Mary's* Message--And if so, it was no Doubt a comfortable Answer for the present, tho' it must afterwards puzzle them as well as the Disciples how to explain it, when they found that *Lazarus* was actually dead. *This Sickness is not unto Death, i. e.* Not unto an *abiding* Death, because he intended to raise him again, soon after his Decease---It is like that other Expression of our Lord in *St. Mark, The Damsel is not dead, but sleepeth*; which must not be understood in a literal, but metaphorical Sense--And this and such like Instances, ought to teach us to weigh carefully our blessed Lord's Words, and to wait for an Explication of them, by subsequent Providences; otherwise we shall be
in

in Danger of misapplying them, and thereby bring our Souls into unspeakable Bondage---*This Sickness is not unto Death, but unto the Glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby*—This is the End both of the Afflictions, and the Deaths of God's People—By all that happens to them, he will be glorified one Way or another, and cause every Thing to work together for their Good—And who then would but be content to be sick, or willing to submit to Death itself, if so be the Son of God may be glorified thereby? This Answer no Doubt proceeded from Love—For we are told, Verse 5. that *Jesus loved Martha and her Sister, and Lazarus*—Oh happy Family! Three in it beloved of Jesus, with a peculiar, everlasting Love—“Very often “it so happens that,” to use the Words of the pious Bishop *Beveridge*, “there is but one in a “City, and two in a Country, of this Stamp”—But here are two Sisters and a Brother, all Lovers of, and beloved by the glorious Jesus—What shall we say to these Things? Why, That our Saviour's Grace is Free and Sovereign, and he may do what he will with his own—They who are thus so highly favoured, as to have so many converted in one House, ought to be doubly thankful! Such a Blessing have not all his Saints—No! Many, very many, go mourning over their perverse and graceless Relations, all their Lives long; and find even to their dying Day, that their greatest Foes are those of their own Household.—Surely these three Relations lived, a Heaven upon Earth—For what can they want, what can make them miserable who are assured of Jesu's Love? But surely if Jesus loves this dear little Family, the next News one would think

think we should hear, would be, that he went immediately and healed *Lazarus*; or at least, cured him at a Distance—But instead of that, we are told, Verse 6. *When he had heard that he was sick, he abode two Days still in the same Place where he was*—A strange Way this, in the Eye of natural Reason, of expressing Love; but not so strange in the Eye of Faith—For the Lord Jesus very often sheweth his Love, by deferring to give immediate Answers to our Prayers---For hereby he tries our Faith and Patience, and exercises all our passive Graces—We have a Proof of this in the *Syrophean* Woman, upon whom the blessed Jesus frowned, and spake roughly to at first, only that he might afterwards turn unto her and say, *O Woman, great is thy Faith*—Let not those then that believe, make too much Hastē; or immediately in their Hearts repine against the Lord, because he may not answer their Requests, in their own Time and Way—God's Time and Way is best—And we shall find it to be so in the End---*Martha* and *Mary* experienced the Truth of this, tho' undoubtedly our Lord's seeming Delay, to come and heal their Brother, cost them great Searchings of Heart---But will the Lord Jesus forget his dear *Lazarus*, whom his Soul loveth? *Can a Woman forget her sucking Child?* Indeed she may; but the Lord never faileth those that fear him—Neither is he slack concerning his Promise, as some Men count Slackness---For his very Delays are Answers---The Vision is for an appointed Time---In the End it will speak and not lie.—Tho' our Lord abode two Days where he was, to try the Faith of these Sisters, yet after this, he said unto his Disciples, Verse 7. *Let us go*
into

into Judea again--- With what a holy Familiarity does Jesus converse with his dear Children! Our Saviour seems to speak to his Disciples, as tho' he was only their Brother, and as it were upon a Level with them; *Let us go into Judea again.* How gently, according to what was predicted of him, does he lead those that are with Young! Jesus very well knew the Weakness of his Disciples, and also what a dangerous Place *Judea* was: How gradually therefore does he make known unto them, his Design of going thither! And how does he admit his Disciples to expostulate with him on this Account! *Master, say they (Verse 8.) the Jews of late sought to stone thee, and goest thou thither again?* They were amazed at our Lord's Boldness, and were ready to call it Presumption. As we generally are prone to censure and condemn other zealous and enterprizing Persons, as carrying Matters too far, for no other Reason, if we examine the Bottom of our Hearts, but because they go before, and excel ourselves.--- The Disciples, no doubt, thought that they spoke out of Love to their Lord, and assuredly they did; but what a Deal of Self-love was there mixed and blended with it? They seem much concerned for their Master, but they were more concerned for themselves.--- However Jesus overlooks their Weakness, and mildly replies, Verse 9, and 10. *Are there not twelve Hours in the Day? If any Man walk in the Day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the Light of the World; but if any Man walk in the Night, he stumbleth, because there is no Light in him.* As tho' our Lord had said, "My dear Disciples, I thank you for your Care and Concern for me--- *Judea* is a dangerous Place, and what you say of the

" Treatment I met with from its Inhabitants, is
 " just and true; but be not afraid of going there
 " upon my Account—For as a Man walketh safely
 " Twelve Hours of the Day, because he walketh
 " in the Light; so as long as the Time appointed
 " by my Father for my publick Administration
 " lasts, I shall be as secure from the Hands of my
 " Enemies, as a Man that walks in Broad-day is
 " secure from falling---But as a Man stumbleth if
 " he walketh in the Night, so when the Night of
 " my Passion cometh, then, but not till then, shall
 " I be given up into the Hands of my spiteful
 " Foes." Oh what Comfort have these Words,
 by the Blessing of God, frequently brought to my
 Soul! How may all Christ's Ministers strengthen
 themselves with this Consideration, that so long as
 God hath Work for them to do, they are immor-
 tal! And if after our Work is over, our Lord should
 call us to lay down our Lives for the Brethren, and
 to seal the Truth of our Doctrine with our Blood,
 it would certainly be the highest Honour that can
 be put upon us---*To you it is given not only to be-
 lieve, but also to suffer,* says the Apostle to the
Philippians---These Things the Evangelist tells
 us, Verse 11. *said he, viz. Jesus, and after that,*
 to satisfy them that he was not going into *Judea*
 without a proper Call, *He saith unto them, Our*
Friend Lazarus sleepeth---Our Friend---Amazing!
 For what is a Friend? As one's own Soul---How
 dear then, and near are true Believers to the most
 adorable Jesus! *Our Friend Lazarus*---Still more
 amazing! Here is Condescension, here is unparal-
 lelled Familiarity indeed---And what of him? *He*
sleepeth---A figurative Way of Expression---For
 what

what is Death to the Lovers of Jesus Christ, but a Sleep, and a refreshing One too? Thus it is said of *Stephen* when he died, that *he fell asleep*—Christ indeed *died*, but Believers only *sleep*—And *those that sleep in Jesus*, says the Scripture, *will God bring with him*—Our Friend *Lazarus sleepeth*—For though he be dead, I shall raise him from the Grave so soon, that his dying will be only like a Person's taking a Nap of Sleep---Our Friend *Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of Sleep.* By this Time, one would imagine, our Lord's Disciples should have understood him: But how unwilling are we to believe any Thing that we do not like. *Then said his Disciples, Verse 12th, Lord, if he sleep he shall do well*---Oh fearful, and slow of Heart to believe! How fain would they excuse themselves from going into *Judea*, for fear of a few Stones! By this Way of talking, how do they in effect impeach their blessed Master's Conduct, and under a Pretence of preserving his Person, foster, and as it were, plead for their own (tho' perhaps undiscern'd) Cowardice and Unbelief! That Charity, which hopeth and believeth all Things for the best, teacheth us to judge thus favourably of them---For, *Howbeit Jesus spake of his Death: they thought that He had spoken of taking Rest in Sleep*---The Great and Compassionate High-Priest knowing whereof they were made, and remembering they were but Dust, throws a Veil of Love over their Infirmity; and at length, *Verse 14th, said unto them plainly* (for if we wait on Jesus, we shall know his Will plainly, one Way or another) *Lazarus is dead*---And even then, lest they should be swallowed up with over-much Sorrow, he immediately adds, *Verse 15th,*

And I am glad for your Sakes that I was not there, to the Intent ye may believe; that is, have more Faith, or have that Faith you have already encreased and confirmed--A plain Proof this, that all Jesu's Delays to answer Prayer, are only to strengthen our Faith----- Nevertheless, says our Lord, let us go unto him.--This was a sufficient Hint, if they knew how to improve it, that he intended to do something extraordinary, though he would not tell them directly what he intended. For the Lord Jesus will keep those whom he loves at his Foot, and dependent on him. Let us go unto him--He still speaks as tho' they were his Equals-- Oh that Christians in general, Oh that Ministers in particular, would learn of him their great Exemplar, to condescend to Men of low Degree! Well, the Secret is now out--Jesus has said unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead---And what Reception does this melancholly News meet with? With great Condolency, especially from Thomas; for Verse 16. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his Fellow Disciples, let us also go and die with him; i. e. according to some, with Lazarus, with whom it may be, Thomas had contracted an intimate Acquaintance--But granting it was so; shall I commend him for this passionate Expression? I commend him not--Surely he spake unadvisedly with his Lips; Let us also, says he to his Fellow Disciples, go and die with him--As tho' there was no Comfort henceforward to be expected in the World, now his Friend Lazarus was gone--This was a great Fault, and yet a Fault that many of God's Children run into daily, by mourning over their deceased Relations over-much, like Persons

sons that have no Hope--But this Infirmity ought not to be indulged---For if our Friends and dear Relatives are dead, Jesus, that Friend of Sinners, is not dead--He will be better to us than seven Sons, and will abundantly supply the Place of all Creature-Comforts. But I am more inclined to think that the Word *Him*, refers to Jesus his dear Master; and if so, he is so far from being blamed, that he spake like a good Soldier of Jesus Christ--*Let us also go, that we may die with him*-- "If our dear Master will go into *Judea*, and hazard his precious Life, let us not any longer make such frivolous Excuses, but let us manfully accompany him; and if the *Jews*, should not only be permitted to Stone, but also to Kill him, *let us also go and die with him*, we cannot die in a better Cause."---This was a Speech worthy of a Christian Hero, and *Thomas* herein hath set an Example, that we should follow his Steps, by exciting and provoking one another closely to adhere to the blessed Jesus, especially when his Cause and Interest is in any more immediate Danger---This Exhortation it seems had a proper Effect---They all went, and as far as we know, cheerfully accompanied their glorious Master---How their Thoughts were exercised on the Road, we are not told---But I am apt to believe they were a little discouraged when they came to *Bethany*-- For *When Jesus came*, (Verse 17.) *he found that he had lien in the Grave four Days already.* And what would it avail them, to come so many Miles only to see a dead Man's Tomb? But how wisely were all Things ordered by the blessed Jesus, to manifest his Glory in the most extraordinary Manner, that not only
his

his Disciples might have their Faith confirmed, but many also of the *Jews* might believe on him-- This *Bethany*, it seems, Verse 18th, *was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen Furlongs off; i. e.* about two Miles; and *Martha* and *Mary*, being what we may call People of Fashion, and devout likewise, many of the Devout, and we may suppose many of the wealthy *Jews* came from the Metropolis, as well as other adjacent Places, Verse 19th, *to Martha and Mary; not to pay an idle, trifling, but a serious, profitable Visit, viz. to comfort them concerning their Brother.*—This was kind and neighbourly—To weep with those that weep, and to visit the Afflicted in their Distresses, is one essential Branch of true and undefiled Religion—And Oh how sweet is it when we visit surviving Friends, that we have Reason to think that their departed Relations died in the Lord! And we can therefore give them Comfort concerning them! For *blessed are the Dead, that die in the Lord*, even so saith the the Spirit, for they rest from their Labours.—This, and such like Arguments, no doubt, these Visitors made use of in order to comfort *Martha* and *Mary*-- And indeed they stood in much Need of Consolation--For we have Reason to suppose, that from our Lord's Answer, *viz. This Sickness is not unto Death, but the Glory of God*; they had entertained Thoughts of the Recovery of their Brother—But who can tell what these two holy Souls must feel? When they found their Brother not only not recovered, but dead, laid out, and now stinking in the silent Grave! --What hard Thoughts, without judging them, may we suppose they entertained concerning Jesus! Think ye not that they were
ready

ready to cry out in the Language of the Prophet? *Thou hast deceived us, and we are deceived*---But Man's Extremity is Jesu's Opportunity--- In the Multitude of the Sorrows that they had in their Hearts, the News of Christ's Coming refreshes their Souls---Some Body or another, commendably officious, privately informs *Martha* of it---*Who*, Verse 20th, *as soon as she heard that Jesus was come* (without making any Apology to the Company for her Rudeness) *went and met him: But Mary sat still in the House*---But why so, *Mary*? I thought thou hadst been most forward to attend on Jesus, and thy Sister *Martha* more prone to be cumbered about the many Things of this Life---Why sittest thou still? It may be the News was brought only privately to *Martha* (for it is plain from Verse 31st, that the *Jews* who were in the House knew not of it;) - and *Martha* knowing how our Lord had chid her once, was resolved he should have no Reason on the same Account to chide her any more; therefore when the News were brought, she would not so much as stay to inform her Sister, but went out to see whether the News were true or not, and if so, as the eldest Sister, she would invite the blessed Jesus in---How happy is it, when Christ's Reproofs for past Neglects, excites our future Zeal to come out and meet him! Such Reproofs are an excellent Oil---Or, it may be, the News reached *Mary's* Ears, as well as *Martha's*, but being overcome with overmuch Sorrow, she thought it too good News to be true, and therefore sat still in the House---Oh how careful ought Believers to be, to keep up and maintain even in the midst of Tribulation, a holy Confidence and Joy in
God!

God! For the Joy of the Lord is a Believer's Strength---Whereas giving Way to Melancholy and Unbelief, raises Glooms and Vapours in the Mind, clouds the Understanding, clogs in the Way of Duty, and gives the Enemy, who loves to fish in troubled Waters, a very great Advantage over us---*Mary*, perhaps, thro' the Prevalence of this, and being also naturally of a sedentary Disposition, *sat still in the House*, while her Sister *Martha* got the Start of her, and went out to meet the Holy Jesus---And how does she accost him? Why, in a Language bespeaking the Distress of a burdened and disordered Mind---For she said unto Jesus, Ver. 21st, *Lord, if thou hadst been here, my Brother had not died*. Here is a Mixture of Faith and Unbelief---Faith made her say---*Lord, if thou hadst been here, my Brother had not died*---But Unbelief made her confine Christ's Power to his bodily Presence---Besides, here was a tacit Accusation of the Blessed Jesus of Unkindness, for not coming when they sent unto him this Message, *Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick*---Once she charged Jesus with Want of Care; *Lord, carest thou not, that my Sister hath left me to serve alone?* Now she taxes him with Want of Kindness---*If thou hadst been here*; as much as to say, if thou hadst been so kind as to have come when we sent for thee, *my Brother had not died*; and by saying thus, she does as it were lay her Brother's Death to Jesus Christ---Oh how apt are even those whom Jesus loves in a very peculiar Manner, to charge him foolishly! How often does the Enmity of our desperately wicked Hearts rise against Christ, when we are under the afflicting Hand of his Providence! Are not the very best of

us frequently tempted in such Circumstances, to say within our selves at least, Why does God thus cruelly deal with us? Why did not he keep off this Stroke, seeing it was in his Power to have prevented it? How should we be ashamed, and confounded before him upon this Account? How should we pray and labour to be delivered from this remaining Enmity of the Heart, and long for that Time, when Mortality shall be swallowed up of Life, and we shall never feel one single Rising of Heart, against a good and gracious, an all-wise and glorious Redeemer, any more! However, to do *Martha* Justice, Verse 22d, she pretty well recovers herself—*But I know*, says she, *that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee*—Whether these Words imply an actual Belief of our Lord's Divinity is not certain—To me they do—Because we shall find by and by, that she did believe that our Lord was the Son of God, and that Messiah which was come into the World—Therefore when she said she knew that whatsoever he asked of God, God would give it to him, she may be understood as referring to God the Father, under whom the Lord Jesus acted as Mediator, tho' equal to him in respect to his eternal Glory and Godhead—This Mystery we may well suppose her acquainted with, because Jesus had been frequently preaching at her House, and consequently, had no doubt opened that Mystery unto her—O what a blessed Thing must it be to have such a Mediator! Such an High Priest, and Intercessor at the Father's Right-hand, that whatever he asks the Father in our Behalf, he will give us! Jesus takes this kindly at *Martha's* Hand, and passes over her Infirmary—

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For if the Lord was exact to mark every Thing that we say or do amiss, alas who could abide? He only calmly says unto her, Verse 23d, *Thy Brother shall rise again*—Glad Tidings these of great Joy—This should comfort us concerning our deceased, pious Relations, viz. That e're long they shall rise again, and Soul and Body be for ever with the Lord—Howbeit Jesus spake here of an immediate Resurrection, tho' he did not speak plainly—For Christ loves to exercise the Faith and Patience of his Disciples, and frequently leaves them to find out his Meaning by Degrees—It is best for us in our present State, that it should be so—In Heaven it will be otherwise—*Thy Brother*, says Christ to *Martha*, *shall rise again*—She might immediately have replied, When, Lord? But she fetches a Circuit as it were, and labours to find out the Mind of Jesus by Degrees—*I know*, says she (Verse 24.) *that he shall rise again at the Resurrection of the last Day*—These Words to me seem to imply, that she had some distant Thought of our Lord's Design to raise her Brother *now*, and that she spoke thus only to draw our Saviour to speak, and tell her plainly whether he meant to do so or not—For those who are acquainted with Jesus, are taught a holy Art by the blessed Spirit, in dealing with their blessed Master—*I know*, says she, *he shall rise again at the Resurrection of the last Day* (a notable Proof this, by the Way, that the pious Jews believed the Resurrection of the Body) It is just the same as tho' she had said, Lord, dost thou mean that my Brother shall rise again before that Time? Our Saviour wisely keeps off from giving her a direct Answer; but chuses rather to preach to her
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Heart—*Jesus said unto her (Verse 25th) I am the Resurrection, and the Life: He that believeth in me, tho' he were dead, yet shall he live.* On this *Martba's* Faith, if in Exercise, might take hold. Oh glorious Words! How encouraging to you poor Sinners lying in your Blood! Tho' you are dead in Trespases and Sins, and might justly be condemned to die the second Death, yet if you believe on the Lord Jesus you shall live.---*And whosoever (Verse 26th) believeth in me, shall never die; i. e.* Never die as to their Souls, never die eternally, and consequently, never finally fall away from God—This is an encouraging Soul-comforting Declaration for you, O Believers, who are thus kept, as it were, in a Garrison, by the mighty Power of God, thro' Faith, unto Salvation! *Believest thou this?* says Christ to *Martba* Verse 26th—For what avail all the many great and precious Promises of the Gospel, unless they are applied and brought home in particular to each of our Souls? The Word does not profit unless it is mixed with Faith—We wou'd therefore do well, when we are reading Christ's Words, to put this Question to ourselves; O my Soul, *believest thou this?* And well wou'd it be for us, if upon putting this Question to ourselves, we could with the same holy Confidence, and in the same delightful Frame, say with *Martba*, Verse 27th, *Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the World.* This I think is a direct Confession of our Lord's Divinity ---How full was her Heart when she spoke these Words! I am persuaded it burnt within her---What a divine Warmth had she contracted by talking with Jesus! How does she long that her Sister might

share in her holy Joy! For when she had so said, Verse 28th, *She went away*; full of Love no doubt, and called *Mary* her Sister, as all will labour to call their near Relations, who have felt the Lord Jesus to be the Resurrection and the Life themselves---But *Martha* took Care in the midst of her Zeal (as we should always do) to behave with Prudence; and therefore she called her Sister SECRETLY, saying, *The Master is come, and calleth for thee*---The Master is come---She need say no more; *Mary* knew very well whom she meant---For holy Souls easily understand one another when talking of their Master Jesus---The divine *Herbert* used to delight (when speaking of Jesus) to say, "MY MASTER;" Perhaps he learned it of *Martha*, who said here, *The Master is come, and calleth for thee*---But what is this thou sayest, *Martha*? The Master is come, and calleth for thee? Surely a Woman of thy exalted Piety will not tell a deliberate Lie, and in order to induce thy Sister to come to Jesus, acquaint her that Jesus called her, when indeed he did not---Thou needest not put thyself to such an Expence, or do so much Evil, that Good may come of it---Only mention Jesus to *Mary*, and let her know for a Certainty that the Master is indeed come, and I am persuaded she will sit no longer---*Martha* no doubt knew this, and therefore I cannot judge her as some do, as tho' in her Haste she said what was not true---For Jesus might bid her call her Sister, tho' it be not directly mentioned in this Chapter---And it is very probable, that our Lord did enquire after *Mary*, because she used to take such great Delight in sitting at his Feet, and hearing the gracious Words that proceeded out of his Mouth---*The Mas-*

ter is come, saith Martha to her Sister, and calleth for thee. And so say I to all poor Sinners---Jesus, your Lord and Master, your Prince and Saviour, is come, come unto this lower World, and is come this Day in his Word, and by me, who am less than the least of all his Servants, and calleth for you---Oh that he may also come in the Demonstration of the Spirit, and by his mighty Power, bow your stubborn Hearts and Wills to obey the Call, as Holy *Mary* did!---For we are told, Verse 29th, *When she heard that, she rose quickly, and came to Jesus*---Sinners, when will you do so? Or why do you not do so? How know you whether Jesus will call for you any more, before he calls you by Death to Judgment? Linger, Oh longer no longer---Fly, fly for your Lives---Arise quickly, and with *Mary*, come to Jesus---She obeyed the Call so very speedily, that her Haste was taken notice of by her Visitors---*The Jews then, Verse 31st, which were with her in the House, and comforted her* (that is taken particular Notice of) *when they saw Mary that she rose up hastily* (without any Ceremony at all) *and went out, followed her, saying, she goeth to the Grave, to weep there*---How wisely does our Lord permit and order all this, to bring the Jews out to behold the wonderful Miracle that he was about to perform! Little did *Mary* and the *Jews* think for what End they were thus providentially led out---But when Jesus hath Work to be done, he will bring Souls to the Place where he intends to call them, in spite of Men or Devils---But how does *Mary* behave when she comes to Jesus? We may be assured not without great Humility---No wonder then we are told, Verse 32d, that *When she saw him, she immediately fell down at*
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his Feet (a Place *Mary* had been used to) and in an Agony of Grief, says, as her Sister had done before her, *Lord, if thou hadst been here, my Brother had not died.*—Poor *Mary*! Her Concern was great indeed—Tho' she was a holy Woman, she could not well bear the Loss of her Brother—She knew very well that the World would miss him, and no doubt he had been a kind and tender Brother to her—But I am afraid she was sinfully overcome with overmuch Sorrow—However, had we been there, the Sight must have affected us—It seems to have affected the Visitors, especially the blessed *Jesus*—He, instead of blaming her for her tacitly Accusing him of Unkindness, for not coming to her Brother's Relief, pities and sympathizes both with *Mary* and her weeping Friends! *When Jesus, Verse 33d, saw her weep, and the Jews also weeping, he groaned in his Spirit, and was troubled.*—Troubled: Not with any sinful Perturbation we may be assured—Nothing of that Nature could possibly be in his sinless Soul—And therefore some have judiciously enough compared the Trouble our Lord now felt, to some Chrystal Water shaken in a Glass or Bottle—You may shake it, but there will be no Sediment—It will be Chrystal Water still—He groaned in his Spirit I do not see why this may not be understood of his Praying in the Spirit, which maketh Intercession for the Saints, with *αδελφοις στεναγμοις*, Groanings that cannot be uttered.—Methinks I see the Immaculate Lamb of God, secretly, but powerfully Agonizing with his Father—His Heart is big with Sympathy! At length out of the Fulness of it, he said, Verse 34th, *Where have ye laid him?* They, I suppose *Mary* and *Martha*, say unto him, *Lord, come*

and see---He came, he saw, "He wept," Verse 35th---It is put in a Verse by itself, that we might pause a while, and ask why Jesus wept? He wept to shew us that it was no Sin to shed a Tear of Love and Resignation, at the Grave of a deceased Friend. He wept, to see what Havock Sin had made in the World, and how it reduced Man, who was originally little lower than the Angels (by making him subject to Death) to a Level with the Beasts that perish---But above all he wept at the Foresight of the People's Unbelief---He wept to think how many then present would not only not believe on, but would be hardened, and have their Prejudices encreased more and more against him, tho' he should raise *Lazarus* from the Dead before their Eyes---Well then may Ministers be excused, who, whilst they are Preaching, now and then drop a few Tears, at the Consideration of their Sermons being, thro' the Perverseness and Unbelief of many of their Audience, a Saviour of Death unto Death, instead of a Saviour of Life unto Life---Upon a like Occasion Jesus wept---What an affecting Sight was here! Let us for a while suppose our selves placed amidst these holy Mourners---Let us imagine that we saw the Sepulchre just here before us, and the *Jews*, and *Mary*, and the blessed Jesus weeping round it!---Surely the most obdurate of us all must drop a Tear, at least be affected with the Sight---We find it affected those that were really By-standers---For, then said the *Jews*, Verse 36th, *Behold, how he loved him.* And did they say, Behold, how he loved him, when Jesus only shed a few Tears over the Grave of his departed *Lazarus*? Come then, O Sinners, and view him dying, and pouring out his precious

precious Heart's Blood for you upon an accursed Tree; and then surely you must needs cry out, Behold how he loved us! But alas, tho' all were affected, yet it seems, all were not well affected at seeing Jesus weep!--For we are told, Verse 37th, that some of them said, *Could not this Man which opened the Eyes of the Blind, have caused that even this Man should not have died?* One wou'd imagine that Satan himself could scarce have utter'd a more perverse Speech. Every Word is full of Spite and Rancour--Could not this Man, this Fellow, this Deceiver, who pretends to say, that he opened the Eyes of the Blind, have caused that this Man, that he seems to love so, should not have died? Is not this a sufficient Proof that he is a Cheat? Have we caught him at last? Is it likely that he really helped others, when he could not help his own Friend? Oh how patient ought the Servants of our Lord to be! And how may they expect to be censured, and have their good Deeds questioned, and lessened, when their blessed Master has been thus treated before them! However Jesus will do Good, notwithstanding all these Sights put upon him; and therefore again *groaning in himself*, Verse 38th, *he cometh to the Grave---It was a Cave, or Vault (as is customary in great Families) and a Stone lay upon it*--Jesus said, Verse 39th, *Take ye away the Stone*—How gradually does our Lord proceed, in order to engage the People's Attention the more—Me-thinks I see them all Eye, all Ear, and eagerly waiting to see the Issue of this Affair--But *Martba* now returning with the rest of the Company, seems to have lost that good Frame which she was in when she went to call her Sister—*She saith unto him*, Verse 39th,

39th, *Lord, by this Time he stinketh! For he hath been either dead or buried four Days—*Oh the dismal Effects of carnal Reasoning! How naturally do we fall into Doubts and Fears; when we have not our Eye sincerely directed to the blessed Jesus! *Martha*, instead of looking up to him, looks down into the Grave, and poring upon her Brother's stinking Corpse, falls into a Fit of Unbelief—By this Time he *stinketh*, and therefore a Sight of him will only be offensive—For, perhaps, she might think our Lord only wanted just to take a View of her Brother *Lazarus*---Jesus therefore, to give her yet a further Hint, that he intended to do something extraordinary, saith unto her, Verse 40th, *Said I not unto thee, that if thou shouldst believe, thou shouldst see the Glory of God?* Our Lord speaks here with some Degree of Warmth—For nothing displeases him more than the Unbelief of his own Disciples—*Said I not unto thee, if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the Glory of God?* When Christ spoke these Words unto her, we are not told—It might be, this was Part of their Conversation upon some other Occasion some Time before—However he checks her openly for her Unbelief now—For those whom Jesus loves must expect to be rebuked sharply by him, whenever they dishonour him by Unbelief—The Reproof is taken—Without making any more Objections, *They*, Verse 41, *took away the Stone from the Place where the Dead was laid;* And now behold with what Solemnity the holy Jesus prepares himself to execute his gracious Design! *And Jesus*, Verse 41st, *lift up his Eyes, and said, Father I thank thee that thou hast heard me—*And I knew, Verse 42d, *that thou hearest me always: But because of the People*
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which stand by, I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. Who can express with what Fervour and Intensity of Spirit, our glorious High-Priest uttered these Words! They are a Thanksgiving arising from an Assurance that his Father had heard him—For Christ as Mediator was inferior to the Father—I knew that thou hearest me always (and so may every Believer in his Degree say too) But because of the People which stand by I said it—Said what? We do not hear that Jesus said any Thing by Way of Prayer before—And that is true, if we mean vocally, but mentally he did say something, even when he groaned in the Spirit once and again, and was troubled—For there is a Way of praying even when we do not, and cannot speak—*Why cryest thou,* saith God to *Moses,* tho' we do not hear that he spoke one single Word—But he cried in his Heart; and I observe this for the Comfort of some weak, but real Christians, who think they never pray, unless they can have a great Flow of Words—But this is a Mistake---For we often pray best, when we can speak least---There are Times when the Heart is too big to speak, and the Spirit itself maketh Intercession for the Saints, and that too according to the Will of God, with Groanings that cannot be uttered—Such was *Hannah's* Prayer for a Son, *she spake not, only her Lips moved;* and such was our Lord's Way of praying at this Time—And perhaps the Soul is never in a better Frame, than when in a holy Stillness, and unspeakable Serenity, it can put itself as a Blank in Jesu's Hand, for him to stamp on it, just what he pleases—And now the Hour of our Saviour's performing this long expected Miracle, is come—*When he thus had spoken,*

ken, Verse 43d, *He cried with a loud Voice, Lazarus come forth*--With the Word there went an *irresistible Power*--He spake, and it was done--He cried and behold, *He that was dead, Verse 44th, came forth, bound Hand and Foot with Grave-cloaths; and his Face was bound about with a Napkin.* (What a Sight was here! Methinks I see Surprise sit upon each Spectator's Face--As the Body rises, their Wonder rises too-- See how they gaze! See how their Looks bespeak the Language of astonished Hearts; and all with a Kind of silent, but expressive Oratory, ready to say, What Manner of Man is this? Surely this is the Messiah that was to come into the World. How did the Hearts of *Martba* and *Mary*, as we may very well suppose, leap for Joy! How were they now ashamed of themselves, for charging Jesus foolishly, and taxing him with Unkindness, for not coming to prevent their Brother's dying! It is true Christ suffered him to die, but behold he is now alive again! For Jesus never denies us one Thing, but he intends to give us something better in the Stead of it.--Think you not that *Martba* and *Mary* were now the most officious to obey our blessed Lord's Command, *viz. Loose him and let him go?* That same Power that raised *Lazarus* from the Dead, might have also taken off the Grave-cloaths from him--But Jesus Christ never did, and never will work a needless Miracle: Others could unloose his Grave-cloaths, but Jesus alone cou'd unloose the Bands of Death.--And now perhaps some may be ready to ask, what News hath *Lazarus* brought from the other World! But stop, O Man, thy vain Curiosity! It is forbidden, and therefore useless Knowledge--The Scrip-

tures are silent concerning it—Why shou'd we desire to be wise above what is written? It becomes us rather to be wholly employed in adoring the gracious Hand of that gracious Redeemer who raised him from the Dead, and to see (now we have heard the History) what Improvement we can make of such a remarkable and instructive Transaction——

Would to God, that my preaching upon this Resurrection of *Lazarus* To-day, may have the same blessed Effects upon you, as the Sight of it had upon some of the Standers-by—For we are told, Verse 45th, *Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the Things which Jesus did, believed on him—*A profitable Visit this! The Best no Doubt that they ever paid in their Lives—And this was in Answer to our Saviour's Prayer, *but because of the People that stand by, I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.* And one wou'd imagine, that all who saw this Miracle, were induced, thereby, really to believe on him—But alas! I could almost say, that I could tell you of a greater Miracle, than raising *Lazarus* from the Dead—And what is that? Why, that some of these very Persons who were on the Spot, instead of believing on him, *went their Way,* Verse 46th, *to the Pbarisees, and told them what Jesus had done—*And this was so far from convincing them, that it only excited their Envy, stirred up the whole Hell of their Self-righteous Hearts, and made them, from that Day forward, Verse 53, *take Counsel together,* to execute what they had long before designed, I mean, put the innocent Jesus to death—See how busy they are, Verse 47th, *Then gathered the Chief Priests and the Pbarisees a Council, and said, What do we? For this*

this Man doeth many Miracles—Envy itself, it seems, could not deny that—And need they say then, *What do we, or what shou'd we do?* Believe on to be sure, and submit to him; take up the Cross, and follow him. No, on the contrary, say they, Verse 48th, *If we let him thus alone* (which they would not have done so long, had not God put a Hook in the Leviathan's Jaws) *all Men will believe on him*—And suppose they did? Then all Men would be blessed indeed, and have a Title to true Happiness—No, say they, *then the Romans shall come, and take away both our Place and Nation*—But were not the Romans come already? Were they not at this Time Tributaries to *Cæsar*? But they were afraid of the Church as well as the State—*They will come and take away our Place, i. e. our Place of Worship, and consequently they look upon Jesus Christ and his Proceedings, and Adherents, as dangerous both to Church and State*—This hath been always the Method of Pharisees and High-Priests, when they have been taking Counsel against the Lord Jesus, and his dear anointed Ones—But they need not have been afraid on this Account—For our Saviour's Kingdom neither was, nor is of this World; and the only Way to have preserved their Place and Nation, was to countenance, and as much as in them lay, to have caused all to believe on Jesus—How miserably were they out in their Politicks! The Death of Jesus, which they thought would save, was the grand Cause of the utter Destruction both of their Place and Nation—And so will all Politicks formed against Christ and his Gospel end at last in the Destruction of those that contrived them—But Oh the desperate Wickedness and Treachery of Man's deceitful

ceitful Heart! Where are the Scribes, where are the Infidels, where are the Letter-learned Disputers of this World, who are daily calling for a Repetition of Miracles, in order to confirm and evidence the Truth of the Christian Religion? Surely if they believe not *Moses* and the Prophets, neither would they believe, though one rose from the Dead— Here was one raised from the Dead before many Witnesses, and yet all those Witnesses did by no Means believe on Jesus.—For divine Faith is not wrought in the Heart by moral Persuasion (tho' moral Persuasion is very often made use of as a Means to convey it—) Faith is the peculiar Gift of God—No one can come to Jesus unless the Father draw him—And therefore, that I may draw near the Close of this Discourse, let me shut up all with a Word of Exhortation.—Come then, ye dead, Christless, unconverted Sinners, come and see the Place where they laid the Body of deceased *Lazarus*—Behold him dead and laid out, bound Hand and Foot with Grave-cloaths, lock'd up and stinking in a dark Cave, with a great Stone placed on the Top of it!—View him again and again—Go nearer to him—Be not afraid—Smell him, and see how he stinketh—Stop there now, and pause a while; and whilst thou art gazing, O Man, upon the Corpse of *Lazarus*, give me leave to tell thee with great Plainness, but greater Love, that this dead, bound, entombed, stinking Carcase, is but a faint Representation of thy poor Soul in its natural State—For whether thou believest it or not, thy Spirit which thou bearest about with thee, sepulchred in Flesh and Blood, is as literally dead to God, and as truly dead in Trespasses and Sins,

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as the Body of *Lazarus* was in the Cave— Was he bound Hand and Foot with Grave-cloaths? So art thou bound Hand and Foot with thy Corruptions— And as a Stone was laid on the Sepulchre, so is there a Stone of Unbelief laid upon thy stupid Heart—— Perhaps thou hast lain in this State, not only four Days, but many Years, stinking in God's Nostrils! — And what is still more affecting, thou art just as unable to raise thyself out of this loathsome, dead State, to a Life of Righteousness and true Holiness, as ever *Lazarus* was to raise himself from the Cave in which he lay so long— Thou mayest try the Power of thy own boasted Free-Will, and the Force and Energy of Moral Persuasion and rational Arguments (which, without all Doubt, have their proper Place in Religion) but all thy Efforts, exerted with never so much Vigour, will prove quite fruitless and abortive, till that same Jesus who said, *take away the Stone*, and cried, *Lazarus come forth*, comes by his mighty Power, removes the Stone of Unbelief, speaks Life into thy dead Soul, looses thee from the Fetters of thy Sins and Corruptions, and by the Influences of his blessed Spirit, enables thee to go and walk in the Way of his holy *Commandments*— And Oh that he would now rend the Heavens, and come down amongst you! Oh that there may be a Stirring among the dry Bones this Day! Oh that whilst I am speaking and saying, *dead Sinners come forth*, a Power, even an Almighty Power, might accompany the Word, and cause you to emerge and awaken into new Life! And if the Lord should vouchsafe me such a Mercy, and but one single Soul in this great Congregation, should arise and shake

shake himself from the Dust, of his natural State, I think, according to the present Frame of my Heart, I should not care if preaching this Sermon here in the Fields, was an Occasion of hastening my Death, as raising *Lazarus*, hastened the Death of my blessed Master. For, methinks Death, in some Respects is more tolerable, than to see poor Sinners Day by Day lying sepulchred, dead and stinking in Sin! Oh that you saw how loathsome you are in the Sight of God, whilst you continue in your natural State! I believe you would not so contentedly hug your Chains, and refuse to be set at Liberty—Methinks I see some of you affected at this Part of my Discourse—What say you? Are there not some here ready to complain, alas, we have some Relations present, who are so notoriously wicked, that they not only hug their Chains, but make a Mock of Sin, and stink not only in the Sight of God, but Man—Dear Hearts! you are ready to urge this, as a Reason why Jesus will not raise them, and think it hard, perhaps, that Jesus does not come, in Answer to your repeated Groans and Prayers, to convert and save them—But what Jesus said unto *Martha*, I say unto you—*Believe, and you shall see the Glory of God*—Look not down so much, nor think it a Thing incredible, that God should raise their dead Souls—Oh think not hard of Jesus for delaying an Answer to your Prayers—Assure yourselves he heareth you always—And who knows but this Day Jesus may visit some of your dear Relations Hearts, upon whose Account you have travelled in Birth till Christ be formed in them?—You have already sympathized with *Martha* and *Mary*, in their Doubts and Fears: Who
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knows but you may also be Partakers of that Joy which their dear Souls experienced, when they received their risen Brother into their longing Arms—Oh Christless Souls, you do not know what Grief your Continuance in Sin occasions your godly Relations! You do not know how you grieve the Heart of Jesus—I beseech you give him no fresh Cause to weep over you upon Account of your Unbelief—Let him not again groan in his Spirit, and be troubled—Behold how he has loved you, even so as to lay down his Life for you—What could he do more? I pray you therefore, dead Sinners, come forth—Arise, and sup with Jesus—This was an Honour conferred on *Lazarus*; and the same Honour awaits you—Not that you shall sit down with him personally in this Life, as *Lazarus* did, but you shall sit down with him at the Table of his Ordinances, especially at the Table of the Lord's Supper, and ere long sit down with him in the Kingdom of Heaven—Happy, thrice happy ye who are already raised from spiritual Death, and have an Earnest of an infinitely better and more glorious Resurrection already in your Hearts—You know a little how delightful it must have been to *Martha*, and *Mary*, and *Lazarus*, to sit down with the blessed Jesus here below—But how infinitely more delightful will it be, to sit down, not only with *Mary* and *Martha*, but with *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and all your other dear Brethren and Sisters, in the Kingdom of Heaven—Do you not long for that Time, when Jesus shall say unto you, Come up hither? Well, blessed be God, yet a little while and that same Jesus, who *cried with a*

loud Voice, Lazarus come forth, shall with the same Voice, and with the same Power, speak unto all that are in their Graves, and they shall come forth — That all who hear me this Day may be then enabled to lift up their Heads and rejoice, that the Day of their compleat Redemption is indeed fully come, may Jesus Christ grant for his infinite Mercy's Sake, *Amen, and Amen.*

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