

THE
Nature of Regeneration

OPENED,

And it's Absolute Necessity,

In Order to SALVATION,

Demonstrated,

IN

A SERMON

From JOH. III. 3.

ALSO

The Nature of Adoption,

With its Consequent Priviledges, Explained.

IN

A SERMON

From I JOH. III. I.

By the Reverend

Mr. John Tennent,

Late Minister of the Gospel in *Freehold, New Jersey.*

An Expostulatory ADDRESS to Saints and Sinners.
Added as an APPENDIX, to the first of these
Discourses :

By **GILBERT TENNENT, A. M.**

Minister of the Gospel in *New-Brunswick, in New-Jersey.*

*Iai. 1. 18. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though
your Sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow; though they
be red like Grimson, they shall be as Wool.*

Eph. v. 10. Be ye followers of God, as dear Children, and walk in love.

And its Absolute Necessity.

In Order to SALVATION
A Demonstration
of some

APPEAL

FROM JOHN III.

ALSO

THE NATURE of Salvation
The Necessity of Faith

A SECOND APPEAL



tempt without the aid of the Holy Spirit
on of his real presence
I am aware that this
Partially in the
bound to by the
strength of their
to be yielded, and then
guide their tongue
their language
I freely confess there
in the general
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ally Ours their
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tations like not to
some great men
the apt to follow



A prefatory Discourse to the following Sermons, with a Relation of some *Memoirs* of their Author's Conversion and Character.

ARDON me, candid Reader, if notwithstanding the Nearness of my Relation to the *Author* of the following Sermons, for the *Honour* of the most high GOD, and the *Glory* of his free *Grace*, I do his *Memory* the Justice, and the *World* the Service, (I mean such as were not personally acquainted with him) as to attempt without the Paint of Flattery, a modest Description of his real *Character*.

I am aware that *Relatives* are apt to be suspected of Partiality, in the Relations they give of those they are bound to by the Tyes of Nature; because through the Strength of their natural Affection, their Judgment is apt to be *byassed*, and their byassed Judgment as apt to misguide their Tongue, or Pen, into hyperbolical Mistakes in their Narratives.

I freely confess there is some Reason for this Suspicion in the general; but is it not possible for a Relative to get his Mind freed from those partial Byasses, so as to observe plain Matters of Fact, with *Modesty* and Impartiality. Or must their Reason and Senses be rendred wholly and inviolably Useless, in such Matters as concern those they are related to. Sure I am, they have an Advantage above Strangers in this, that they can with more Ease *inspect* into the secret and more retired Passages of their Relations *Lives*, not to say that it has been the Practice of some great Men (whose Example those of a meaner Order are apt to follow *pro Viribus*) to favour the *World* with

an Account of their Relations Lives and Characters; whose Names, if it were needful, I could mention.

I confess I am unequal to the *Task* I am engaging in; but a Regard to *God's Honour*, and the *good of Mankind*, invite me to attempt it.

Once more, to remove the former Suspicion, I can with the utmost *Solemnity* assure the *Reader*, that what I shall offer, shall be much below what I might in Justice assert.

But to proceed,

The Reverend *Author* of the following Sermons, was blessed by God (from whom every good Donation flows) with a quickness of *Apprehension*, copiousness of *Fancy*, and fluency of *Expression*. As to acquired *Parts*, he made no contemptible *Progress* in the Knowledge of the learned Languages; as also in philosophical and theological Studies, considering his Years and Opportunities; which those Reverend *Gentlemen*, before whom he pass'd his *Tryals*, gave honourable Testimony to, by such an Approbation of his publick Performances, as was suited to his distinguished *Merit*. But particularly, he excelled in the *polemical* and *casuistical* Parts of *Divinity*; he was well known to be a keen *Disputant*, and an expert *Casuis*t. But that which *crowned* his other Attainments, and made them appear with *Beauty* and Lustre, in the Eyes of all judicious Beholders, was his undisguised and eminent *Christianity*. It pleased the God of all Grace some considerable Time before his Entrance into the publick Ministry, to work a special Work of his pure Grace in his Heart, which in Concurrence with his peculiar natural and acquired Endowments, rendred him a prepared and polished *Shaft*, for the ministerial Work. Give me leave, candid Reader, to relate a few Passages concerning the Manner of his *Conversion* to God.

His *Conviction* of Sin, and the State of Danger and Misery he was brought into by it, was the most violent in Degree, of any that ever I saw: For several Days and Nights together, he was made to cry out in a most dolorous and affecting Manner, almost every Moment; the Words that he frequently used in his Soul-Agony were these, "O my poor Soul! O my bloody lost Soul! What shall I do? Have Mercy upon me, O God, for *Christ's* sake!" Sometimes he was brought to the very Brink of *Despair*, and would conclude, surely God would never have Mercy upon such a great Sinner as he was; and

yet

yet in the mean time, *observe* Reader! that his Life was unstained with those scandalous Extravagancies, which too many (alas for it!) in the Bloom of their Youth are ensnared by. His natural *Predominant* was the Sin of Passion, or rash Anger, and the worst I ever knew him guilty of, was some indecent *Heats* this Way; which afterwards he was exceedingly humbled for and watchful against; his Passionateness cost him many a deep *Sob*, heavy *Groan* and salt *Tear*, and after it pleased the blessed God to confer his free Grace upon him, he was remarkably altered in this Particular, and gained in a great Measure, the ascendant over it. Now, *Reader*, considering that the Manner of his Life before his Conversion was such, as to be free from gross Enormities, the depth of his *Distress* under his *Conviction*, and that in young *Tears*, is the more remarkable, and serves to confute that vain *Norion*, of some carnal People, that if Persons have not been prophane in their Lives, then they say there no need of deep Convictions, and great Anguish of Soul, in order to a true *Closure* with *Christ*. Indeed his *Distress* was such, as forced him to make an open *Confession* of his Sins, to almost all that came near him; as also to *beg* their Prayers at God's *Throne* in his Behalf; and this he did in such a piteous Manner, with such a dejected frighted Countenance, like that of a Man going to be put on a *Rack*, or *Gibbet*, or having his Head upon a *Block* in order to be chop'd off; and with such dolorous *Groans*, and vehement *Importunity*, did he implore *Heaven* for *Relief* and Pardon, that even some Strangers who came to see him, were much affected therewith; the *Tears* trickling down their Cheeks like *Hail*. At the beginning of his *Conviction*, I endeavoured to heighten it, by representing to him the particular and heinous Aggravations of those Sins, I knew or suspected him to be guilty of, in a Dress of *Horror*; lest his *Conviction* should *languish*, and he *relapse* into a dangerous *Security*. But when I perceived that it increased to a great *Degree*, and was attended with vehement longing after *Christ*, and a Willingness to forsake all for him; I altered the former *Method*.

I think I had sufficient Evidence of the *depth* of his *Humiliation* and *Strength* of his *Desire* after *Christ*, in the following *Instances*, and many others that might be mentioned, did I not design *Brevity*) " He profess'd with an " *Agony of Passion*, that he was willing to bear the *Torments of Hell*, if so he might but get a *Sight of Christ*,

“ and an *Interest* in him ; he earnestly and frequently
 “ beg’d of God, that he would humble him to the *Dust*,
 “ yea below the *Dust*.”

One Morning about the break of Day, after great Wrestling through the Night and Day preceeding, he took occasion from the Time of the Day, to speak as surprizingly as ever I heard any Mortal about the Morning-*Star*, longing and praying, “ that the blessed *Jesus*, the “ true, the bright, the beautiful *Morning Star*, who had “ introduced the *Light* and the *Day*, into a *dark World*, “ would appear in Mercy to his poor distressed Soul ” ; and thus he improved the Time about the *Sun’s* rising, “ begging that the *Sun* of Righteousness would shine up- “ on his disconsolate, dejected, wretched Soul with *Beams* “ of Mercy and Salvation ”. And thus he improved many other *Occurrences*, every of which were they here mentioned, would swell this Paper to too large a *Bulk*. But to be brief, his Heart seemed to be sick, sore sick, with panting after *Christ*, ready to burst in pieces. I have (Glory to God) through the Riches of free Grace, been honoured with the Sight of many a convinced Sinner, but never did I behold besides himself, any in such a *Rack* of acute and continued Anguish, under the dismal Apprehensions of a holy, just, jealous and provoked *Deity*, impending *Ruin* and endless *Misery*.

Now when I perceived such plain *Signs* of a deep *Conviction*, great *Humiliation*, and earnest *Desire*, I altered the former Method as I hinted before, and offered all the encouraging Supports I could gather from every promisory Part of the sacred *Scriptures*, that I thought related to his Case, that I might minister Comfort to his sick Soul, but in *vain*. Sometimes after having offered a promisory *Scripture*, and laboured to persuade him that he had an Interest in it, because the Conditions on which the promised Blessings were suspended, were wrought in him ; this would have sometimes so much Influence upon him, that it would prevent his crying out for a few Minutes, (just like a Man drowning in troubled Waters, a small *Twig* may support for a few Moments, but the next *Surge* that comes will beat him off) and then immediately the *Torrent* of his Grief would break forth, in the most doleful *Accents*, “ complaining that neither that nor any other “ Promise in the whole *Book* of God belonged to him ; “ that the Conditions annexed to them were not wrought “ in him.” The Truth is, his Wound was so deep,

that

that none but God's own Arm could heal it. But it pleased the Almighty, after four Days and four Nights, enduring the utmost Agony of Soul *Distress*, in which space he cried out almost every Moment, after the Manner before described, to make his *Consolations* as conspicuous and eminent as his *Conviction* had been. But by the Way, *observe Reader*, that for some Time before it pleased the Almighty to shed abroad the *Beams* of Mercy and Love into his Soul, he was much exercised with sorrowful and piercing Reflections upon his conceived Hypocrisy; he judged and condemned himself to be a Pharisee, a Hypocrite, for crying out as he had done, and yet the biting of his Conscience, the Sharpness of his inward Pain, and Weight of his Grief was such, that he could not prevent it, therefore he would have all People out of the Room, that he might pray and mourn alone.

One Morning when I went in to see him, I perceived a great Alteration in his Countenance; he that but about an Hour before, looked like a condemned Man, going to be put to some cruel Death, looked upon me with a cheerful gladsome *Countenance*, (so as if a Person oppress'd with Poverty, had the most valuable *Diadems*, and opulent *Kingdoms* the *Earth* affords or contains, conferred upon him would look) and spoke to me in these Words, "O Brother! the Lord Jesus has come in Mercy to my Soul, I was begging for a *Crumb* of Mercy, with the *Dogs*, and *Christ* has told me he would give a *Crumb*." Then he desired me to thank God by Prayer, which I did more than once. He also requested me to praise God by singing Part of a Psalm, which I comply'd with, and sung the thirty-fourth. And was it not strange and surprizing *Reader*, to hear this *Person*, of whom I have been treating, singing the Praises of God with more Joy, Energy and Cleaness, than any of the *Spectators*, who crowd'd in upon so extraordinary and solemn an *Occasion*, especially considering the Time when this happened, viz: between ten and eleven of the Clock in the Forenoon, and that about three of the Clock the same Morning he was *Speechless* for some Minutes, and in the Judgment of all the *Spectators*, *expiring*, in the Pangs of Death. Yea the *Consolations* of God had such a mighty Influence upon him, that about an Hour or two after he went thirty-two Rods upon his own *Feet*, with but a very little Help to see his *Brother*, the Reverend Mr. *William Tennent*, who was then extremely sick, nigh unto Death, deem'd by the

most, past all humane Probability of Recovery; for he said, "he must see his *Brother*, in order to tell him, what God had done for his Soul, that he might praise God upon his Account, before he died": And indeed when he came to the upper Room where his Brother lay (who is yet through Mercy alive, and who has been and is like to be further serviceable to advance the *Kingdom of Jesus*, in the Hearts of Sinners) I having him by one Hand, and Mr. *Court Van Varbes* by the other, he had almost sprung out of our Hands, when he came near the Head of the Stairs, the *Joy of God* became so his *Strength and Song!* When he came to his *Brother*, he address'd him in these Words, "O *Brother!* the Lord has looked in Pity upon my Soul, let the *Heavens, Earth and Sea*, and all that in them is, praise God! -- But being expos'd too soon to the cold Air, he fell into a Fever, and then in some few Hours *questioned* that eminent Discovery of *God's Love*; but was in a little time after comforted, and thenceforward the Course of his Conversation was altered; he had many after *Sealings* of God's Covenant-Love, but in the *Intervals* was frequently dejected, and distressed with doubtful Thoughts about his *State*. Don't expect Reader, that I should relate what affecting *Impressions* these extraordinary *Occurrences* had upon the *Hearers and Spectators*; only one particular I must not conceal with a *Vail* of Silence, viz That a certain Person of Distinction, who in Respect of practical Religion was but *Galeo-like*, being present when my Reverend Brother received these *Consolations* mention'd, was forced to confess, That the Sight of these Things, was enough to convince an *Atheist* of the Reality of Religion".

But to proceed, after these satisfactory Discoveries of the Love of God in Jesus, he became a conscientious Performer of the Duties of Religion, both negative, positive and relative. He was cautious in avoiding all incentives to Vice, as being sensible of his own Weakness, and the Force of Temptations.

He was painful in the Performance of such Duties especially, as were most contrary to Nature's Ease, such as constant secret Devotion, and frequent Fasting, the last of which is almost wholly neglected, by the greatest Part of the present Generation, both young and old, which is for a Lamentation!

He was a tender hearted, kind and courteous *Relative*, of a very sympathetick Spirit, and particularly his dutiful

Respects

Respects to his *reverend* and aged *Father*, his honoured and affectionate *Mother*, (of whose early Kindnesses he still retained a grateful Sense) merits honourable *Mention* and cheerful *Imitation*. His great Soul disdained any thing that was mean and trivial, and inclined him to the most noble and generous Actions that were within the *Verge* of his Power. But not to insist here,

I proceed to consider his Attainments in the Christian Graces or Virtues: Now there are these three, viz. *Humility*, *Love to Christ*, and *Zeal for his Kingdom*, in which it pleased God to give him considerable *Advances*, each of which I shall speak a little of. And

1. He was wont to express himself in the most abasing *Strains*, viz. "That he thought himself, one of the worst of *Creatures* ever the *Creation* bore!" Give me leave to mention but a few Instances of his *Humility* and *Modesty*.

Was not this a remarkable Evidence of the abasing *Sense* he had of his own *Unworthiness*, that he earnestly upon his dying *Bed*, desired his *Relations*, "to forbear any *Funeral-Encomiums* upon him when he was gone; for he asserted with some Degree of *Passion*, that he deserved "none". But this was an Instance of his *Modesty* and *Humility*, yet we cannot but think, that we should obey God rather than *Man*, by labouring to convey the *Memoirs* of God's peculiar *Goodness*, expressed to his *Servant*, to the latest *Posterity*.

Another *Instance* was this, when he was admitted to the ministerial *Office*, in his private Studies, he often took the *Bible* in his Hand, and walked up and down the Room *weeping* and *mourning* over it, because altho' there was such a *Treasury* of precious *Truths* contained in that blessed *Book*, that he understood so little (as he thought) of them. A *Sense* of the *Greatness* of the ministerial *Work*, and of his own *Ignorance* and *Unfitness* for it, (as he conceived) was often a very oppressive *Burden* to his *Spirits*.

Again, It was long, even after it pleased God to succeed his *Labours*, before he could be persuaded to believe that the *sovereign Majesty* of *Heaven*, would bless the *Endeavours* of a *Person* every Way so mean and *unworthy*, as he reckoned himself to be; and therefore when *Reports* were brought to him, of *Persons* convinced by his *Sermons*, he could not think for a Time that they were *real* and *special*, until further *Matter* of *Conviction* was offered him, by a *Variety* of bright and incontestable *Evidences*.

As to his *Love* to the *Lord Jesus*, it's necessary I should offer one Word: It may be asserted with *Truth & Justice*; that he had an *affectionate Affection* to the *King of Saints*; which he express'd to the *surprize* and *satisfaction* of such devout Souls, who had the *advantage* of hearing his *eloquent*, and *earnest Prayers*. *Christ* and him *crucified*, was the *mark* of his *Pursuits*, the *sacred Centre*, to which the various *Lines* of his *Life* run, with a *delightful proness*; and in which they *terminated*. *Christ* was the *Object* both of his *supreme Love*, and *highest Admiration*: Of Him he would often speak, in the *rothorical* and *rapturous Strains*, of *Love Language*: Upon this most excellent, precious, and *delightful Subject*, his *Tongue* was sometimes as the *Pen* of a *ready Writer*.

He had also a very *flaming Zeal* for the *promotion* and *establishment* of the *Messiah's Kingdom*; it was often, often his *Petition* to *God*; a *Request*, which he usually offered, with much *Vehemence*: "Namely, that it would please the *Gracious God*, to make him *serviceable* to his *Church* in the *World*; and that he wou'd not suffer him to live only to *devour* the *Alms* of it, but rather remove him to himself, before he became *useless*, and *unprofitable*": Which *Request* the *Almighty* granted, for he was carried off in a *throng* of *Labour* and *Success*; when his *Heart* was much set upon the *Work* of *God*, and his *People's Love* upon him.

If we consider him in his publick *Character*: It pleas'd that *God* in whose hands the *Hearts* of all *Men* are, and who can turn them, as he does the *Streams of Water*, in the *South*; to stir up in him *earnest Longings* after the *Servise* of *God* and his *Church* in the *Ministerial Office*; a *Station* which the *Fountain of Gifts*, and *Father of Spirits*, had in a *peculiar manner qualified* him for; a *Station* in which he thought he might more *eminently dedicate* and *devote* all his *Parts* and *Powers* to the *Glorious God*; in *labouring* to illustrate his *Honour*, and advance his *People's Interest*: With these *Desires* and *Designs*, after having pass'd the usual *Trials*, with *uncommon Approbation*, he came into the *Ministry*; in which he laboured as a *Workman*, that needed not to be *ashamed*.

His *Ministerial Administrations*, were attended with three notable *qualities*, viz *Prudence*, *Pains*, and *Success*.

He beav'd himself in all respects, with such *decent caution*, but yet attended with such *Christian plainness*, and

manly

manly boldness; that those of his People who lov'd him not (tho' indeed there were but few such) fear'd him.

As to his *Pains* in the *Ministerial Work*, the *Truth* is, his *labour* was great! tho' his *Time* was short, his *Race* was *swift* and *vehement*! His *Heart* was so fix'd upon the *Work* of God, that there was no perswading him to desist, in the *progress* of his publick *Labours*, even then when his *Body* was much *emaciated* and weakned by a *Consumptive Illness*; when it was judg'd by skillful *Physicians*, very *prejudicial* to his *broken* and *languishing Constitution*. He often *preach'd* to his dear *People*, while he was under the *power* and *influence* of a burning *Fever*; which plainly shew'd the *flame* and *fervor* of his *Zeal*, and that he had but little regard to his *Body*; compar'd with the precious *Souls* of Men, for whom he was willing to *spend* and be *spent*.

In his *publick Discourses*, not to mention the *justness* of his *Method*, *beauty* of *Style*, and *fluency* of *Expression*, by which he *chain'd* his not unwilling *Hearers* to his *Lips*; he was very *awakening* and *terrible* (to *Unbelievers*) in denouncing and describing, with the most *vehement pathos* and awful *solemnity*! the *terrors* of an offended *Deity*; the *threats* of a broken *Law*, the *miseries* of a sinful *State*; and this *Subject* in the *Course* of his *Ministry*, he insisted much upon; because he found it by experience, (with many others) the most *effectual* and *successful mean* to *alarm* secure *Sinners*: And observe, *Reader*, he us'd a close distinguishing and detecting *method* in the *Application* of his *Sermons*, which with his *pungent mode* of *Expression*, was very *piercing* and *solemn*; but as *Dr. Watts* observes in his *Funeral Elegy* upon *Mr. Gouge*, so I may truly say of him "that he knew the *pity* of *Emanuel's Heart*, [as well " as the *terrors* of *Jehovah's Hand*". He was as *tender* and *compassionate* in his *addresses* to gracious *Souls*, as he was *awful* and *awakening* to others; he knew as well how to *open* and apply the *Gospel Balsom* to *sick Souls*, as to *brandish* and apply the *Law's Lancet* to the *Secure*; and he was as willing to do the one, as the other. But indeed he was very cautious of *misapplying* the different *Portions* of the *Word* to his *Hearers*, or of setting before them only a common *Mess* (as the manner of some is) and leaving it to them to *divide* it among themselves, as their *fancy* and *humour* directed them; for he knew well that that was the *bane* of preaching.

Once more, He was a very *successful Minister*. When he was under *Trials* in order to the *Ministry*, he was much *exercis'd*

The P R E F A C E.

exercis'd with doubts, difficulties and distresses, about his Call to that great and awful Trust: but it pleas'd the good God to dissipate these Clouds, and afford to his perplexed anxious mind, abundant Satisfaction respecting this matter, by the numerous Seals which crown'd his publick Labours; (for as famous Rutherford observes, "it is not probable that God will Seal a Blank) so that it may be truly said of him, that he gained more poor Sinners to Christ in that little compass of time which he had to improve in the Ministerial Work, which was but about Three Years and an half, than many in the space of Twenty, Thirty, Forty or Fifty Years. Many Souls have, and will have, reason to bless God to Eternity, that ever they saw him: But tho' he was thus honour'd with the smiles of Heaven, upon his Labours; with the kind regards of a loving, and generous People; who had it been possible, could have pluck'd out their Eyes, and given them to him, Gal. 4. 15. A People, who shew'd as much respectful regard, and sympathy, as ever any before them did to a Minister! Yet was he far from being exalted in his own Mind, but through Grace, still retain'd a just, grateful, and humble Sense of God's distinguishing goodness, and his own unworthiness.

But I must hasten to consider the melancholy concluding Period, of this labourious, and successful Scene of Action.

As he drew nearer to his End, his Love to, and Concern for, his People encreas'd; he would often express himself to his Brother, with many tears, in these Words! "I am griev'd for my poor People! for I fear they will be left to wander, as Sheep without a Shepherd, or get one that will pull down, what I have poorly endeavoured to build up". Yea his Brother (who lay by him) has frequently overheard him, in the deep silence of the Night, wrestling with God by Prayer, with sobs and tears (as he understood) for his People! even then when so reduc'd, by the Consumption, that he could scarce walk alone; the wasting pains of which lingering and tedious Distemper, he bore with unbroken Patience, and silent Submission to his Father's Pleasure; until it pleas'd God to open a door of escape to his captive Soul, through the ruins of his decay'd Frame.

On Saturday Evening, the last Evening of his Life, he was seiz'd with a violent [pang] of Death, which was thought by the Standers by, to be his last; of which, unexpectedly reviving, and observing a disorder among them, he address'd one of them thus, whom he saw uncommonly

affected,

affected, with a chearful Countenance ; " I would not
 " have you think the worse of the ways of Holiness, be-
 " cause you see me in such Agonies of Distress, for I know
 " there is a Crown of Glory in Heaven for me, which I
 " shall shortly wear". Afterwards many times in the
 Night, he earnestly pray'd in these words, " Come Lord
 " Jesus, Come Lord Jesus ! O Jesus ! why dost thou lin-
 " ger." Sometime before Day, after a little Pause, he ex-
 press'd with a humble Confidence, the last words of the
 sweet Psalmist of *Israel*, 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. " Although my
 " House be not so with God, yet hath he made with me an
 " everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure"
 " for this is all my salvation, and all my desire." About
 the break of Day, he call'd his Brother *William* to Prayer ;
 and earnestly desir'd him, to implore *Heaven* for his speedy
 removal ; for he said, " He long'd to be gone." About
 Eight or Nine of the Clock, on the Morning of the Sab-
 bath, (the Season which he us'd to improve in the most
 earnest and winged Supplications to the *divine Majesty*, for
 his Blessing upon the *Church* in general, and particularly
 for that *Branch* of it, he presid'd over ; it pleas'd his *Master*
 to translate him, to that Great *Assembly* of the *Just*, the
Church of the *first born*, there to celebrate an eternal Sab-
 batism, in Praises and Songs of Triumph ! instead of his
 former painful Employments.) A few Minutes before he
 expir'd, he broke out into the following rapturous Expres-
 sions (having his Brother *William* by the Hand) " Fare-
 " well my Brethren, Farewell Father and Mother, Fare-
 " well World, with all thy vain Delights : Welcome God
 " and Father, Welcome sweet Lord Jesus : Welcome Death,
 " Welcome Eternity, Amen." A little after he only men-
 tioned with a low Voice (the strength of Nature being
 broken) these words, " Come Lord Jesus, Come Lord Je-
 sus !" and so he fell asleep in *Christ*, and obtain'd an abun-
 dant Entrance into the Everlasting Kingdom of his God and
 Saviour ; and has left us to mourn ! the Loss the *Church*
 of *Christ* has sustain'd in general, by the dismal gloom of an
 angry *Heaven*, in the removal of so prevailing an *Intercessor*,
 and faithful *Watchman* (who could well sound an alarm)
 and his own *Congregation* and *Relations* in particular ! by
 the absence of such a painful *Pastor*, and passionate *Friend*.
 What a doleful presage is it to a Land, of impending, ap-
 proaching *Calamities*, when the Great God locks up such
Jewels in his Cabinet ! *Isai* 57. 1.

He

He has left us to *mourn* our own, and the publick *Loss*; by the removal of such a *Guide* from us, and *Guard* from others, in the passionate Language of *Elisha*, over a departed *Elijah*, 2 Kin. 9. 12. *And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My Father, my Father! the Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof: and he took hold of his Cloaths and rent them in two pieces.*

He is gone to the *Rest of God*, and left us behind him in this *doleful Desert*; to *travel* and *mourn*, and *hang our Harps on Willows*; while he drinks the *Foys of Angels*, in that *Seat of perfect Pleasure*, where all *tears* are *wip'd away*. For

*Jam procul a patria mesti Babylonis ad oras.
Fluminis ad Liquidas mesti Sedemus aquas.*

*By Babel's Borders sorrowful we sit,
Far from the Country where we Love we wait.*

He has left us to *mourn*, but blessed be *God* not without *Hope*, a rational & Scriptural *Hope*, of *meeting* in a better *Country*, where there will be no need of *parting* any more, and where the happy *Inhabitants* are perfectly freed from *Sorrow*, *Strife*, and *Sin*. A *Country* of which a poor *Indian* could say,

*Illic vera quies, illic sine fine, voluptas;
Gaudia et humanis non referenda somis.*

*There Joy unbounded, infinitely glides,
There's Rest and Pleasure, blooming too besides.*

Thus did this faithful *Servant of God*, *live*, and thus did he *die*.

Sic Mibi contingat vivere, sicq; more.

*Thus let me Live, thus let me Die, O God!
Thus let me triumph, on the shining Road.*

It may be with *Justice* observ'd, concerning him, that he *liv'd* much *desir'd*, and *died* much *lamented*. His *Funeral* *Herse* was well *inviron'd* by thronging *Crouds*, and well *bedew'd* with ornamental *tributary Tears*.

The *Reverend* and *Ingenious* Mr. *Dickinson* of *Elisabeth-Town*, compos'd the following *Elegy*, to be *Inscrib'd* on his

his Tomb Stone ; which is indeed a just and genuine Description of his Character.

Here lies what was Mortal of the Reverend Mr. John Tennent, Nat. Nov. 12th. 1707. Obijt April 23. 1732.

Who quick grew Old, in Learning, Vertue, Grace ;
Quick finish'd well, yielded to Death's Embrace,
Whose moulder'd Dust, this Cabinet contains,
Whose Soul triumphant, with bright Seraph's reigns.
Waiting the time, till Heaven's bright Conclave flame,
And the last Trump, repairs his ruin'd frame.

*Cur prematuram mortem, queramus acerbam,
Mors matura Venit, cum bona vita fuit.*

But I proceed to speak something of the following Sermons, and this I must crave leave to say of them, that tho' they are bereav'd of their Author's finishing Hand, which doubtless would have help'd them to appear with more beauty and lustre, yet as they are, I can't but hope that they will be grateful to all devout and intelligent Persons, and accepted of as Specimens of their Author's Ingenuity and Piety.

The Subjects treated of in them are weighty and momentous : The first treats of Regeneration which is the foundation of practical Religion, the Soul that animates it, without which it is but a dead Carcase ; the Source from which it springs. Secondly, in this Sermon you have the nature of this Change plainly, and succinctly open'd, it's absolute necessity in order to Salvation incontestibly demonstrated, and it's inseperable Characters agreeably and justly display'd. In the second you have the Nature of Adoption, the necessary consequent of Regeneration, with its peculiar and noble Privileges, solidly tho' briefly discuss'd.

I made choice of these Sermons, not because I deem'd them the best of his Composure, but because best suited to the Subject before treated of.

I beseech the Reader, that he would read them with attention and reflection, and ask the Divine Direction and Benediction upon his pains ; for this is the way in which only he has rational encouragement of meeting with saving good and edification.

Courteous Reader, I have added an *Exposulatory Address* to, and *Lamentation* over *unconverted Sinners*, with some *Directions* to those that are truly *gracious*, by Way of *Appendix* to the *first* of these *Sermons* of my *Brother's*, partly because the *Discourse* concluded abruptly, and principally because I wanted to express a little of the *Thoughts*, *Sorrows* and *Desires* of my *Soul*, upon that so necessary and precious a *Subject*; that I might essay to *allure* the *Sinner's Love*, as I had attempted in the first *Discourse*, to *strike* their *Fear*; that so by any Means, if it were the good *Pleasure* of *God*, I might be an *Instrument* in *his Hand*, of gaining some to *Christ*. I cannot say I have come up to the *Dignity* and *Weight* of the *Subject*; but I can say, I have desired and attempted it. Pray Reader, Be entreated to *weigh* the *Arguments* in thy *Mind* impartially, and then *judge* if they are not *rational*? And I beseech thee to remember, *for Christ's Sake*, that in this *World* only (which is a *State* of *Probation*) there is *Time* to work out your *Salvation* in: The *Damned* in *Hell* are for ever past it, the *Blessed* in *Heaven* are in the perfect *Enjoyment* of it; therefore *call upon God* while he is near, *seek him* while he may be found, *Isai. 55. 6*. Let not unconverted *Sinners* encourage themselves in *Sin*, because *God* delays the *Execution* of his *Justice*, for the longer abused *Patience* waits, the more enflamed and terrible will be the *Executions* of provoked *Anger* at last; when *Men* have filled up the *Measure* of their *Impieties*, and thereby ripen'd themselves for the *Stroaks* of it. *Gen. 15. 16. Jer. 51. 13. Isai. 42. 14. I have a long Time holden my Peace, I have been still and refrained my self, now will I cry like a travailing Woman, I will destroy and devour at once.*

And let not the *Saint* think his *Work* is over, because he is converted; this is just as if the *Israelites* when they had passed through the *Red-sea*, had imagined themselves to be got into *Canaan*, but they afterwards found an *howling Wilderness* to travel through, full of *Dangers*, *Difficulties* and *Enemies*, which they must *grapple* with, before they get to *Canaan*, and so will you. When the *Ship* is built, and rigg'd, and launched, and loaded, and beginning to move to her *Port*, the *Voyage* is but just begun; the *Mariners* must expect to meet with *Storms* and hard *Labour*, before they get to their intended *Harbour*: Thus it is with you my *dear Brethren*, *Conversion* but leads you into that narrow *Way*, in which you must expect *Travel* and *Labour*, and *Difficulties* of different *Kinds*, But in the

the mean time, I confess that Conversion gives you an habitual Fitness to *perform* the one and *sustain* the other. Beware of being ensnared by the *Amusements* of this *vain World*; remember you will pay dear for all *stolen Sweets*. Beware of forgetting your *first Love*. Beware of a covetous, slothful or ambitious Spirit, each of which will prove very prejudicial to your *Progress*, if indulged. *Live* within Sight of your own *Country*. O! bring forth Fruits for *Christ*; for what do you stand in the *Vineyard* but for this? What is the Design of all the *Waterings* of the *Word*, and *prunings* of *Providence*, but to make you *fruitful*? Read *Isai. 5*. Remember the *Dignity* to which you are advanced, and act worthy of it; you are the *Sons* of a *King*, disdain and avoid *base sneaking Actions*, as unsuitable to your *exalted Character*. *Hasten, Hasten, Hasten*, upon the *Wings* of *Faith*, and *Feet* of *Love*, to your *Rest*. *Watch ye, stand fast in the Faith, quit you like Men, be strong*, 1 Cor. 16. 13. *I commit you to God and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you, and to give you an Inheritance among them that are sanctified*, Acts 20. 32. 1 Pet. 5. 10.

And remain Your's

In the Dear LORD JESUS,

New-Brunswick,
July 19th. 1734.

Gilbert Tennent.

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POST.




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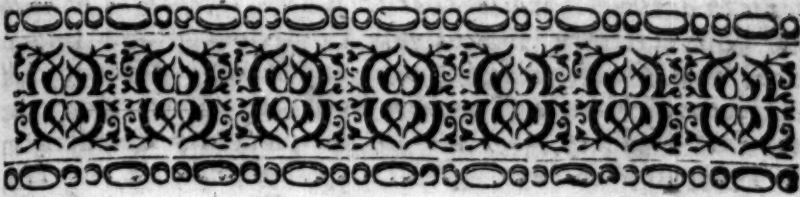
IF any ungodly Men with effronted Impudence, will deride the foregoing broken *Memoirs*, I have given of my Brother's *Conversion* and *Character*, it being natural for the *Sons of Pride*, to laugh at that which through their *Blindness* and *blockish Ignorance* they can't, or through their *Malice* and *Prejudice* against *God* and *Religion*, they won't understand; Remember that by your *Scoffs*, you make your own *Bonds and Fetters strong*, *Isai. 28. 22.* You cannot by your *Virulence* hurt the *venerable Dead*: He is got beyond the *Reach* of your *Rage*; and as for my self, I look upon your groundless and invenom'd *Calumnies*, among my greatest *Honours*; but if ye desire a further Answer, take it in the Words of *Dr. WARTS*, in one of his *Lyrick Poems*.

‘ Laugh ye Prophane, and swell, and burst,
‘ with bold Impiety,
‘ Yet ye shall live, for ever curs'd,
‘ and wish in Vain to die.


Farewell,

G. T.





Regeneration Opened.



JOHN III. 3.

JESUS answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of GOD.

THESE Words are Part of a remarkable Dialogue between Christ and *Nicodemus*; in which *Nicodemus* his Fear, Ignorance, and Willingness to be taught, are principally bewrayed; he was one of the Pharisees, as we are informed from the first Verse of this Chapter, who in General were stated Enemies against Christ, and his Gospel; these Pharisees were proud Separatists, who upon the Opinion of their own Righteousness despised all others.

As to his *Station*, he was a Ruler, as the Word *Archoon* signifies; this Man being in a high and eminent Station, through Fear of incurring the Anger or Displeasure of the Jewish Sanedrim, by openly professing Christ, came to him by Night, Verse 2. Thus we see what Clogs, Hindrances, and Impediments, Honour, Grandeur, and Greatness are, in the Way of the Profession and Practice of Truth and Holiness; yet it is evident from the Words of *Nicodemus*, in the second *ver.* notwithstanding his Fears to acknowledge openly the Truth of Christ's Mission from the Father, that he had a well grounded Perswasion of it, from the Miracles the blessed Jesus had wrought; *Rabbi,*

we know that thou art a Teacher come from God: for no Man can do those Miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. But certainly it is of vast Consequence and Importance, that the gross Ignorance and strange Stupidity of this learned Man, a Teacher in Israel, concerning the vital Part of Piety, ----- are so perspicuously detected in our Text and Context. *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily -----*. In the Words are three Things remarkable, 1. A Proposition. 2. An Asseveration: 3. The implicit Occasion of them both.

1. The Proposition in these Words, *Except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God*. In it there be two Things, 1. The Subject, a Man. 2. The Predicate, or that which is spoken concerning the Subject, *be born again*.

1. As to the Subject, a Man. This indefinite Expression (the Matter so requiring as the present Case is) is equipollent, or equivalent to a universal. It is as much as if he had said every Man, of whatsoever Order, or Character, or Age, or Nation, Great or Small, Rich or Poor, Noble or Ignoble, Learned or Unlearned, Young or Old, Jew or Gentile, Bond or Free, Male or Female, must be born again, or they cannot see the Kingdom of God. *Gal. 6; 15. Heb. 12. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 23. 2 John 1. 13. John 3. 7. 1 John 2. 29. & 3. 9. & 5. 4.*

2. The Predicate; which being complex treats of two Things, viz. (1.) Of Happiness under that Term the Kingdom of God. (2.) The Qualification universally necessary to obtain it, which is *being born again; ean me tis genesthe anwthen*. The Greek Word *anwthen* is generally render'd *superne*, from above, but the Tenor of our Context, especially *Nicodemus* his Answer to Christ, *How can a Man enter the second Time -----*? Verse 4. sufficiently proves that it signifies as much here as *deuteron*, or *again*, *ouc dunatai idein, ten basileian tu theou; he cannot see the Kingdom of God; by seeing here I understand possessing*, according to that Phrase of the Romans, *Hereditatem cernere*. A Proof of this we have in our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, *Matth 5. 8. Blessed are the Pure in Heart: for they shall see God; i. e. they shall see him to their Comfort, see him so as to enjoy him, see him as a Friend and Father, and possess him as a satisfying Portion. Cannot, an unregenerate Man is under a threefold Impotency, in Regard of the Enjoyment of God's Kingdom.*

1. Natural

1. *Natural.* He must take this Kingdom by main Force out of the Hands of a just and infinite GOD, if he gets it at all, while he remains in this State. Now what Power has a guilty Worm to do this? *Whose Foundation is in the Dust, and who is crushed before the Moth,* Job 4. 19.

2. *Moral.* He is a Subject utterly unqualified for the pure Pleasures that Kingdom affords, being universally corrupt, and subject to the Government of Sin and Sense.

3. *Judicial.* He is disseized of, and seperated from this Inheritance, by the Sentence of Christ the Judge of Quick and Dead; which no Power in Heaven or Earth can reverse: For He that liveth and was dead, carries the Keys of Hell and Death at his Girdle, *Rev. 1. 18.*

An Unregenerate Person, as such, neither can, nor shall see the Kingdom of Heaven, so as to inherit it, if there be Power enough in God and Christ to keep him out; for this Christ gives his Word in pawn, which he will surely accomplish. Now there is a threefold Kingdom made mention of in the Holy Scriptures.

1. A Kingdom of God's Providence, establish'd upon the Basis of God's uncontrollable Power, and unsearchable Wisdom, *1 Chron. 29. 11.* Jacob's God has the reins of Government on his Shoulders, He weilds the Eternal Scepter, and sits at the sacred Helm.

2. The Kingdom of God's Grace in the Church; built upon Christ the Golden Foundation, the chief Corner Stone: This Kingdom is given to the Branch by God the Father, as the inspired Evangelist testifies, *Luk. 1. 32.*

3. A Kingdom of Glory and Blessedness: *Matth. 25. 34.* Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you ... This last mentioned I take to be the Kingdom design'd by Jesus in the Text, viz. that triumphant Quire in which the Saints and Angels sing Eternal Hallelujah's, to the Everlasting King. Heaven is call'd a Kingdom, because in it God rules his Sons and Subjects. God's Kingdom is where he reigns: Now he reigns in Righteousness, *Heb. 1. 8.* Thy Throne O God is for ever and ever! a Scepter of Righteousness, is the Scepter of thy Kingdom.

2. The Affelevation, *Verily, Verily.* This Affelevation is a conspicuous Confirmation of the Truth of the Proposition, tending clearly to manifest the great Momentousness and Importance of it. There be two Things in the Affelevation which serve to establish inviolably the Veracity or Truth of the Proposition, viz. (1.) The Repetition of the Particle Amen. (2.) The Dignity of the

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Speaker. The Word *Amen*, rendred Verily in the Text, is twofold, either *prefixed* or *affixed*; when it is *prefixed* or put before a Proposition, it is the Note of a certain and earnest Affirmation, as in the Words of our Text, *Verily, verily*. When it is *affixed* or subsequent to a Proposition, it notes two Things: Either (1.) The Assent of the Mind, Will, Affections, as at the Conclusion of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. Or (2.) An Asseveration, or certain Affirmation, as the Word *Amen*, at the End of the Lord's Prayer, signifies not only our Assent to, but Assurance of the Reality and Certainty of the Things therein contained; now the Repetition of this Particle in our Text, like the redoubling of *Pharaoh's* Dream, *Gen. 41. 32.* shews us at once the undeniable Certainty and great Weight of the Thing spoken of.

2. The *Dignity* of the *Speaker*: Who is it that speaks thus? The *blessed and holy Jesus*, as our Text informs us; which Name some derive from *Temi mitto*, a Word that signifies to send, because the *Lord Jesus* is the bright *Angel*, the faithful *Messenger* of the everlasting *Covenant*; *Mat. 3. 1. Heb. 3. 2.* Others from *jaw sano*, a Word that signifies to heal, because our *Lord Jesus* was the true *Physician*, *Matth. 9. 12. Mark 2. 17.* *Basil* and *Cyri* among the *Ancients* are of this Opinion,

But the *Angel* explains the true Derivation of it, *Mat. 1. 21. And thou shalt call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his People from their Sins.* And that not only typically, as *Moses* and *Josua*, and others, but really and truly. Nor (2) only temporally, as those before mentioned, just from bodily Miseries, but from spiritual and eternal, from Sin and Death, *Heb. 2. 14. 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56, 57. 1 John 3. 8.* (3.) Neither did he only free his People from Misery, as *Moses* did Israel out of *Egypt*; no, but as his Type *Josua* led Israel into *Canaan*; so does the blessed *Jesus* the Anti-type, introduce his People into a State of endless, uninterrupted, and unspeakably ravishing Delight, in the Imperial *Paradise*, of which the earthly *Canaan* was but a dark *Figure*. Now I say, the *Dignity* of the Person speaking in our Text, gives great *Weight* and Confirmation to the Truth spoken. Will he who is *Truth* it self lie? Will he who is the great *Prophet* of his People, co-equal and co-eternal with his Father, the *Brightness* of his *Glory*, the *Express Image* of his *Person*, *Heb. 13. 4, 8.* deceive us? *I say unto you: I who am the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; the*

the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and Prince of the Kings of the Earth.

As to the third Particular, the Ground or Occasion of the Words of our Text, imply'd in that Phrase, *Jesus answered*, It is difficult to find out what were the Words *Nicodemus* spake, to which *Jesus* gave answer, there is a Diversity of Opinions about it. Some think that *Christ's* Words, are a direct Answer to those Words of *Nicodemus* mentioned in the second Verse; As if *Christ* had said, Thou lookest upon me as a Prophet only, thou canst do no otherwise, unless thou wert regenerated. Others think, and that more probably, that from the good Opinion *Nicodemus* had of *Christ*, he asked the Way to Salvation; and that our Text is an Answer to that Question.

From the Words thus briefly explained, there arises these two doctrinal Observations, the one imply'd, and the other express'd.

Obser. I. *That Man from his very Birth is depraved.*

Obser. II. *That Regeneration is absolutely necessary in Order to obtain eternal Salvation.*

As to the first of these which is this, *That Man from his very Birth is depraved.*

The Method I design to follow in prosecuting this Doctrine is

1. *To prove the Truth of it.*
2. *Explain the Nature of it.*
3. *To improve it.* And

1. I am to consider the *Truth* of the Doctrine. This is plain from the Text, for if the first Birth was not vitiated, what need would there be of a second. The royal Prophet *Isaiab* upbraids *Israel* with this, *And was called a Transgressor from the Womb*, *Isai*. 48. 8. The Psalmist gives Testimony to the same Truth, *Psalms* 51. 5. *I was shapen in Sin*, not only corrupted with Sin as soon as born, but before, even in our Formation. *Job* confirms this in the 14th. Chapter of his Book, 4 Verse. *Who can bring a clean Thing out of an unclean? not one.* Yea, the blessed *Jesus* makes this the Ground of the Necessity of a Change, in the 7. Verse of our Context, *That which is born of the Flesh is Flesh*: As if *Christ* should say, You need not wonder, *Nicodemus*, at my Inculcation of the Necessity of this inward Change or *New Birth*; because Men are corrupted from their first Birth. This original

Regeneration Opened.

Depravity is conveyed to all the Sons of *Adam* by *Generation*, unless prevented by a Miracle, as in *Christ*. The *Sickness* and *Death* of *Infants* are a plain and unanswerable Proof of this; *For the Wages of Sin is Death*, *Rom. 6. 23.* Also the baptismal Laver shews this hereditary Contagion and Infection. But

2. I am to explain the *Nature* of this *Depravity*, which consists chiefly in these three Things, viz.

1. *In a Privation of Good.*
2. *In an Antipathy to God.*
3. *In a Propensity to Evil.*

1. Then, In every Unregenerate Soul, there is a *privation* of all good: There is no Spark or signature of that pristine beautiful Image engraven at first on the Soul by God; no reliques of Man's primitive Righteousness, neither in habit or in act, in inclination or motion, that is spiritually good, *Rom. 7. 18* *In my flesh, i. e. in my Nature* considered as corrupted, *there dwells no good thing.* The Soul is depriv'd of it's ancient *Ornaments* and *Furniture*; it is left *poor* without spiritual riches, *blind* without saving knowledge, *naked* without spiritual raiment. *Rev. 3. 17.*

And,

2. There is an *antipathy* to God, his Ways, his People, his Image, *Rom 8. 7.* *The carnal mind is enmity to God.* This is evident from the Speech and Practise of wicked People, their embittered jeers, and satyrical invectives against God's People. A *Cain* hated an *Abel*, and an *Ishmael* an *Isaac*, and an *Esau* a *Jacob*; and that because of their goodness. *1 Job. 3. 12.* Now this hellish spite is to be found in all natural unregenerate People, till remov'd by the supernatural Change, of which I design to speak afterwards. I now proceed to the

3. Particular contained in this *depravity*; which is the *Propensity* that is in all Unconverted People to every Evil. *Prov. 22. 15.* *Foolishness is bound in the heart of a Child.* Indeed there is not an equal propensity in all, to every Sin; no, for some by reason of their natural Temperament, manner of Education, or custom, are inclined to one Sin more than some others; yet all Men by Nature are virtually disposed to every Sin; for we are prone to Evil as the Sparks fly upward, *Job 5. 7.* Every Sin is form'd in our Nature; they want only time, opportunity, temptation, and the removal of restraining Grace, to bring them forth into action.

USE.

USE: Hence we are informed (1.) of Man's miserable and deplorable state by Nature, which affords us sufficient matter for the deepest *Humiliation*, and most doleful *Lamentation*! It's on this account that we are rendred obnoxious to the vindictive Justice of a terrible and holy God. *Eph.* 2. 3. This is it that makes our Lives so corrupted, and all our religious Services so defective and depraved.

2. This informs us of the absolute necessity of a universal Change, of Heart as well as Practice, in order to obtain Fellowship and Communion with a holy sin hating God here, 1 *Joh.* 1. 6. or the more full Enjoyment of him in the Life to come. How can there be a sweet Communion, and full Enjoyment, without *Love*? and how can there be *Love* without *Likeness*? and pray what *Likeness* or Resemblance is there between an infinitely pure God, and an Unconverted Sinner, who is a very mass of Pollution and Defilement? How can that God who is glorious in Holiness fix his complacential Love upon that which is the object of his eternal abhorrence? And how can an unrenewed Sinner, who is fill'd with enmity against God, *Rom.* 8. 7. fix his highest Love upon one he hates with an implacable hatred? All which consider'd, complexly shews us the absolute necessity of a universal Change. Which naturally leads me to the *second Observation*, which is,

That Regeneration is absolutely necessary in order to obtain Eternal Salvation.

This is evident from the words of our Text, *Except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.* Also from *Gal.* 6. 15. *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails any thing, but the new Creature. Therefore if any Man be in Christ Jesus he is a new Creature, old things are pass'd away, and all things are become new.* *Heb.* 12. 14. *Without Holiness no man shall see the Lord.* *Rev.* 21. 27. *And there shall in no ways enter into it, any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lye, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of Life.*

In prosecuting this Doctrine, I shall endeavour to observe the following method.

1. Shew *Negatively* what Regeneration is not.
2. *Positively* shew what it is.
3. Propose those *Reasons* that urge the *necessity* of it.
4. *Improve* it.

Regeneration Opened.

As to the *first propos'd*, which was to shew what *Rege-neration* is not. And,

1. It is not what *Nicodemus* grossly conceiv'd, a *re-entry* into the *Womb* of our *Mother*. It is surprizing that a Man of so polite *Literature*, as we have reason to believe *Nicodemus* was: A *Master*, a *Teacher* in *Israel*! acquainted with the *Law* and *Word of God*, where doubtless he had read frequently such passages as those, *Ezek. 36. 26* should have such gross conceptions of this *Work of God*; but hereby are these sayings of *God* verify'd, *1 Cor. 1. 21.* and *2. 14* *For in the wisdom of God the World by wisdom knew not God; but the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* Such is the inherent hereditary *Contagion* of our apostatiz'd *Nature*, that were we born a thousand times in a natural way, it would not remedy that *Malady*: This the blessed and holy *Jesus* plainly and clearly confirms in the 6th. ver. of our Context, *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh, i. e.* it is corrupted and contaminated.

Hence it appears to be a *prodigy* of incomparable folly for any to boast of and glory in, the grandeur of their *Descent* and *Lineage*, seeing that whatsoever is born of the *flesh* is *flesh*, and without outward *Cultivation*, and inward *Renovation*, must be the *Subjects* of indelible misery. Neither

2. Is *Regeneration* a change of the *Essence*, or being of the *Soul*: (*hec semper eadem physica manet*) The *Soul* is not made new as to it's being or substance (*aut quo ad esse physicum*) other ways a new *Soul* must be infus'd, which we read not of; but as to it's qualities (*aut quod ad esse morale*) new qualities or principles of *Action* are infus'd into the *Soul* by *God*, by which it is inclin'd, and sway'd after another manner, and to another scope, than formerly. Some do talk strangely of this affair, that the substance of the *Soul* is chang'd, as *Flaccus Fliricus*, *Gregory Nazianzene*, and others, "that *People* are *Goded* into *God*, and *Christ-ed* into *Christ*, as their Expressions *Theopoiein Christo-poisin* import. It's true, the *Scripture* calls this gracious *Change*, a participation of the *Divine Nature*, *2 Pet. 1. 4*: But this is only to shew (1) the *reality* and fixedness of this work of *Grace*, that it is no notion or fancy, but a solid reality. (2) the *resemblance* it bears to the *Divine Perfections*. Such *Persons* are renew'd after *God's Image* in *Knowledge*, *Righteousness*, and *Holiness*; they have a *divine*

divine temper and disposition of Soul ; the principal *byas* of their Hearts is towards God and his Service. But tho' they are thus born *after God* and *of God*, yet they are not thereby made *God*. That which is by way of *substance* or *essence* in him, is only by way of *accident* in us. Neither

3. Doth it consist in an *outward Profession* of *Christ*, or his Ways. The *foolish Virgins* had large *Lamps*, but no *Oyl*, *Matth. 25*. A Man may be reform'd from Paganism or Popery, to the Profession of true Christianity, and yet be a stranger to this *Work* of God. Nor

4. In the enjoyment of *outward Priviledges* ; such as Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and others of the like nature. The *Jews* of old depended upon these outward Priviledges and Prerogatives, *Fer. 7. 4. Rom. 10. 3*. And so do many of the *Gospellized World* now ; but the divinely inspired *Jeremiah* pungently inculcates the invalidity of outward Ordinances, without the thing signified by them, to obtain bliss and glory ; therefore he puts the circumcis'd Jews, who were uncircumcis'd in Heart, in a *paralel Case* with *Edom, Ammon, Moab*, heathenish Nations, *Fer. 9. 25*. Yea *Christ* himself had a Controversy with the *Jews* upon the same account, he endeavoured to destroy their fond hopes of Heaven grounded upon their outward Priviledges, and for his plain dealing he receiv'd abusive treatment, *Joh. 8*. The Apostle *Paul* very plainly sheweth the insufficiency of these things without an inward *renovation*, *Gal. 6. 15*. Neither

5. Doth it consist in an *external conformity* to the *Law* of God : For this is something inward, the Workmanship of God in the Heart. A Man may pray, read, hear outwardly, keep the Sabbath, be faithful to his Word, and just in his Dealings, and yet be a stranger to this *Work* of God in the Soul : For such were some of the Pharisees of old, *Phil. 3. 6. Mar. 10. 20* and yet our ascended Lord and Saviour positively avers, that *unless our Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, *Mat. 5. 20*. Nor

6. In a *restraint* of the *Old Man*. God *restrains* many whom he never *renews* : So he did *Abimelech* a Heathen, *Gen 20. 6*. One that is not renew'd may avoid gross sins, through fear, shame, or the absence of opportunities, and temptations ; or through the influence of Nature's light, the Precepts of Morality, the Doctrines of the Gospel, and the Civil Laws of the Land. The Apostle *Peter* speaks of some that had *escap'd the Pollutions of the World through*
the

the knowledge of the Lord Christ, and yet were again intangled in them, 2 Pet. 2. 20, 23. Restraining Grace keeps only from the outward acts of Sin, through slavish fear, or some selfish motives; but saving Grace subdues Sin at the root, and raises an irreconcilable hatred in the Soul against it.

2 Cor. 7. 11. Nor
 on 7. In common Gifts or motions of the Holy Spirit, which are without distinction confer'd on both the Elect and Reprobate: It is not a Gift of Prayer, Tongues, Utterance, or a faculty of unfolding Scripture Difficulties: Judas had all or most of these, yet was he not born again, but a Son of Perdition, Job. 17. 12. "It is not with Men as
 " with Trees (as one observes) for every bud, blossom, or
 " leaf, argues some life in the Tree, but every ability to
 " Preach or to Pray, does not prove this supernatural
 " Life in us." Neither does it consist in the common motions of the Holy Spirit, such as some sight of Sin, some grief for it, and wishes after Amendment; personal Afflictions, a prospect of Eternity in Sickness, or other such alarming Occurrences, may cause such like workings. Herod delighted to hear John the Baptist, Mark 6. 20. Felix trembled when he heard Paul preach, Acts 24. 25. And Agrippa was almost persuaded, ex eligo, which compar'd with Paul's answer, ver. 29. Acts 26. 28. may be justly rendred all to a little: and even wicked Balaam could wish for a happy Death, tho' he did not so well relish a holy Life, Numb. 23. 10. Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my last End be like his. 2 Pet. 2. 15.

Nor

8. Does Regeneration consist in a partial Change of the Soul, or of some of it's Faculties only; but it is a total Change of the Soul in all its Powers. There may be strange Changes in some of the Faculties, and yet no true Conversion to God; as particularly, (1) There may be great light and knowledge of divine Truths, with an assent to, and persuasion of their veracity, in the mind. 1 Cor. 13. 2. And though I have the gift of prophesy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have no Charity (or Love, for so the word *agape* signifies) I am nothing. Also Heb. 6. 4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened. -- Rom. 2. 17, 18. Here we see the Understanding the directive Power may be so illuminated by the Spirit of God, as to perceive divine Truths with a more clear and affecting view than before, without a saving Change.

Also

Also the *Will* which is a *cardinal Faculty* of Man's *Soul*, may be much bow'd, and almost perswaded in some of the Unregenerate, *Act.* 26. 28. Again, the *Conscience*, another Power, or as some say, a reflex act of the Mind, may be much *awakened* by the terror of God upon the account of Sin, *Gen.* 4. 13, 14. *Act.* 24. 25. Also the *Passions* may be in some measure *chang'd* in the Unregenerate: They may have great *Sorrow* for Sin, 1 *Kin.* 21. 27. *Mat.* 27. 4. 5. *Joy and delight* from divine *Objects*; *Heb.* 6. 4. *Mat.* 13. 20. and in attendance upon divine *Ordinances*, *Joh.* 5. 35. *Isai.* 58. 2. *Desires* after *Christ*, *Mal.* 3. 25. *Joh.* 6. 34. after *Grace*, *Mat.* 25. 8. after *Heaven*, *Numb.* 23. 10. some *hatred* against Sin, *Rom.* 2. 22. 2 *Kin.* 10. 26, 27, 28. some *purposes* to forsake it, *Numb.* 22. 17, 18. some *Love* to God, *Jer.* 2. 2. *Deut.* 9. 6, 24. compar'd to *Christ*, *Mat.* 10. 37. to the *People of God* in general: This the *Parable* of the wise and foolish *Virgins* proves, *Mat.* 25. for it is probable that the foolish would not have associated and dwelt with the wise so as they did, unless they had lov'd them, *Gal.* 4. 7. to *faithful, Soul searching Ministers* in particular, *Mark.* 6. 20. some *fear* of God, *Jam.* 2. 19. *Jonah.* 1. 10. 16. some *zeal* for God, 2 *Kin.* 10. 6. *Phil.* 3. 6. *Rom.* 10. 2. some *faith* in God, *Act.* 8. 13. *Joh.* 2. 23, 24. some *dependance* and reliance upon God, *Mich.* 3. 11. 2 *Chron.* from ver. 5. to 13. & 18. compar'd with *Deut.* 9. 6. 24. & 1 *Kin.* 15. 3. some confident *perswasion* of their interest in his special *favour* and *friendship*, *Mat.* 25. 7, 11. *Joh.* 8. 33. 2 *Chron.* 13. 10. *Numb.* 22. 18. All these things I have mentioned under this Head, People may have, and yet want *regenerating Grace*, and so be *damned* at last. But I proceed to consider the

2. Thing propos'd, which was to shew positively what *Regeneration* is. And

1. More generally, it may be said to be a *restauration* of God's defaced *Image* in Man, to some degree of it's primitive *beauty* and *lustre*. Our first Parents were made after God's Image, in *Knowledge, Righteousness* and true *Holiness*, with *dominion* over the *Creatures*, *Eccl.* 7. 29. *Gen.* 1. 27. *Psal.* 8. 5. This Image of God consisted in a universal *rectitude* of the whole *Soul*, with all its *Faculties, Powers* and *Affections*; the *Understanding* being the guide and governour of the *Soul's* *Faculties*, had clear *Perceptions* of the mind and will of God; the *Will* was subject to the *Understanding's* directions, having an inherent *inclination* to will that which the *Mind* by it's native light, shew'd

to be good. The whole train of *Passions* freely follow'd the guidance of these superiour Powers, without the least *reluctance*: Thus there was a universal *harmony* at first among all the Soul's Faculties establish'd by the God of order, but Sin has introduced a confusion and *Chaos* among these Faculties, it has darkened the *Understanding*, rendred the *Will* obstinate, and 'misplac'd the *Affections* upon diametrically opposite *Objects*, hardned the *Heart*, stupified the *Conscience*: Now the blind Will which was before a *Subject*, usurps the *Empire*, and hurries the other Powers to a compliance, with its inordinate *dictates*. Now *Regeneration* is a *renewing* that gracious *Image* of God in us which we have lost; for by it the blind Understanding is in some measure *enlightened*, Act. 26. 18. the stony Heart *mollify'd*, Ezek. 36. 26 the disordered Affections *rectify'd* and *fix'd* upon the most suitable and noble *Objects*, God himself as their *chief Good* and *last End*.

But more particularly,

A *Law Work* generally precedes this *Change*: Hence the *Law* is said to be a *Schoolmaster* to lead us to *Christ*, Gal. 3. 24. which I apprehend is wrought in the following manner.

1. There is a *discovery* of *Sin*, which the Lord effects by the *Law* and by the *Spirit*. Rom. 7. 7. *I had not known Sin, but by the Law*. Before this *Christless Sinners* are secure, like *Peter* sleeping in his Chains, Acts 12. 6. The *Spirit of God* concurs with the *Law*. This is one of his first Works with *Unconverted Sinners*; as is evident from *Job*. 16. 8. Before he convinces them of *Righteousness*, he convinces them of *Sin*; their Eyes are opened, Act. 26. 18. Now they see *Sin* in its loathsome nature, deplorable circumstances, and dreadful consequences; they begin to see the *holiness* of God, the spiritual latitude of his *Law*, and their own corrupt nature; then are they apt to cry out, Who can stand before this great and dreadful God! Now, tho' this discovery of *Sin* begins at a *particular Evil*, as with the *Jews*, Act 2. 37. yet it proceeds to more; as *Ezekiel* was led to divers parts of the *Temple* to see greater and greater abominations, Ezek. 8. 6 — 12, 13.

2. There is an *application* of the *merit* of *Sin*: God convinces the *Sinner* that all the threatnings belong to him; yea he particularly applies them to himself, as *Nathan* his parabolical Discourse to *David*, 2 Sam. 12. 7. *I am the man*, that these *Curses* are directed against: He hears his *Condemnation* sounded by the *Trumpet* of the *Word*; he
sees

sees and feels that he is in the utmost distress, environed with dangers, and can at present see no way of escape open'd, *Luk. 15. 17.* He is in the case of the afflicted pursu'd *Israelites* at the Red-Sea, *Exod. 14. 14, 15.* This is that *Spirit of Bondage to fear*, which ordinarily precedes the *Spirit of Adoption*, *Rom. 8. 15.*

3. *Compunction*, or sharp anguish for *Sin*. The sight of *Sin* and *Wrath* wound the *Soul*, as tho' it were stab'd with a *Sword*, *Act. 2. 37.* They have such acute Pains as if a sharp *Spear* lanc'd their *Hearts*: It's elsewhere call'd the *rending of the Heart*, *Joel 2. 13.* When we are greatly griev'd in *Soul* for *Sin*, so that it even cuts us to the *Heart* to think how we have *disbonoured* *God*, and *disparag'd* our selves by it; when we conceive an aversion to *Sin*, and earnestly desire and endeavour to get clear of the principles of it, and never to return to the practise of it, then we rend our *Hearts* for it, and then will *God* rend the *Heavens*, and come down to us with *Mercy*. Also this *Compunction* I am treating of is called breaking up of the fallow-ground, *Jer 4. 3.* *Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns*: Which represents both the necessity and difficulty of it. "An unconvinced *Heart*, says one, is like "fallow Ground, until'd, unfenc'd, unfruitful of any thing "besides *Thorns*, which is the natural produce of the "Soil; which we are bound to get plow'd up by the *Word* "of *God*, *H. b. 4. 12.* otherwise they will choke our at- "tempts, and blast our hopes." *Hos. 10. 11.* It's also compar'd to a taking away the fore-skin of the *Heart*. *Jer. 4. 4.* *Circumcise your selves to the Lord, and take away the fore-skins of your Heart, ye men of Judah, and Inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings.* i. e. saith *Mr. Pool*, "take away that brawniness and obstinacy that "is upon your *Heart*; having to do with *God* that hath "respect unto the *Heart*. *Deut. 10. 16. Ezek. 44. 9. Act. 7. 51.* lest you proceed so far in your obstinacy, that I "will not be pleas'd." *Jer. 21. 12. Amos 5. 6.*

4. *Enquiry*: When the *Apostle Peter's* preaching accompanied with divine *energy*, had wounded the *Jews*, this was the necessary effect of it; *What shall we do?* *Act. 2. 37.*

Thus I thought it necessary to prevent mistakes, to speak first of that which is *previous* and preparatory to this *Change*. Now I come to speak somewhat briefly of the *Change* it self in the several *Faculties* of *Man's Soul*. And

1. The

1. The *Understanding* is renewed in it's several *Powers* or *Acts*, a *Light* from on high shines into it, whereby it's natural *Darkness* is in some *Measure* *dissipated*, so that it hath new *Apprehensions* of *Things*. As natural *Light* was one of the first *Things* produced in the old *Creation*, *Gen. 1. 3. And God said, let there be Light, and there was Light*: so *Spiritual Light* is one of the first in the new, *2 Cor. 4. 6.* Formerly the *Face* of *Christ* was *veiled* from the *Soul*, as the *Face* of *Moses* from the *Israelites*, but now he sees something of his *peerless Beauty*, and *transcendent Excellency*. *Christ* is to him as the *Apple Tree* among the *Trees* of the *Woods*, as the *Rose* of *Sharon*, and the *Lilie* of the *Valley*, *Cant. 2. 1, 2, 3.* His very *Name* is as *fragrant Ointment* poured forth, and *aromatick Spices*, *Cant. 1. 3.* All other *Enjoyments* are as *Drofs* in comparison of him, in the enlightened *Sinner's Esteem*, *Phil. 3. 8.* Now he sees, the *loathsome* and *abominable Nature* of *Sin*, *Rom. 7. 13.* Now he sees and experience tells him, that there is no true *Solace*, *Contentment* or *Satisfaction* to be had in any *sublunary Trifles*, he sees that such *earthly Enjoyments* are empty of *solid Good*, *transient*, *unsatisfying*, and *bewitching*; contrary to his former *Apprehension*, *Isai. 55. 2. 1 Cor. 7. 31. Psalm 6. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.* They can find no more *Nourishment* in them for their *hungring Souls*, than a *starving Man* would do in *Gravel Stones*, *Wind*, *Husks*, *Ashes*, *Prov. 20. 17. Hos. 12. 1. Luke 15. 16. Isai. 44. 20.* That *Heart Holiness* and *Circumspection* of *Life*, which he was apt formerly to *ridicule* and *deride*, as *needleless Preciseness*, *affected* and *foolish Singularity*, *Cant. 5. 9. 1 Pet. 4. 4.* He sees not only *necessary*, but *desireable* and *lovely*, *Cant. 6. 1. Zeck. 8. 23. Mal. 3. 16, 17.* Now he sees clearly that that *good Heart*, those *good Words*, *good Deeds*, *good Meanings*, for which he thought *God* would spare and reward him, deserves nothing less than the *revengeful Strokes* of *God's direful Justice*, *Isai. 64. 6. Phil. 3. 7.*

2. He has a new *Assent*, his *Understanding* being enlightened to perceive the *precious Truths* of *Christ*, he assents to them with a kind of *Plerophory*, in a *lively*, *sensible Manner*, *Luke 1. 1.* His *Assent* is not grounded upon *Opinion*, *Conjecture*, or *historical Credit*, as formerly; and therefore is not *light* and *superficial*, but *firm* and *real*; the *natural Atheism* of his *Heart*, is in some *Measure* cured; so that he does not so *staggeringly assent* to *divine Truths* as before.

3. His *Judgment* is *changed*. Formerly it was an absurd Paradox to him, if he had all the Honours, Profits, Pleasures his Heart could Desire, that he should not be happy then; but now he judges by Experience, that these Things can no more satisfy an enlightened Soul, than an Adamant Stone, or a Puff of Wind, would satisfy a hungry Person. Formerly he used to think that the *New-Birth* was but a *Fancy*, a *Whim*, a *Fiction*, introduced by some hypocondrick, silly, precise People, that imposed upon themselves and others, with Dreams and Notions, the Effects of melancholly Blood, a sickly Constitution, or a disordered Brain; but now he sees and feels an *absolute Necessity* of it, and that he must be *damned* without he obtains it, according to the *solemn redoubled Asseveration* of the *Lord Christ*, in our Text. In short, He used to judge of Things by their *Appearance*, but now he judges of them according to what they are in *Reality*.

4. His *Estimate* of Things is *changed*. He was wont to think highly of the World and the Things of it, however contrarily he might speak, these had the Throne of his Heart; but now he prefers even the Reproach of Christ before them, *Heb. 11. 26*. Thus his Estimate is changed in Respect of Honours, Pleasures, Companions, Gifts, Parts, Privileges, Performances, which would take up more Time than can be well spared at present to *explain* and *illustrate*. I proceed therefore to another Particular.

5. His *Purposes* are *changed*, he has vastly different *Designs* from those he was wont to entertain and *indulge* before his New Birth; while he was in a State of Security, his principal Scope was to get the World, if possible; to this End he would be frequently, almost continually framing the most artful and suitable Schemes, and if these did not answer as he would have them, then perhaps his Sleep would be broken, and his Thoughts disturb'd, and he put upon a Rack of impatient Pain. In short, His *Purposes* were for *Sin* and *Self*, but *now* they are for *God* and *his Soul*, now he strives as much daily to get his Heart and Affections *deadned* to the World, as he did before to secure and advance his Interest in it. Now his anxious Mind is often contriving, what Measures he should take to *glorify* the blessed God, to *subdue* abominable *Sin*, and *advance* the despised *Interest* of his dear *Lord Jesus*.

6. His Reasonings are changed. He was wont in his State of Sin and Security, to argue for Sin and the World, against Christ and Holiness; from the Mercy and Goodness of God to Liberty, (so called, but it is really the basest Bondage) in sinning against him, but now it is the greatest Motive to Holiness, and Circumspection.

2. The Will is changed. It has got a new *Byass* and Center of its Actions; in his unconverted State, himself or the World was the Center, in Reality (notwithstanding his fair and false Flams and Flourishes of empty Talk to the contrary) to which he moved. for which he acted with a furious natural *Proneness*, *Psalms* 4. 6. *2 Tim.* 3. 2. But now God in Christ is the Center to which all his Actions, whither natural, civil, or sacred, do bend and terminate. He aims at God's Glory in all his Actions universally, and singly, the Inclinations of his Will bend towards God freely from an inward and powerful Principle of Life. *1 Cor.* 10. 31. Grace is in him as a Well of Water springing up to eternal Life, *John* 4. 14. His Will has an unconstrained Motion. Some under the Views of a vast Eternity, or some afflictive Dispensation, have weak Motions of Heart towards God, *Psalms* 78. 34. But when the Prospect of Danger is removed; the Motions cease, *Psalms* 78. 57. like the Motion of a Clock, when the Spring is removed, but the Motions of a Believer's Heart are constant, even when outward Enforcements are taken away, *Psalms* 119. 112. because they flow from an inward and vital Cause.

Furthermore, His Will has new *Enjoyments*: in his State of Unregeneracy, his Life was only a vexatious Wandering from Vanity to Vanity, all the Contentment he had was in some worldly *Accommodations*, or outward *Performances*, *Psalms* 46. *Amos* 6. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6. *Rom.* 10. 3. But now they are as *Husks* to him, he can't be satisfied without the *Childrens Bread*. *Psalms* 119. 57. *Eccl.* 106. 4. It was an observable Saying of *Augustine*, "*Tu fecisti Cor nostrum, et Irrequietum est donec ad te revertatur, i. e.*" "Thou hast made our Heart, and it is Restless till it returns to thee." The Sinner in his Security would be contented with the *Husk* and *Shell* of Duties, but now nothing will satisfy him, but the *Presence* of *Jesus* in them; a *Sight* of the *King's Face*, a *Sense* of his *Special Love*. But the cardinal Acts of the Will, are *Affent* and *Dissent*, these are the very Hinges upon which it exerts its *receptive* and *exclusive Faculties*, suitable to it's Love or Dislike

to the Object proposed, *John* 1. 12. & 5. 40. When *Christ* is offered to the Soul appended to the *Pole* of the *Gospel*, on his own Terms of Self denial, and taking up the *Cross*, the new Born Person is willing to *want* all that he may *have* him, to *loose* all that he may *gain* him.

3. The *Affections* of the *Soul* are *changed*; such as *Desire*, *Delight*, *Fear*, *Hatred*, *Joy*, *Love*. New-born Persons have frequent and vehement *Desires* after *Communion* with, and *Conformity* to *God* in *Christ* here, and the full *Enjoyment* of him hereafter; arising from a *Sight* of his *Beauty* and *Excellency*, *Psalms* 42. 1, 2. *As the Heart panteth after the Water Brooks, so panteth my Soul after thee, O God. My Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God. Psalm* 63. 1, 2, 3, 8. *My Flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty Land where no Water is; To see thy Power and thy Glory, --- Because thy Lovingkindness is better than Life, --- my Soul followeth hard after thee. Psalm* 84. 1, 2. *How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! My Soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord: My Heart and my Flesh crieth out for the living God. Cant.* 1. 2. *Let him kiss me with the Kisses of his Mouth: For thy Love is better than Wine. Psalm* 73. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee. Psalm* 119. 5, 174. *O that my Ways were directed to keep thy Statutes! I have longed for thy Salvation, O Lord: and thy Law is my Delight. Rev.* 22. 20. *He which testifieth these Things, saith, surely I come quickly, Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus. And as their Desires are after Christ, so their Delight is in him. Cant.* 1. 4. *The King hath brought me into his Chambers: We will be glad and rejoyce in thee, we will remember thy Love more than Wine. Cant.* 1. 13. *A bundle of Myrrhe is my well beloved unto me; he shall lie all Night betwixt my Breasts. Cant.* 2. 3. *As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood, so is my beloved among the Sons. I sat down under his Shadow with great Delight, and his Fruit was sweet to my Taste. Cant.* 5. 16. *His Mouth is most sweet; (i.e. the Communications of his Love by his Word are most Delightful,) yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my Friend, O Daughters of Jerusalem. And as they delight in him, so they fear to offend him, and that even in the least Things, 1 Thess.* 5. 22. *They are apt to try out when they are tempted, as Joseph, How shall do his great Wickedness and Sin against God, Gen.* 39. 9.

They see the *Baseness* and feel the *Bitterness* of Sin, and therefore fear it. *Lam* 3. Having in Remembrance the *Wormwood* and the *Gall*. They feel a Sense of the divine Goodness, and therefore fear sinning against it; *Hof* 3. 5. *Afterward shall the Children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and shall fear the Lord and his Goodness in the latter Days.* *Rom* 2. 4. And as they fear Sin, so they hate it universally & irreconcilably. *Psal* 119. 104. and cannot at any Time fall in Love with it as formerly, 1 *John* 3. 3, -- 10. Again the Objects of their Love are changed, *God's People, his Laws, his Image, his Ordinances*, are the Objects to which their Affections freely flow; now the New-born Person Loves sincerely and fervently, those whom he once despised, and pities those whom he once loved and admired, and disdains their Society, their Scoffs and Threatnings, as well as their destructive Gains and perishing insipid Pleasures, *Psal* 15. 4. & 119. 115. 2 *Kings* 3. 14. *Psal* 2. 1, 4. & 52. 6, 7. *Isai* 33. 15. *Psal* 141. 4. *Heb* 11. 24. Now he sees that the People of God are the most excellent Persons on Earth, as much preferable to others as *Jewels, the Stones of a Crown, refined Gold, a royal Diadem*, is to common *Pebbles, Dross and Rubbish.* *Mat* 3. 17. *Zech* 9. 16. *Lam* 4. 2. *Isai* 62. 3. *Psal* 16. 3. As much excelling others, as *Wheat* does *Chaff*, *Matth* 13. 30. *Psal* 1. 4. *Light, Darknes*, *Matth* 5. 14. *Eph* 5. 8. *Cedars and Myrtle trees, the Tares and Thorns*, *Psal* 92. 12. *Isai* 55. 13. *Matth* 13. 38. *Cant* 2. 2. As much as the most potent Kings, the basest Slaves, *Rev* 1. 6. *Acts* 8. 23. *Isai* 61. 1. As much as *Lambs, and Doves* are preferable in their Qualities to *Goats, Swine, Dogs and Foxes*, *Hof* 4. 14. *Matth* 10. 16. & 25. 33. & 7. 6. 2 *Per* 2. 22. *Luke* 13. 32. and *Vipers*, *Matth* 3. 7. Therefore the New-born Person resorts to God's People, covets their Company (which he before shun'd) that with them he may seek *Jesus*, *Acts* 4. 23. *Cant* 1. 7. & 6. 1. When the blinded Jaylor came to have his Eyes opened, he soon washed the Wounds he had made before, by many and cruel Stripes, *Acts* 16. 23, 33. Their Love is fixed on God in *Jesus*, as their highest Good, and last End; as their compleat, satisfying and everlasting Portion, *Lam* 3. 24. *Psal* 16. 5. & 73. 26. which shews it in lively, warm, vigorous Actings, so that the whole Soul feels sometimes the sweet Pains, and refreshful Qualms of a Love-sickness after *Christ*, *Cant* 5. 8. All the Waters of Affection

Affliction cannot quench this Love, but makes it burn more brightly, as Oyl cast into the Fire; *Cant* 8. 6. *See me as a Seal upon thine Heart, as a Seal upon thine Arm: For Love is strong as Death.* --- Their Sorrow is also changed as to its Objects; they were wont in their carnal and secure State, to mourn principally about worldly Losses, and Disappointments, *Psalms* 4. 6. *2 Cor.* 7. 10. that either they could not amass and obtain, or retain such a Quantity of worldly Pelf, as their greedy Desires longed for, or their Trouble principally center'd upon the Loss of their Relations or Friends, or their *Credit* and worldly *Comfort*, *Gen.* 27. 38. *1 Sam.* 15. 30. But now they mourn chiefly over their Sins against God, *Psalms* 51. 4. that they are so many, so heinous, that they have continued in Sin so long, *Rom* 6. 21. that they are so inwardly and universally corrupted by it, *Rom.* 7. 24. and they do not only grieve that they themselves have sinned against such a good God, but that others also do grievously reproach the Almighty, and affront his Majesty, by contemning his Authority, prophaning his sacred Name, violating his Sabbath, slighting his Word and Ordinances, opposing his Truths, and abusing his People. *Ezek.* 9. 4. *2 Pet.* 2. 7, 8. *Psalms* 119. 136. *Lam.* 4. 2. They also mourn an absent God! The withdrawing of his comfortable Presence from them distresses their Spirits, *Psalms* 42. 5. *Cant.* 3. 1, 2, 3. & 5. 6, 8. The numerous Crouds of wicked People, the Smallness of the Number of those that are truly Godly, and the little Success of the Gospel of Christ, affords Matter of great Sorrow to New-born Persons, *Matth.* 7. 13. & 20. 16. & 22. 14. *Nabum* 7. 1, 2. *Psalms* 3. 1. *Isai.* 53. 1.

4. The *Conscience* is changed: As before it was not able to perform it's Offices, or Functions, viz. to apply, convince, or tremble at the Word, but now when the Soul feels the regenerating Influences of the Holy Spirit, what a tender Sense fills the renewed Conscience? For what small Things will it smite, rebuke and check the Sinner? How strongly will it bind to Duty, and bar against Sin? The Consciences of the most of ungodly People are large, secure, and mostly silent; if it be not when they commit gross and notorious Crimes, *Titus* 1. 15. But the Consciences of regenerate Persons being purged from dead Works, *Heb.* 9. 14. do wake and rebuke sharply for small Offences, *1 Sam.* 24. 5. and puts the Sinner into Distress and Anguish, *Gen.* 43. 21. Now it is the conti-

nued Labour of the New-born Person to get and keep a good Conscience, *2 Cor.* 1. 12. *Acts* 24. 16.

5. The *Memory*; now it is more apt to embrace and retain divine Things then formerly, *Cant.* 1. 4. *Psalms* 103. 18. & 119. 11. The regenerate Person endeavours to lay up the Sayings of *Jesus* in the Cabinet of his Memory, *Matth.* 26. 75. I confess that regenerating Grace does not change the *natural* Imperfections of the human Constitution, only the *moral*. If a Person has naturally a weak Memory, it cannot be reasonably expected that Grace will strengthen the natural Faculty, for it's Design is not to heal the *Body* but the *Soul*, it only turns the *Vein* of the Thoughts and Affections on divine Subjects, and helps to perceive better, fundamental Truths, *1 John* 2. 20, 27. and makes a Person the more desirous to retain them, but it don't enlarge or strengthen the Faculty it self ordinarily; a Person may be a strong Christian, have an affectionate *Heart*, and a holy humble *Practice*, and yet have but a weak *Memory*, but in the mean time, it is surely the Practice of New-born Persons to pore much upon divine Things, *Psalms* 1. 2 & 104. 34 & 119. 97, 99. Therefore when they forget precious Truths they have heard explained (their Affections being fixed upon them) they are grieved. But

6. Their *Conversation* is changed: They were wont to be like Moles grovelling in the *Earth*, now their Mind and Conversation is in *Heaven*; *Phil.* 3. 20. *Heb.* 13. 14. They are ashamed and blush at their former Conversation, *Rom.* 6. 21. They have changed their former Masters, *Sin*, *Satan*, and the *World*, and broke their detestable league with them and *Death*, *Rom.* 6. 14, 16 to 23. *Isai.* 28. 15, 18. *Gal.* 5. 24. *And they that are Christ's have crucified the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts.* The New-born Person maintains a continual Conflict with *Sin*, *Gal.* 5. 17. *Rom.* 7. 23. Now he does not only endeavour to *restrain* the outward *Act*, but to *crucify* the *Root* of his inward Corruption, *Psalms* 51. Not only to cut off some Branches, but all, even that *Sin* which has the strongest *Seat* in his Constitution, *Psalms* 18. 23. He endeavours to repress the first Motions of *Sin*, and to flee the Appearance of *Evil*, being Diffident of his own *Strength*, and afraid to offend his God, *1 Thess.* 5. 22.

But I proceed to the third Thing proposed,

3. To offer *Reasons* urging the *Necessity* of *Regeneration*.

And

1. The

1. The universal Corruption of our Nature shews the indispensable Necessity of renewing Grace; as in the 6. Verse of our Context. *For without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. Rom. 8. 13. Is it reasonable to suppose that such a holy God as *Jehovah* is, who cannot look on Sin but with *Abhorrence*, should receive such polluted Wretches as unconverted Sinners are, into his complacential Embraces?

2. Because while unconverted, the *Law condemns us*, Gal. 3. 10. Rom. 3. 19 which Sentence cannot be removed any other Ways but by Faith in Christ, Mark 16. 16. John 3. 18 which no unconverted Person has, for if he had, it would change his Heart and Practice, Gal. 5. 6. 2 *Thess.* 1. 11. James 2. 14. He may indeed have a historical or temporary Faith, but that won't do for Salvation, James 2. 19, 20

3. Because of the *Stability* and *Firmness* of God's Word. He who cannot lie hath spoken it, and *Heaven* and *Earth* may and shall pass away, but not one Title that God hath spoken, shall pass away unaccomplished, *Matth.* 24. 35. Therefore *Regeneration* is necessary to *Salvation*.

4. The Consideration of the Nature of the Happiness of Heaven, with the Respect that Regeneration hath to it, plainly manifests the Necessity of it. Surely the Nature of future Happiness is pure and spiritual, consisting in the Vision and Fruition of a holy God, who is a Spirit, 1 Cor. 13. 12. and in the Society and social Worship of Saints and Angels, and such Pleasures and Employments as the Beauty of the Objects and other Circumstances of the Place, may be supposed to imply. Now what Suitableness is there between a carnal unrenewed Mind, and the spiritual and pure Pleasures of Heaven? Does not Pleasure spring from the Suitableness, between the Object and the Faculty? What Pleasure then can be expected by the unregenerate in Heaven it self, if they were carried there in their present Condition? (though they may be sure, in the mean time, that while such, they will never have the Tryal, *Rev.* 21. 27. & 22. 15.) there is such a *Discord* between their present Dispositions and the Temper and Entertainments and Employments of Heaven, for these are holy and spiritual. but they are carnal and sensual. This Dr. Scott expresses beautifully, "For alas (if we consider the Matter rightly) how could Souls of their Relish and Complexion, find a proper Employment for themselves

" themselves in the Regions of Bliss ? There are no
 " wanton Amours among those heavenly Lovers, no Ri-
 " vers of Wine, among their Rivers of Pleasure, to grati-
 " fy their boundless Sensuality ; no Parasite to flatter their
 " lofty Pride, no Miseries to feed their meager Envy, no
 " Mischiefs to tickle their devilish Revenge, but all the
 " Felicities with which that State abounds, (viz. Praise,
 " Love, Contemplation) are such that they would loath
 " and nauseate them, as too pure and refined for their
 " depraved Appetites ; and not improbably (if they had
 " their own Option) desire to fly to Hell for Shelter, to
 " Spirits of their own Depravity, rather than stay to be
 " tormented in a Heaven so incongruous to their Na-
 " ture." So that if these Men would be happy they
 must either find out a new Heaver, or get new Hearts.

Bishop *Beveridge* expresses himself thus upon this Head ;
 " Supposing it should please God to take us all up imme-
 " diately into the highest Heavens, and there place us a-
 " round our blessed Saviour ; all such as are real Saints
 " among us, as love God above all things, and have pre-
 " par'd their Minds for spiritual Enjoyments, how glad
 " would they be to see their Redeemer, shining in all his
 " Glory ? How suddenly would they strike up with the
 " Choir of Heaven, in singing the Praises of him that
 " brought them thither ? What infinite Pleasure would
 " they take in the Place, Employment, Company, and
 " every thing they see there ? But as for others who are
 " still in their Sins, and mind only Earthly things, how sad
 " and disconsolate would they be ? they would wonder to
 " see the Saints so pleasant and joyful ; for, as for their
 " parts, they would see nothing there to take delight in ;
 " in the midst of Light they would be still in Darkness,
 " and in Sorrow in the midst of Joys, they would not
 " hear the Heavenly Musick, or if they did, it would sound
 " harsh, and be all discords to them ; they could not taste
 " these spiritual Dainties, or if they did, they could not
 " relish or find any sweetness in them : they could not
 " see the Face of God, or if they did, they would not be
 " pleas'd but terrify'd and confounded at it ; and all this
 " for the want of a true principle of Grace and Holiness,
 " without which a blind Man may as well delight in
 " Pictures, the deaf Man in Musick, or a brute Beast in
 " Metaphysicks, as Men of such tempers, either in Heaven,
 " or God himself.

Again,

Again, Regeneration hath such a relation to our Salvation, that it is indeed a part and beginning of it. *Gratia est aurora Glorie*; Grace is the very dawn of Glory, differing only in degree and duration, from the happiness of Heaven. "The truth is (saith *Stanhope*) God in his Wisdom hath so ordered the matter, so admirably contriv'd our Nature and our Duty, that Virtue and Happiness, Grace and Glory are one and the same thing, differing only in the Circumstances and several Prospects we view them under. The good Man begins his Heaven upon Earth, and finishes there what is imperfect here; for the more he masters his sensual Appetites, and gets above the World, --- the more he is spiritualiz'd, and made meet to be a partaker with the Saints in Light."

Pray consider seriously that precious, but awful place of holy Scripture, *Gal. 6. 15.* It's observable here that the Apostle was speaking of some who desired to make a fair shew in the Flesh, and therefore urg'd the necessity of Circumcision, whom the Apostle inform'd, and assur'd, that in Christ Jesus neither Circumcision nor Uncircumcision avail'd any thing, i. e. to Salvation, but the new Creature. Circumcision was certainly an Ordinance of God's own Appointment, a Seal of the Covenant between God and his People, *Rom. 4. 11.* A badge of distinction between them and the Infidel Nations, *Rom. 3. 2.* a sign of their original pravity, and of the necessity of inward sanctity, *Jer. 4. 4. Col. 2. 13.* Yet the Apostle informs those who thought they were bound to observe it, that without an internal Change these suppos'd Priviledges would avail nothing, and by a parity of reason (as *Dr. Edwards* justly observes) "he must be interpreted to speak to us, that our Sacramental Washing in Baptism, our Spiritual Gifts and Endowments, our profound Knowledge and Learning, our observation of the Ordinances of Christ, and our outward acts of religious Worship, will all avail us nothing, unless we have a new principle implanted in us, such as influences our Lives, and produces evangelical Obedience."

But I proceed to the

4. Thing propos'd, which was to *Improve the Doctrine,*
And,

USE. I. It *Inform*s us that the way to be made a Member of the invisible Church is by *Regeneration*; for there shall inno wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever

whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, Rev. 21. 27.

2. It informs us of the Love of God in revealing that way to us. *Hos. 8. 12.* which shou'd strike our Admiration, and awake our Gratitude.

3. It informs us of the Love of Christ in purchasing after such a painful manner, that Life for his People, to which this way leads, *2 Cor. 8. 9.* For ye know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. *2 Tim. 1. 10.* Who hath abolished Death, and hath brought Life and Immortality to light through the Gospel. That having your Affections dead to, and wean'd from all Enjoyments here, your Life may be hid with Christ in God; that when he who is your Life appears, you may appear with him, *Col. 3. 4.*

4. It informs us of the Emptiness and insufficiency of all outward and legal Performances to obtain an actual Interest in the purchas'd Happiness, without good principles of Action; such as a new Heart, and transcendent Love to the divine Majesty. *Luk 6. 43.* For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit: neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Therefore according to the words of Jesus, if you would have the Fruits good, you must make the Tree good, *Mat. 12. 33.* For God is a Spirit, and therefore will not accept of or be pleas'd with any Worship but that which is agreeable to his Nature, *Joh. 4. 24.*

USE. II. Of Examination. Now that you may know your present state and condition, I shall propose some Characters of Regeneration.

Now the first Property of Regeneration is *Divine Life*. As natural Life is the natural product of Generation, so is a spiritual Life, of Regeneration. *Gal. 2. 20. 2 Cor. 4. 10.* Now this Divine Life, has these following Properties, by which it may be known analogous or agreeable to the Properties of a natural Life.

1. *Breath*. Without this a natural Life would soon expire. *Psal. 104. 29.* Thus it is with the spiritual, *1 Pet. 2. 2.* As new born Babes desire the sincere Milk of the Word: Some render the original Words (*Logicon gala*) rational Milk, such as is fit for the nourishment, not of the Body, but of the Mind: A true Convert desires the sincere Milk, the pure Word of God, not blended or diluted with adulterating, depraving, and debasing mixtures. It's the natural property of every kind of Life to desire

Food

Food suited to it's nature, without which it can't subsist : Now as the natural man chiefly longs after the enjoyments of this World, *Psal.* 4. 6. so does the new born Person after Heavenly Enjoyments. *Col.* 3. 1.

2. *Sense.* As a natural Life feels what opposeth it, grapples with its Enemy, and if stronger, proves victorious : so it is eminently in the divine Life, which having such supernatural Assistances, proves too hard for its Opponents. *Gal.* 5. 17. 1 *Job.* 5. 4, 18. 1 *Job.* 3. 9.

3. *Growth.* It's natural for Children to grow fast, if some uncommon accident don't prevent it, and that not in the *Head* only, for indeed such are distempered with the Rickets, but in all other *Parts proportionably* ; so do Babes in Christ grow fast, if not distempered, 2 *Thes.* 1. 3. and that not only in *Knowledge*, but in *Faith, Love, Holiness.* 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. 1 *Cor.* 13. 11. *When I was a Child I spake as a Child, I thought as a Child, when I grew a Man, I put away childish things.* So it is with the growing Christian. they put away Childish things ; and this among the rest, *viz.* entertaining a fond imagination, that he shall be always dandled on his *Father's Knee*, or in his *Lord's Lap*, or always embrac'd in his *Husband's Arms* : When he was but a Babe in Jesus, he was apt to conclude his Father had quite abandon'd him, if he lost sight of his Face but for a little, if he wanted the sweet sense of his Love he was peevish and dejected ; but now he knows better, that he is not to live by *Sense* but by *Faith*, *Gal.* 2. 20. Tho' he retains still an earnest desire after Communion with God, yet it is more discreet believing and submissive ; and when they can't perceive any growth in themselves after some time, they grieve and mourn. A Child of God not only weeps at his birth but afterwards. *Mr. Burkett* has a very good Observation upon this, " that as natural Children " come crying into the World, so no spiritual Child is still-born" or born dumb. *Act.* 9. 11. We may justly reckon those graceless, and unrenewed Persons, who do not earnestly long and labour after growth, or mourn not for their little proficiency. *Heb.* 6. 1. *Phil.* 3. 14. They that are contented with stinted measures of supposed Grace, in reality have no saving Grace at all. 1 *Cor.* 15. 8. *Eph.* 3. 18.

4. *Motion.* This is an inseperable property of a natural Life, *Act.* 17. 28. When we see any thing stand *stock still* for a considerable time without the least *motion*, we know it is *dead* ; e. g. when we observe a Statue void of motion
with

with its Eyes fixed, for some space of time, we are soon convinc'd for all its *fair face*, that it has *no Life*; so when we behold Professors of Christianity having but an empty *form*, without the powerful and progressive *practice* of Piety, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. Mayn't we judge them, and should not they judge themselves to be (notwithstanding of their *fair pretences*) *dead Idols* in a spiritual sense, void of the Life of *Jesus*.

5. A *Generative Faculty*, when grown to maturity: So those that have a divine Life labour to communicate it to others. *Joh.* 4. 28, 29. *Luk.* 22. 32. Here we may apply justly that of the Poet, *Nascitur indigne per quem non nascitur alter. He is unworthy of Life himself, who is not the cause of it to another.*

2. *Likeness.* The Father begets a Son in his own *likeness* so did the first *Adam*, *Gen.* 5. 3. and so does the Second, *Joh.* 3. 6. The *Image* of the first is of the *Earth Earthly*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 47, 48, 49. *For he that is born of the flesh is flesh*, *Joh.* 3. 6. i. e. exceedingly corrupt and sinful; not only fleshly but flesh; abstracts denote great degrees of what is spoken, *Eph.* 5. 8. Man by a sinful indulgence of his appetite, *Gen.* 3. 6. prostituted the dominion of his Soul to the tyranny of Sense; so that now before Conversion he is quite sunk in Sensuality; instead of deserving the honourable *character* of a living Soul as formerly, *Gen.* 2. 7. he now incurs that just, but sarcastical one of *Flesh!* His Reason and all his noble Powers are so degraded, unhing'd and corrupted; he acts with such indifference about *Eternal*, and with such vigour about *Temporal* things, as if he had no Soul, but was wholly *Flesh*, a meer master *Beast*. But the *Image* of the *Second Adam* is *Heavenly* and *Spiritual*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 47, 48, 49. *For he that is born of the Spirit is Spirit*, *Joh.* 3. 6. i. e. his Soul has recovered it's just, tho' lost, *Empire* over the Senses and brutish Appetites, and is now guided and governed by the influence and direction of the *Holy Spirit*, *Rom.* 8. 1, 4. As the natural Parent communicates of his Nature to the Child, so those that are born of God are said to partake of the divine Nature, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. i. e. they have a certain resemblance of the *moral, communicable Perfections* of the *Diety*, wrought in them: *They are holy as he is holy*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 15, 16. *Merciful as their Father is merciful*, *Luk.* 6. 36. *Perfect as their Father in Heaven is perfect*, *Mat.* 5. 48. i. e. they endeavour earnestly after perfection of degrees as well as of parts, *Phil.* 3. 13, 14. *Eph.* 5. 1, 2. So long as Men

are contrary to God in their generally prevailing *Dispositions*, and course of *Action*, we may tell them as our Lord the perverse Jews, Joh. 8. 44. *Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.*

3. *Love.* A Child hath a Love to his Father and Brethren, which the Law of Nature teaches, and the likeness that is between them confirms: He is a very Monster in Nature that is void of this Affection! Thus the new born Christian hath,

1. A predominant Love to God in Christ. *Psal. 73. 29. Mat. 10. 37.*

2. A permanent Love. *Joh. 15. 9. 10.*

3. A panting longing Love. *Psal. 84. 1, 2.*

4. An operative and efficacious Love. *2 Cor. 5. 14. Joh. 14. 21. Rom. 6. 4, 5.* And so he has a real, effectual, universal and well grounded Affection to the Children of God, as his Brethren in Christ: His Affection don't consist in windy Words, *1 Joh. 3. 17, 18.* Neither is his Love limited to a Party of his own Denomination, Temper or Sentiments: No, no! that is too narrow a Circle for truly Christian Love, (such a confin'd Affection, is but a natural selfish Party Zeal, which don't deserve the name of Love) which extends it self to all that carry the Image of the holy God, and speak in the Language of Canaan, of whatever Nation they be, or Denomination they bear; and as he loves all Christians for that of God he sees in them, so consequently his Affection is carried forth with a greater degree of ardor towards such as excel others in Holiness, Humility, and Circumspection; and that not with a fearful but complacential respect. *Psal. 16. 3. 1 Joh. 4. 8.* The

4. Character is that Change of the Practice, which I described in the doctrinal Part of this Discourse; which I think is rather an Effect of the New-Birth than a Part of it. It is observable that in every Generation, there is a great Change in the old Creation, to which this Work of God is for many and weighty Reasons compared, *Eph. 2. 10.* There was [an admirable Alteration, when the present most beautiful and regular System of Things was produced by the Agency of the Infinite Spirit of God, (who moved upon the Face of the Waters) out of the former Disorder, dark Mass, and confused Chaos. So is there not an admirable Change, when a prophane, ignorant sottish Creature is turned into a sober, holy, heavenly Christian? " Give me, says Lactantius, a Man as prophane and abusive, as leud and lascivious,

“ as can be imagined ; and with a few Instructions of
 “ God, I will make him as meek and innocent as a
 “ Lamb ? Could ever any of the Philosophers do this ?
Lib. 2. In short, such a *Change* deserves our Admiration
 more than if a *Clod of Earth* were turned into a *Star*
 of *Heaven* ! This is no less a Change than from *Dark-*
ness to *Light*, from *Death* to *Life*, *Eph. 5. 8.*

And now, *Brethren*, I pray you for *Christ's* sake, *Ex-*
amine your selves, whether you have had the Experience
 of these Things ; it's easy to be mistaken in this Mat-
 ter, and a Mistake is dangerous, *Jer. 17. 9. Prov. 14. 12.*
 I shall propose a few Questions to your Consciences,
 from what I have been treating of, and I beg you would
 answer them impartially as in the Presence of *God*.

And

1. Has Sin been discovered, and applied to your Con-
 sciences with Power, both in Respect of it's vile Nature,
 and dreadful Effects, by the *Law* of *God*, and the *Spi-*
rit of *God*, as I before described ?

Quest. 2. Have you been made to see your lost and de-
 plorable State by Nature, so as to be exceedingly dis-
 tress'd, and put to a Soul afflicting Plunge and Loss,
 about obtaining Deliverance out of it, and shut up to
Christ as the only Door of Hope ? *Acts 2. 37. & 14. 27.*
John 10. 7.

Quest. 3. Hast thou O Sinner ! been made to inquire
 after and seek for Relief, with *Anguish* of Soul ? *Acts 9.*

Quest. 4. Has the *Lord Jesus* been discovered by his
 Word and Spirit to your inquiring, burdened, anxious
 Soul, in his mediatorial Excellency and Sufficiency ? *Mat.*
11. 21. Gal. 1. 16.

Quest. 5. And have you with Deliberation and Resolu-
 tion, unreservedly *closed* with the offered *Redeemer*, upon
 the Terms of Disciplethip he has specified ; viz. of taking
 up his Cross, denying your selves and following him,
John 1. 12. Luke 9. 23. & 14. 26. That is, have you
 been, and are you willing, and heartily resolved, to quit
 freely and cheetfully your dearest natural and civil In-
 terests, your *Friends*, *Relations*, *Estates*, *Lives*, *Liberties*,
respectively, if called to it, for the Defence of Truth,
 and readily embrace *Shame*, *Sollitude*, *Poverty* and *Death* ?
 Are you willing also to abandon your own Righteous-
 nesses, all your religious Performances in *Point of Depen-*
dance, and *absolutely*, immediately, and freely, forsake all
 your darling Lusts, and embrace strict Holiness ? What
 sayest

sayest thou, Sinner? How is it with thee in these Respects, willing or not? What, does that Man say it's hard? I cannot now! Wretched Soul! As the Lord lives thou art a dead Man.

Quest. 6. Are old Things passed away? 2 Cor. 5. 17.

As particularly,

1. Is thy old *Blindness* removed? 1 Pet. 1. 4.
2. Thy old *Security* disturb'd? Luke 11. 21.
3. Thy old *Hope* sapp'd at the Foundation? Rom. 7. 9.
4. Thy old *Enmity* against God's People subdued? Cant. 6. 1.

5. Thy old carnal worldly Thoughts, Affections and Practice altered, or are they still as they were? Why then I may say to thee as the Apostle Peter to Simon Magus, Acts 8. 21, 23. *Thou hast neither part nor lot in this Master: For thy Heart is not right in the Sight of God. I perceive thou art in the Gall of Bitterness, and in the Bond of Iniquity.*

Quest. 7. Are all Things made new? 2 Cor. 5. 17.

As particularly,

1. Hast thou that new *light* in the *Understanding*? Acts 26. 18.
2. That *Pliability* in the *Will*? Psalm 110. 3. Acts 9. 6.
3. That *Proneſs* in the *Affections* God ward, and Heavenward, which I before described? Col. 3. 2.
4. That *Tenderneſs* of *Conscience*?
5. That *tenaciousneſs* of *Memory* respecting divine Things? Psalm 119. 98.
6. That *Reformation* in *Practice*, which was before described?

Quest. 8. Have you had that *Life of God*, that *Likeneſs* to *God*, that *Love* for *God* and his *People*, which was before spoken of?

Quest. 9. Is your *Obedience* *evangelical*, *universal*, *continual*?

But I proceed to the

III. USE, which is of *Conviction* and *Terror*, to those that are not *born again*; but *who* are *they*, and *what* may afford *them* necessary *Terror*?

1. More *generally*; You are they who cannot with a good *Conscience* say, *Yea*, in answer to the nine *Questions* I proposed before. But more *particularly*,

1. May Persons make a strict *Profession* of *Piety*, and be admitted to, and enjoy *religious Privileges*, and so pass
for

for Christians, and yet be unconverted? How far then are you from this blessed *Change*, who even *scorn* to profess *Christ* and *Piety*, who *disdain* and *disclaim* the very Name *Saint*, as a Term of *Reproach*, a *Badge of Dishonour*, and *grin* and show your *Teeth* (silly Souls) when the very Word is but mentioned in your Hearing? Remember, for this you shall *gnash* your *Teeth* in Hell, except ye repent: I suppose you think to be saved without the *New Birth*, in a Way of your own Contrivance, (O *blind Moles!*) ay, but then the Devil your dear Father, and your Brethren the Sons of Belial, the whole Crew of prophane unclean *Rebels*, and venomous *Vermine*, the burdened *Earth* now *bears*, for *Hell* contains, must be saved along with you, and a pretty Company you would make all together, would you not? A fine Heaven indeed! How can ye expect that *Christ* will *own* you *hereafter*, when you will not *own* him *here*?

2. May People be convinced of Sin, and of their lost and deplorable Condition because of Sin, so as to be in great Distress about it, without being *new born*? Alas then! What will become of you who are yet secure and asleep in Sin?

3. May Persons be *restrained* from gross Impieties, and yet be in a State of Death, estranged from this *divine Birth*? O! What will then become of you, who give a *loose* to Prophaneness, Swearing, Whoring, Sabbath-breaking, Drunkenness, Uncleaness, Fraud, and the Derision of what is good? Is not *Burnings*, *Burnings* from God, *Burnings* hotter than *Sodom's Flame*, like to be your Portion?

4. May Persons attain the *Form* of *Piety*, and be externally *regular* in the Performance of all religious *Duties*, and yet not be *new born*? Then wretched Sinners! How far are you from this divine Birth, who *prophane* *God's Name*, *slight* his *Word* and *Ordinances*, by neglecting to *attend* upon the *one*, and to *seek* Preparation for the *other*, who as fearlessly as prophanely, violate his holy *Sabbaths*, and neglect many positive *Duties* of Religion? Read that Passage of *God's Word*, and blush and tremble? *Matth. 5. 20.*

5. May People have great *Gifts*, and good *Motions*, and want this *New birth*, I have been treating upon? Then what will become of you, *ignorant Souls*, especially such of you as are *willingly ignorant*; how far are you from a sound *Conversion* to *God*, which begins in Light and

and Knowledge? 1 Cor. 4. 6. And how far will you be at last from obtaining that *Inheritance* Conversion qualifies Persons for? *Isai.* 27. 11. 2 *Thess.* 1. 7, 8.

6. May Persons have a partial *Alteration* upon some of all the *Powers* of their Souls, and be almost perswaded to be real Christians, and yet be void of the *New-Birth*, what will become of you *hardned Wretches*, every of whose *Faculties* are perhaps *altered* for the worse, whose *Necks* are as an iron Sinew, and whose *Brow* is Brass? *Pharisees*, *Heathens* and *Devils* out do you in what is good. The *Pharisees* in most or in all the outward Duties of Religion, *Philip.* 3. The *Heathens* in their Morality (perhaps) e. g. the *Turks* or some of them, have have had a greater Concern about their Souls than thou hast: Remember trembling *Felix*, and be ashamed of thy horrible Stupidity! Yea, the very *Devils* tremble, and yet thou art *Senseless*! O Man! Is thy *Breast* *Adamant*, or thy *Bowels* *Iron*, that thou thus slightest the Terrors of the *Almighty*, which set themselves in Battle array against thee, canst thou imagine that thou art *new born*, or shall be saved in this Condition? No, no: Be not deceived, the Devil himself would find as easy an Admittion into Heaven, as thou in thy present Condition, as our Text demonstrates.

7. May Persons have a *Zeal* for Religion, as *Jehu* and others, and yet be unconverted? O then! What will become of you *lifeless*, *listless*, *careless* *Galeos* in religious Affairs, who do not care a Straw whether Religion prospers or not, if you can but get worldly Prosperity, if you can but with *Gebazi* get the Changes of Raiment, with *Judas* carry the *Bag*, or with cursed *Achan* get the *Wedges* of Gold, you care not perhaps, tho' for it, you should betray Christ's Cause, and bring Judgments upon others? But won't such luke-warm, selfish Wretches be *spued out of Christ's Mouth*? *Rev.* 3. 15. How far are ye poor Souls from this *divine Birth*?

8. May unconverted Persons come so far as to *love* God's People, *associate* with them, and *delight* in Hearing of God's Word, and *attending* upon his *Ordinances*? How far then are those from *Regeneration*, or the Way to it, who do not come half so far as *Hypocrites* in this? Instead of *associating* with God's People, they carefully *avoid* their Company, *deride* them, and spitefully *abuse* them, and most contemptuously *neglect* Opportunities of Hearing God's Word, instead of delighting in it, and that

forsooth because the Preacher won't be false to God and Souls, and preach *smooth Things* according to their *Fancy*, won't *Herod* that heard *John the Baptist* gladly, rise up in Judgment at last and condemn the haughty and contemptuous *Wretches* of this Generation?

9. May Persons be brought to mourn for Sin, with Bitterness and *Anguish*, and yet be Strangers to the New Birth, as *Abah* and *Judas*? How far then are those *Monsters* in Nature from Conversion, who instead of mourning for their Impieties, *boast* of them, and so *glory* in their *Shame*? But what are the Miseries of those and all other Kinds of unconverted Sinners?

Answ. 1. Ye are *blind Men*, *Acts* 26. 18. Ye see not the Beauty of *Holiness*, of *Christ* and *Heaven*, otherwise ye would not live as ye do, *John* 4. 10.

2. *Poor Men*, however you swell and strut in worldly Wealth and Grandeur, *Rev.* 3. 17.

3. *Mad Men*, *Psalms* 14. 1. compared with 10. 1. *Luke* 15. 17. You act like distracted Men, in preferring Sin to Holiness, perishing sensual Gratifications, to the pure sinless and everlasting Delights that are at God's right hand. Don't you act like Fools, in preferring your *Lusts* to *God* and *Christ*, your *worldly Gain*, which lasts but for a Moment, to an immortal *Crown of Life*? And does not your Folly and Madness eminently appear, in your daring to affront such a *sovereign infinite Majesty*, whom you can neither *overcome*, *deceive* or *avoid*, whose *loving-kindness* is better than *life*, but whose *Anger* is worse than *Death*, and you will find it so in a little Time, when you shall wish for *Death* as a *Sanctuary* from it, but shall not obtain your *Desire*?

4. *Dead Men*, wholly void of divine Life, *Eph.* 2. 1.

5. *Darkned Men*, or Men under the Power of Darkness, *Eph.* 5. 8. *Col.* 1. 13. By which Metaphor the Scriptures exprels all Kinds of Misery, *Psalms* 23. 4. *Matth.* 22. 13. *Isai.* 50. 10.

6. *Possessed Men*, under the Power and Government, and in the Possession of the *Devil*, his Slaves, his Vassals, *Luke* 11. 21. 1 *John* 3. 8, 10. 2 *Tim.* 2. 26.

7. You are *curst Men*, curst by the *God* that made you, which none can revoke but himself, and which has declared he will not unless ye repent, *Gal.* 3. 10. *Luke* 13. 3.

8. You are *condemned Men*, *John* 3. 18.

9. *Guilty Men*, *Mark* 4. 12. And remember *God* has said, he will by no means clear the *Guilty*, *Numb.* 14. 18.

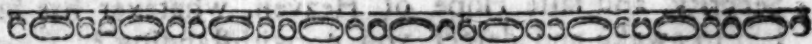
10. You

10. You are *bereaved Men*, secluded from and bereaved of all the Notices, and Sweet Intimations of God's peculiar *Favour* and *Friendship*, in this World or the next. You are without God in the World, and what can be worse than this? *Eph.* 2. 12. And as you are justly deprived of his *Love*, so you are continually exposed to his *Wrath*, *John* 3. 36. You are the very Children of the Devil by *Imitation* and *Possession*, the Seed of the Serpent, *Gen.* 3. 15. 1 *John* 3. 9, 10. *John* 8. 44.

11. *Miserable Men*; you are not only void of true Light, Life, Comfort, in this World, but of any Interest in the Inheritance of God's chosen in the next, as our Text asserts, and are intitled to a very contrary Portion, *Eph.* 2. 3.

12. *Murdering Men*, cruel Murderers, Self murderers, Soul murderers, *Ezek.* 18. 31, 32. & 33-34.

12. *Inexcusable Men*, your eternal Damnation is but the natural and necessary Fruits of your own Wickedness and Obstinacy, in rejecting against your own Souls, God's repeated Warnings and Invitations, and therefore it is but Justice, and that not owing to any rigorous *Severity* of God, but entirely to your own *Cruelty* and *Barbarity*, against your selves, that you should perish, *Hos.* 13. 9. *Acts* 17. 46. And this you will be forced to own at last to God's Honour, and your own Shame, *Matth.* 22. 11, 12. For you have slighted the *Remedy* provided with infinite *Cost* for Sin, this will make your Sin *inexcusable*, your *Damnation unavoidable*, and your selves *unworthy of Pity*, because your Misery is a voluntary Misery, but the Fruits of your own Choice, *Psalms* 95. 8, 11. *Matth.* 22. 3, 5. and 23. 37. *Prov.* 29. 1. What unspeakable Pain will your Reflections upon these Things cause in your Consciences to Eternity, *Mark* 9. 44. *Isai.* 66. 24. O! think of these Things and apply them to Heart before it is too late, and never rest until you get converting Grace.





*An Expostulatory Mournful
Address to the Unconverted,
with some Directions to the
Regenerate.*

Added by Way of APPENDIX, to the
Preceding SERMON.

Dear Brethren,

YOU have heard the *Nature and Necessity*
of *Regeneration opened*, with it's peculiar and
distinguishing *Characters described*, in the
preceding Sermon; now don't you see
that you are without this gracious *Change*,
that you have not been *convinced of* and
tumbled for Sin, as was explained, nor *distress'd* about
your lost State, so as to be shut up to *Christ*, as the only
Door of Hope?

Don't you see that you want the Experience of an in-
ward, universal and effectual *Alteration* of all your *Fa-
culties* and Powers, a thorough *Change* of your *Practice*?
Alas! Are you not yet as carnal, and worldly-minded as
ever? Don't you yet retain your old *Shyness* of, and *En-
mity* against God's dear Children, your old *Aversion* to
strict Holiness? Alas! Do ye not retain your old carnal
Security, and false Hope of Heaven, whatever has been
said to awake and detect you notwithstanding?

O *Brethren*! What do you design to do? Will ye live
contentedly in such a State, in which ye cannot see *God's
Face* in Mercy? Perhaps some may say, I design to turn
to God afterwards. *Ans. Poor Sinners!* This Practice has a
manifold

manifold Evil in it ; it's dishonourable to God, hurtful to others, and prejudicial to your selves.

1. It is *dishonourable to God* in three Respects.
And

1. It contains in it bold *Rebellion* against his *Authority*, which enjoins you to turn speedily, even to day, *Psalms* 95. 7, 8. *Heb.* 3. 7. *2 Cor.* 6. 2.

2. A prophane *Contempt of his Majesty* : For by your *Delays*, you prefer the Devil, the World, and your Lusts before him ; by observing their Commands first, and by giving them the Prime of your Strength and Years ; than which what can be more abominable, base and degenerate ? What to prefer the *vilest Evil*, before the *greatest Good* ! the *basest Tyrant*, before the *best and most beneficent Master* !

3. *Cruel Ingratitude* against his *Mercy* : That instead of improving the morning of your Time in the Service of it's *Author* ; you should *abuse* it to his *Dishonour*, in the Service of his stated and implacable *Enemy*. Miserable Souls ! is this the Way you requite the good God for all the multiplied Kindnesses he has vouchsafed upon you ? And will ye thus *forsake the Fountain of living Waters*, and *hunt after broken empty Cisterns* ? *Jer.* 2. 13. Is not Ingratitude a most complicated and atrocious Evil ? A very Heathen could say, *Si ingratum dixeris omnia dixeris*. If you name Ingratitude, you mention all that is bad.

2. Your *Delays* are *hurtful to others* : For what has a more pernicious ensnaring Influence than a bad Example ? By this you *induce* others to sin, *encourage* them and *harden* them in it, and thereby are like to bring them and your selves with them to Destruction, *Prov.* 2. 18, 19. and 13. 20. Suppose you your selves should be turned to God afterwards (which is not probable) how could you *persuade* those you have *debauched*, by your irreligious Example, to *embrace* that Piety, which they through your criminal Influence, have an inveterate *Prejudice* against. O ! if you had any Love to the Souls of others, and particularly of your own dear *Relatives*, would ye thus conspire with the grand Enemy of Mankind, in procuring the Damnation of those you profess an Affection for ? But

3. Your *Delays* are peculiarly *prejudicial to your selves*, upon many Accounts.

1. They are exceeding *perilous*, because of a threefold *Uncertainty*.

1. Of *Life*. James 4. 13. *For what is our Life? It is even a Vapour which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. Therefore we should work while the Day lasts, for the Night cometh when no Man can work.*

2. Of the *Means of Grace, and Seasons of Salvation*. Hence we are commanded to walk in the *Light*, while we have the *Light*.

3. Of a *Blessing upon these Means*. Conversion is God's *Gift*, Ezek 36. 26. which he confers in his own appointed *Time*, not according to our *Pleasure*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. Therefore we should carefully improve every *Opportunity*, for if we will not with *Earnestness* perform the outward *Duties of Religion* while we *can*, it is just with God to leave us so, that we shall not when we *would*.

Again.

2. Every *Delay* hardens the *Heart* more and more, gradually introduces a *sinful Custom*, and thereby renders *Conversion* the more difficult, *Jer.* 13. 23.

3. *Augments* the *Number and Heinousness* of your *Iniquities*, and provokes the *divine Indignation*; for one *Sin* naturally leads to, and disposeth for another, as *Deep calleth unto Deep*, *Psalms* 42. 7 & 95. 8, 9, 10, 11.

4. *Late Repentance* is seldom true and genuine. There is but one *Example* of this in the *holy Scriptures*, viz. that of the *Thief upon the Cross*; neither can it be proved that this *Man* deferred his *Repentance* with that *View or Expectation*, that he should obtain it at last. Read and consider that terrible *Scripture*, *Matth.* 24. 48. 49.

5. A *Purpose of deferring Conversion* and *Repentance* is inconsistent with a *sincere Purpose* to *repent*, 1 *Pet.* 4. 3.

6. To *delay* in *Matters of such Moment* is the most perfect *Madness*. Would not he act like a *distracted Man* who was bit with a *poisonous Serpent*, or had drank *Poison*, or was mortally wounded, and yet would tarry some considerable *Time* before he would send for a *Surgeon*, take an *Antidote*, or apply a *Balsom*?

7. *Delays* are very contrary to the *Practice of God's People*, *Psalms* 119. 60. *I made haste and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.*

8. But if we could be certain of obtaining a *sound Conversion* at last (which is not attainable, those that wilfully delay are then like to be forsaken, *Prov.* 1. 28.) it would be base and *disingenuous* to treat the *Allmighty* as it is not lawful to treat any of our *Fellow Creatures*,

Prov.

Prov. 3. 28. and so as we would not have the Almighty to treat us, Psalm 102. 3. But to persuade you if possible, to turn to God speedily, and seek converting Grace, consider seriously,

1. That God the Father calls you, Jer. 18. 11. Now therefore go ye, speak to the Men of Judah and to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, Thus saith the Lord, Behold I frame Evil against you, and devise a Device against you: Return ye now every one from his evil Way, and make your Way and your Doings good. Ez-k. 33. 11. Say unto them, As I live saith the Lord God, I have no Pleasure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his Way and live: Turn ye, turn ye from your evil Ways; for why will ye die, O House of Israel? I know not a more piercing and moving Text in the whole Scripture than this. O! methinks it is enough to melt a Rock, to make a Heart of Iron move: The Ingemination or Repetition of the Intreaty, Turn ye, Turn ye: And also the Note of Obsecration, O Israel, is very expressive, (1.) Of the great Weight of the Matter spoken. (2.) Of the Sincerity and Earnestness of God's Desire after the Happiness of true Penitents, for it seems by the Context, that they questioned whether they should live, although they did repent and reform, Verse 10. (3.) The Stupidity and Obstinacy of Sinners that want so many Warnings, Why will ye die? Why will ye act so unreasonably and unaccountably, as to be wilful Procurers of your own eternal Death? O! Will you not hear the Groans and Complaints of a God?

2. The Lord Jesus calls thee, O unconverted Sinner! (1.) By declaring the Happiness thou mayest attain by Conversion, Matth. 5. 8 Blessed are the pure in Heart: for they shall see God. (2.) By expressing the Danger thou art like to incur by the Want of it, John 3. 3, 5. (3.) By offering the kindest Encouragement to those convinced and distressed Sinners, that honestly, earnestly and perseveringly seek it, Matth. 11. 28. John 6. 37. John 7. 37. In the last Day, that great Day of the Feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any Man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, Rev. 22. 17. & 3. 20. Behold, I stand at the Door and knock, if any Man will open the Door, I will come in and sup with him and he with me. And (4.) When ungrateful Sinners will not comply with his reasonable, encouraging, heart affecting, and condescending Invitations, then does the holy Jesus take a mournful Complaint and bewail over their Obstinacy against him, and Cruelty to

their own Souls ; John 5. 40. *Ye will not come unto me that ye might have Life !* O Sinner ! Hast thou an Heart hard enough to withstand an *intreating, wooing, dying Saviour* ? Consider his *Sovereignty*, and *Self-sufficiency*, that his *Happiness* cannot admit of *Increase* or *Decay*, that it is equally incapable of *Addition* or *Diminution*, that thy *Goodness* cannot extend to him, Psalm 16. 2. and wonder at, and comply with, his surprizing *Condescension*. I think Dr. *Watts* expresses this Matter in one of his lyrick Poems, with admirable *Beauty* and *Energy* of Language after the following Manner.

“ Did ever Pity stoop so low,
 “ Dress’d in Divinity in Blood,
 “ Was ever Rebel courted so,
 “ With Groans of an expiring God.

3. The *Holy Spirit* the *third Person* of the adorable *Trinity*, invites you to turn to God, by the good *Inclinations* he stirs up in you, which if you continue to oppose, he will withdraw for ever, and strive no more with you, Gen. 6. 3. And also by his good *Word* proposed to you, Rev. 22. 17. *And the Spirit, and the Bride say come, and let him that is athirst, come : and whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely.* And will you be so cruel and barbarous as to resist to your own *Damnation* the kind *Invitations* and *compassionate Calls* of the God that made you, the *Saviour* that bought you, and of the *Holy Ghost* who offers to *sanctify* you ?

4. Does not the *Word* of God in all it's *Branches*, whether of *Terror* or *Comfort*, *alarm* or *invite* you to turn from *Sin*, to God ? And will you withstand all the *Allurements* of the mildest *Lenity* and *Pity*, and all the *Arguments* of the most *awful Majesty*, and *just Severity* ? Have ye no *Ingenuity*, and are ye lost to *fear* ? What then can be done with you ?

5. Does not the *Providence* of God loudly call you to seek *regenerating Grace* ? Should not God's *Mercies* lead you to *Repentance* ? Rom. 2. And his *Judgments* upon your selves or others *deter* you from *Sin*, which produces such bitter *Effects* even in this *Life*, which are but a small *Prelage* of what must be endured in the next, unless *Repentance* prevent, and especially when you hear of any being removed by *Death* ? O ! you have reason to tremble and quake, as not knowing but you shall be the next, and

and yet are so unprepared for it. Are ye so Deaf and Obstinate, that ye will not hear, the terrible Trumpet of God's Judgments? Joel 2. 1. *Blow ye the Trumpet in Zion, and sound an Alarm in my holy Mountain: Let all the Inhabitants of the Land tremble* ---

6. Do not the faithful *Ministers* of God call you again and again, with utmost Earnestness to turn to God, as they are commanded, *Isai. 58. 1. Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy Voice like a Trumpet, and shew my People their Transgressions, and the House of Jacob their Sins.* 2 Cor. 5. 20. *Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ stead be ye reconciled to God.* And what abundant Satisfaction would your sincere Conversion yield to their oppressed burdened Heart? And will ye have no Compassion either upon them, who travail in Birth for you, till Christ be formed in you, or upon your own Souls? Are ye resolved upon your own Destruction? Why will ye die poor Sinners?

7. Do not your own *Consciences*, those *Harbingers* of God in your Bosoms, call you and urge you to turn, and tell you that it is now high time, that ye have served Sin and Satan too long already? Do they not represent to you a dismal *Map* of those *Miseries* you shall quickly feel if ye turn not, and will ye be deaf to the Warnings of your own Minds? Don't you know that if your Heart condemns you, God is greater than your Heart and knows all Things? 1 *John* 3. 20. Will not your holding and strangling the Truth in Unrighteousness, prepare Matter for the most painful, tormenting, and never ending *Reflections* in the other *World*, when Conscience however muzzled now, shall have full Liberty to speak; won't it prey like an old *Vulture*, upon your *Heart-strings* then think you?

8. Does not your *Reason* call you to turn from Sin to *Jehovah*, by shewing you the Necessity and Equity of this Change? viz. That it is not reasonable to expect the favourable *Smiles*, and uninterrupted *Enjoyment* of a righteous holy God, without Likeness to him, and that it is but equal you should improve the Powers you have received from God in his Service, and make some grateful Returns for his unmerited Kindness.

9. Does not the *Happiness* of Heaven invite you to seek converting Grace, without which ye cannot be a Partaker of it? And are ye willing, miserable Souls, to be for ever separated from the *Light* and *Love*, the *Joy* and *Triumphs* of that blessed State? 10. Should

10 Should not the Torments of Hell alarm you to flee from that Place of perfect and miserable Misery, which you cannot escape without converting Grace? The Damned in Hell while they lived here, were careless of their Salvation, how deplorable alas is their Condition now! O! What would they give for the like Opportunities, they have had and neglected? Was not this the Complaint of Dives? He wanted some Body to go and tell his Brethren, that they might not come into that Place of Torment. Luke 16. 23, 24, 27, 28: Hear how Damned Dives, roars and groans, In Hell he lift up his Eyes being in Torment, and cryed, and said, Father Abraham, Have Mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the Tip of his Finger in Water, and cool my Tongue, for I am tormented in this Flame. I pray thee therefore, that thou wouldest send him to my Father's House, for I have five Brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this Place of Torment.

11. May not the Necessity of this Change excite you to seek after it? Ye can neither behold God here by an Eye of Faith, or enjoy him hereafter without it, Matth. 5. 8. John 3. 5, 5. So that it is absolutely necessary. You may live a contented happy Life, without much Riches, or great Honours, but you can't taste of true Happiness without Holiness, Heb. 12. 14. This is the one Thing necessary, which whosoever chuseth possesseth not only the best, but the most necessary Part; the Lord Jesus contemns the Care of many Things before this, Luke 10. 41.

12. The Excellency of it: For as much as it restores the defaced Image of God in us (which is the Beauty of our Nature) to some Degree of it's primitive Lustre, and thereby capacitates us to answer the Design of our Being, which is to serve and enjoy our Creator and Redeemer, without this we must be unprofitable here, and miserable hereafter.

13: The Profitableness of it.

1. Does it not advance us unto the highest Honours? 1 Sam. 2. 30. Rev. 1. 5, 6. For thereby Jehovah who is the Fountain of Honour, becomes our Father, the Lord Jesus our Husband, Angels our Guards, and Attendants, and the triumphant and militant Church our Brethren; is it a Matter of no Moment for poor polluted Duff, Heirs of Hell and Wrath, to be cleansed from their Deformity, and made the Sons of a King, nay to be made Kings and Priests to God? Does not the Apostle John speak with

Surprise

Surprize and Admiration concerning this Privilege? 1 *Job.*

3. 1. Behold what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God!

2. Does not Conversion instate us in the purest Pleasures, even such as result from the Embraces of a God of infinite Excellency, Beauty, and Glory?

3. Does it not intitle us to the most lasting Benefits, the peculiar Favour and Friendship of an omnipotent, omnipresent, beneficent and everlasting God, which can't expire, (because of the Invariableness of his Nature and Covenant) so long as God lives? Does not this entitle to a Kingdom that hath Foundations perfectly freed from those Variations and Vicissitudes, to which every Thing sublunary is exposed, to a House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens, whose Builder and Maker is God? *John 3. 3.*

14. The Reasonableness of it: Is it not highly rational to secure an infinite Good, *Col. 1. 12.* and to guard against an infinite Evil, both of Sin and Punishment, to preserve a pure peace-speaking Conscience, and please that Sovereign Majesty, from whose good Pleasure our Beings and all the Blessings we possess or expect, proceed; upon whose Power and Providence, we have our continued Dependance? Now without converting Grace we cannot obtain those Privileges, as has been before proved, wherefore then, O Sinner, dost thou not importunately cry to God for, and earnestly labour after this Change?

15. The Freeness of it: Is not the Life of the converted, the freest Life? *John 8. 36.* If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. Regenerate Persons are made free from their natural Bondage to Sin, Satan, Death, the Law of God as a Covenant of Works, and the Curses threatened for the Breach of that Covenant. But Sinner, while thou art without the New-Birth, thou art a miserable Captive to all these, *John 8. 34.* 2 *Tim. 2. 26.* *Gal 4. 25.* *Heb. 2. 15.* *John 3. 36.* What! Art thou contented with this woful Captivity, to the worst of Tyrants? Art thou contented to be stript of all thy original Raiment, and cloathed with basest Rags, confined in the darkest Dungeon, imprisoned in the Pit wherein is no Water, starved for Want of Bread, wounded and left half Dead; chained with massy and unweildy Fetters; this is really the ruful State of every unconverted Sinner, *Isai. 64. 6.* *Zech. 9. 11.* *Col. 1. 13.* *Psalms 40. 2.* *Eccl. 38. 5.* *Isai. 44. 20.* *Eccl. 55. 2.* *Luke 10. 30.* *Acts 8. 23.* And now when

when the *Morning of Mercy* dawns, when the *Dove of Heaven* descends, after the fatal *Shipwreck* of our first Parents *Apostacy*, with a peaceful *Olive* in his *Bill*, and *Life* and *Immortality* is brought to *Light*. When *Zion's King* issues out royal *Proclamations of Pardon*, and the *Silver Trumpet* of the peaceful *Gospel* sweetly sounds a joyful *Jubilee*, proclaims *Liberty, Liberty* to the forlorn *Captives*, a valuable, costly and everlasting *Liberty*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19. When the blessed *Lord Jesus* offers to open the *Prison Doors*, and set the *Captive* free from his *Chains, Darkness, Penury* and *Death*, and to *heal* him with his *Wounds*, and cloath him with his *Righteousness*, won't you accept of this free and invaluable precious Offer? What not accept of *Liberty* and *Life*! Be astonished, O *Heavens*, at this, and be horribly afraid! Dost thou stickle at the Acceptance of such an Offer? Why then, *Wretch*, thou deservest to be damned, that thou mayest feel the *Fruits* of thy abhorred *Obstinacy*! and damned thou shalt be as certainly as *Christ* is true, except thou *repent*, *John* 8. 24. Such *Self-traitors* deserve no *Pity*, neither from *God* nor *Man*.

16. The *Safety* of it: The converted *Person* has *God* to be his *Shield* and *Sanctuary*, his sure *Refuge*, and exceeding great *Reward*, *Psalms* 18. 1. *Isai.* 32. 2. *Gen.* 15. 1. And who then can hurt them, or make them afraid? *Rom.* 8. 28. *Psalms* 23. 4. & 43. 1. & 45. 2, 3. How secure and pleasant must the *Repose* of such *Persons* be? *Psalms* 3. 5, 6. But before this *Change* you are in *Danger* of utter *Destruction* every *Minute*, and have no *Shelter* to cover you from the *Vengeance* of an angry *God*; why then, poor *Sinners*, will you not turn to *God*, and seek converting *Grace*?

17. The *Sweetness* and *Pleasure* of it: As the regenerate *Person's* *Life* is the *safest*, so it is the *sweetest* *Life*, *Prov.* 3. 17. *Wisdoms Ways* are *Ways of Pleasantness*, and all her *Paths* are *Peace*. *Christ's Yoke* is *easy*, and his *Burden* *light*. His *Commandments* are not *grievous*. *Matth.* 11. 30. 1 *John* 5. 3. It is true there is no small *Difficulty* and *Pain* that convinced *Persons* are exposed to, before the *Byas* of the *Heart* is turned towards *God*, and new *Qualities* infused into the *Soul*, but when a *Person* has got his *Heart* *changed*, the *Power* of *Sin* *broken*, and a *Sense* of *God's Love*, then the *Yoke* of *Christ* is *easy*, he goes on in his *Way* rejoicing, *Acts* 5. 41. Now their *Joys* have these remarkable *Properties*.

1. They

1. They are *rational* and *solid*, confirmed by and arising from Consideration and Reflection, and therefore *suitable* to the *Soul*, which is the *Seat* and *Fountain* of our *Reason*. Whereas the Pleasures of Sin, are but a *Flask*, the *Refute* of a cruel *Rape* upon the *Understanding* by *Sense*, which according to the Order of God and Nature should be it's Subject.

2. *Spiritual*, proceeding from the Father of Spirits, and so adapted to the Soul, which is of a spiritual and immaterial *Nature*, but the Pleasures of Sin are *gross* and *sensual*, only suitable for the Gratification of the lower *Passions* and *Appetites*, which Beasts possess in common with Men.

3. *Peaceful*. *Prov.* 3. 17. They introduce a pleasing *Calm* into the Soul, *Gal.* 6. 16. Whereas the Pleasures of Sin must needs produce *Pain* and *Disorder*, *Isai.* 48. 22. *Heb.* 12. 15.

4. *Perpetual*: Either in Seed or Fruit, State or Frame, Habit or Act, *Psal.* 119. 165. Whereas the stolen Pleasures of Sin can't be reflected upon without *Shame* and *Horror*, unless by Men of *reprobate Minds*, and *fear'd Consciences*, *Rom.* 6. 21.

18. Do not all *Things in Nature* bend to their own good? The very irrational Animals by a natural Instinct, seek after their own Safety and Welfare, the sick Dog will seek after a purgative *Herb* to cure himself, the Swallow after *Celandine* to cure her blind young ones, the wounded Hart after *Dittany* to heal her. But alas! few poor Sinners repair to *Christ* the great *Physician* for *Eye-salve*, to cure their *Blindness*, *Rev.* 3. 18. Few hasten in earnest to the *Branch* that sprung out of the *Stem* of *Jesse*, in Order to get a *Leaf* from that *Tree of Life* to *heal* them, and one great Reason is because they feel not their *Sickness* and *Sores*, *Matth.* 9. 12. O might not this Care of those poor Creatures, who are destitute of the Direction of Reason, after their own Safety, excite you who are blessed with that Faculty they want, to *hasten* to *Christ*, with the most earnest Sollicitations for *converting Grace*, without which you must die in your Wounds.

19. May not the common Care of *Mankind*, about Things of infinitely lesser *Weight* excite you? What Pains does the Merchant, the Mariner take, to increase his Stock? Does he not spread his Canvas Wings and fly a cross the broad and boisterous Deep, to the Extremities of the Earth, amidst a vast *Vicissitude* of Dangers, Difficulties,

culties and Death? Does he not willingly endure the scorching Summer Heats, and the cold Winter Gusts? Sleep departs from his Eyes, through the Excess and Anxiety of his Fears and Cares, and all this to gain or secure a little perishing Pelf. Do not Farmers and Tradesmen take much the same Pains, for the most part they rise up early and sit up late, and eat the Bread of Carefulness, under inexpressible Fatigue, and all to secure a little transient and unsatisfying Gain; now will not ye be persuaded to take as much Pains about your Souls, (in seeking of and labouring for *converting Grace*) as the Generality of Men take about their *Bodies* and *Estates*, about an *eternal* as they about a *temporal* and *transient Good*? Will ye not? Will ye not? Unhappy Sinners! O how astonishing is your *Madness*! *Holy and blessed God*, enlighten the *Minds* and *change* the *Hearts* of these poor Sinners, and turn them from *Vanity* to thy self.

20. May not the *Care* of those who are *without* the Communion of the visible Church about their *Salvation* and *Happiness*, alarm and excite you to seek after a *Renovation*? How diligent are the *Mahometans* who pray no less than five Times every Day *statedly*? How famous for *Morality* were some of the *Pagans*, as particularly *Seneca*, *Cato*, *Socrates*? What did not the *Pharisees* do, whose *Fame* was commended before others? Some *Historians* relate of them that they wore *Thorns* in the *Borders* of their *Garments*, that when they sat down, by the *pricking* of these they might be remembered of the *Law*; as also that they used to wear *Hats* with very deep *Brim*s, to prevent their being *insnared* by tempting *Objects*, through the *Windows* of the *Senses*; and that even in their *Beds*, they were wont to hold a *Bullet* in their *Hand*, under which by the *Bed side* was placed a *Brass Bowl*, that when they began to sleep, the *Bullet* falling out of their *Hand* into the *Bowl*, might by its *Report* awake them to *Prayer*; and yet the *Lord Jesus* assures us, *That unless our Righteousness exceeds theirs, we shall in no Ways enter into the Kingdom of God*, *Matth. 5. 20*. Wherefore that is not only necessary to be done; which they did justly, but more, otherwise won't the *Lord Jesus* tell us, *Do not the Publicans so*? And these were not altogether negligent, *Matth. 5. 46, 47*.

In brief, Every *Creature* contained within the spacious *Verge* of the whole *Creation*, whether in the visible *Heavens*, the *Earth* or *Sea*, may excite you; if you look upon
the

the Sun, Moon and Stars, these obey their Creator, while you insolently controul his Authority. If you view the Trees and Plants upon the Earth or Fishes in the great Ocean, those bring forth their Fruit in their Kind, and attain the End of their Creation, while you are barren, and live in a continued Opposition, to the grand Design of your Being. May not every Pile of Grass, or Flower, or Fruit you behold, be an awakening Monitor to you?

Once more consider I earnestly beseech you, as upon my bended Knees, the few following Motives.

1. That Heaven is the Soul's Center; (for which Conversion is a necessary Preparative) Behold! how every Thing in the great Machine of the World inclines to it's Center; see how the Rivers in the mazy Wandrings, run with speed to the great Ocean, that Fountain and Original of Waters; how swiftly do the Sparks fly upwards to their Rest, with what Vehemence do ponderous Bodies descend downwards to the Earth! Then may the Sinner say, Is Heaven thy Center, O my Soul! and shall these inanimate Things exceed thee in their Motion? Shall every Thing hasten to it's resting Place but thee? Was it not the Speech of Naomi, to her Daughter-in-law the Moabitess? *Ruth* 3. 1. Might we not say this to our poor Souls? Shall I not seek Rest for thee, O my Soul, under the Wings of Christ, in the Bosom of God, by imploring of, and labouring for converting Grace?

2. Consider, It is your own Concern: Perhaps one would be slack about another's Business, who would not be so about his own; now this is your own Business, dear Brethren! whatever you get here goes into your own Treasury; here if you are wise you are wise for your selves, but if you scorn Advice, and Instruction, you alone shall bear it, *Prov.* 9. 12.

3. An eternal Concern. Conversion entitles to, and fits for a Kingdom which is not shaken, a Crown which fadeth not away, *1 Cor.* 9. 25. Are not worldly Things valued according to their Duration and Permanency, and why should not this? In comparison of which, they are but fleeting Shadows, which have no abiding, *Eccles.* 6. 12. *1 Chron.* 29. 15. *1 Cor.* 7. 31. What shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul? If he should gain the whole World and loose his own Soul, he would make but a poor Bargain, *Matth.* 16. 26. *Mark* 8. 36, 37. How much more when Men prophanelly sell their Souls for a very considerable Part of it?

4. Would

4. Would it not be your greatest *Wisdom*? Are not those called wise by the God of *Wisdom*, who consider their latter End? *Deut.* 32. 29. And can that be considered to Purpose, without Labour after Conversion to God? No surely, *Psalms* 119. 59, 60. Does not the Want of this *Wisdom* make Men like to *Beasts*, nay worse than they? *Psalms* 49. 20. For is it not worse to be like a *Beast*, than to be one? Is it not a *Fools Property* to want a *Heart*, when he has a *Price* to get *Wisdom*? *Prov* 17. 16.

5. Will not *Salvation* fully recompense all your *Pains*? Certainly there is enough in the heavenly *Paradise* to make amends for all the *Labours*, *Services* and *Sufferings* of the *People of God* here on *Earth*; for *Eye* hath not seen, nor *Ear* heard, neither have entered into the *Heart of Man* (to conceive) *Things* which *God* hath prepared for them that love him, *1 Cor.* 2. 9. There their *Prayers* will be turned into *Praises*, their *Sighs* into *Songs*, their *Tears* into *Triumphs*, their *Sorrow* into *Joy*, their *Cross* into a *Crown*, their *Reproaches* into *Pearls*, their *Labour* into *Rest*, their *Darkness* to *Light*, their *Death* to *Life* and *Love*, *Rev.* 5. 9. 14. 3. & 15. 3. *1 Pet.* 1. 8. *Heb.* 4. 9. *Rev.* 21. 4, 11, 12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23. & 22. 1, 2. Has the *Crown of Righteousness*, the *Crown of Life*, the *Crown of Glory*, which *God* hath promised to those that love and prepare for his *Appearance*, *2 Tim.* 4. 8. *James* 1. 12. *1 Pet.* 5. 4 no Influence on the *Sinner*? Hast thou no *Desire* after that *Place of pure*, consummate and everlasting *Delight*, where neither *Sighing* nor *Sorrow* have any *Access* or *Residence*? *Rev.* 21. 4. Why then, thou art worse than *Balaam* the *Conjurer*, *Numb* 23. 10. If you have, then seek *converting Grace*, else your *Desires* are like to be as vain as his. *Prov.* 13. 4. Pray observe, That tho' *nothing* can recompence for the *Neglect*, and *Loss* of our *Salvation*, yet *Salvation* will recompence for the *Neglect* and *Loss* of all other *Things*, *Matth.* 16. 26. Is it not better to be scoffed at for being too *strict* and *speedy* in travelling upon *Zion's Road*, than to be damned for being too *loose* and *slow*?

6. Won't your sinful *Sloth* (against the *Light* of your own *Minds*) in seeking *regenerating Grace*, aggravate your *Punishments* in *Hell*? *Luke* 10. 12, 13, 15. *It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah* *Luke* 15. 22. *If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had Sin; but now they have no Cloak for their Sin.*

7. Is there not *Encouragement* for earnest *Seekers*, for true *Penitents*? *Matth. 11. 12. The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth Violence, and the Violent take it by Force.* Let the convinced distressed Sinner read the following Scriptures, *John 6. 37. & 7. 37. Rev 3. 20. Isai. 1. 18. & 65. 24. Luke 7. 37, to 48. 2 Chron. 33. 11, 12, 13.* That Expression of God's astonishing Affection recorded in the Parable of the Prodigal, *Luke 15.* is enough I think to invite the most obstinate Sinner to turn to God. No sooner did the poor Prodigal begin to turn to his Father, but immediately his Father spied him a great Way off, his Bowels were moved with Compassion towards him, and he hastened to his Relief, *Verse 20.* Mr. Henry I think glosseth excellently upon this Verse. (1.) Saith he, "Here were Eyes of Mercy, and these very quick-sighted; when he was yet a great Way off, his Father saw him, --- he looketh on Men when they are gone astray from him, to see whether they will return to him, and he is aware of their first Inclination towards him. (2.) Here were Bowels of Mercy, and those Bowels turning within him, and yearning at the Sight of his Son, *he had Compassion.* Misery is the Object of Pity, even the Misery of a Sinner, though he has brought it upon himself, yet God compassionates him, *Hos. 11. 8.* (3.) Here were Feet of Mercy, and these quick-paced; *He runs,* this notes how swift God is to shew Mercy. The Prodigal came slowly under a Burden of Shame & Fear, but the tender Father runs to meet him with his Encouragements. (4.) Here were Arms of Mercy, and these Arms stretched out to embrace him; *he fell on his Neck,* though guilty and deserving to be beaten, though dirty and newly come from feeding Swine, --- yet thus he takes him in his Arms, and lays him in his Bosom. Thus dear are all true Penitents to God, thus welcome to the Lord Jesus. (5.) Here are Lips of Mercy, and those Lips dropping as the Honey-Comb. *He kissed him.* This Kifs not only assured him of his Welcome, but sealed his Pardon." Not a Word of his former Miscarriages is mentioned against him, but on the contrary he is caressed with the highest *Honours*, treated with the most compassionate *Respects*, by his indulgent Father; he came home between Hope and Fear, Fear of being rejected, and Hope of being received, but his Father was not only better to him than his Fears, but better than his Hopes, for he was clothed with the best *Robe*, the *Righteousness*

of Christ, had a Ring put on his Hand, had the *Earnest* of the Spirit given him, and was thereby sealed to the Day of Redemption; and *Shoes upon his Feet*, was endowed with the *Preparation* of the Gospel, *Eph. 6. 15.* A holy *Resolution* to follow Christ through all Difficulties. Now *Brethren*, Is not this a powerful and persuasive *Motive*? Methinks the unconverted Sinner should reason thus with himself, And is the holy blessed God whom I have so cruelly *offended*, and whose *Authority* I have *sighted*, whose *Law* I have *broken*, and whose *Love* I have *abused*, making Suit to me for that Allegiance I owe to his *Majesty*, upon the Performance of which my Life depends? Has the just and righteous God bore with me so long, when I was ripe for the Sickle of his Justice, *Jos. 3. 13.* and plead with me so often to fly from my own Death and Ruin? And now after so many Affronts and Refusals, he is yet *waiting to be gracious to me, and wanting to be exalted, that he may have Mercy upon me.* *Isai. 30. 18.* What the *Sovereign*, the offended *Majesty* of *Heaven* in whose Presence the brightest *Seraphim* veils his *Face* with his *Wings*, as being conscious of his comparative Deformity, the God to whom it is a condescending *Stoop to behold the Things that are done in Heaven!* *Psalms 113. 6.* wait upon a *Rebel Worm!* *Rev. 3. 20.* Is the blessed God willing to be reconciled to me after so many horrible and grievous Provocations, willing to *wash my crimson Sins, and make them white as Snow,* *Isai. 1. 18.* willing to embrace me (*vile Monster!*) in the Bosom of his unmerited Love and peculiar Affection! Is it possible? Is it possible? *O strange! O wonderful!* and shall I? Can I? Dare I withstand such Love any longer? God forbid! God forbid! *Lord, my Heart earns after thee, for I see thou art a gracious God,* *Jonah 4. 2.* Turn me, turn me, most *holy Jehovah, unbare thine Arm, and draw me unto thee,* for now Lord I am weary with sinning against thee; now I want to fear and serve thee, I am grieved at the Heart, O God! that I have served thine Enemies so long; away ye wretched *Tyrants*, be gone, for I hate you all! Now *Lord*, let me come to thee as a poor hunger-starved Prodigal; I confess I have sinned against *Heaven* and against *Earth*, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son, make me as one of thy hired Servants, *Luke 15. 18, 19.* O pity! pity me, blessed God, who would fain fly under thy Wing for Succour, Is there not Mercy with thee, that thou mayest be feared, *Psalms 130. 4.*

Hast thou not been found of those that sought thee not? Lord, wilt thou not be found of me, wretched me, who wants to seek thee, and to abandon all other Lords and Lovers besides thee? *Blessed Jesus*, I have been long lost and wandring from God, in the *Desarts* of Sin, and dead in *Trespases*: O thou almighty *Shepherd*! bring me a poor stray Sheep, by thy Word and Spirit to thy *Fold*; lay me on thy *Shoulder*, or in thy *Bosom*, *Luke 15. 4, 5. Isai. 40. 11.* O let me the poor lost Sheep be found, that the *Dead* may live, *Luke 15. 24.*

8. Thy *Conversion* Sinner, would occasion *Joy in Heaven* and upon *Earth*; the holy *God*, and holy *Angels*, and holy *Men*, would *rejoyce* at it, *Luke 15. 10. 24.* and your own *Soul* among the rest would *shout* with *Joy* and *Triumph*, *Acts 8. 39.* None but wicked *Men* and *Devils* would be disturbed on that *Occasion*, and if that will disturb them, *God* grant they may soon be disturbed; let all *Hell* rage, and foam, let all the *Devil's Imps* growl or sniker, they cannot hurt thee if thou come over to *Jesus*, Come then, poor *Sinner* come! what hinders thee? O *almighty Father*! *Pity* and *perswade* those poor stupid *Sinners* to come from *Darkness* and *Death* to thee.

9. What would you loose by turning to *God*? Is it dishonourable to be related to the *divine Majesty*, to the *Church of the first-born*, whose *Names* are written in *Heaven*, that august *Assembly* of *perfected Spirits*, and to *Jesus* the *Angel* and *Mediator* of the *everlasting Covenant*? *Heb. 12. 23, 24.* Is it dishonourable to be adorned with the *Beauties* of *Holiness*, from the *Womb* of the *Morning*, *Psalms 110. 3.* to be conformed to a *God* of *radiant, transcendent*, and *inexpressibly glorious Excellency*? *Exod. 15. 11.* Is it uncomfortable to partake of the *Clusters* of *Canaan*, the *joyful Soul* ravishing *Earnests* of all the *Sweets* above? *1 Pet. 1. 8.* Can it be uncomfortable to entertain *Communion* with a *God* of *infinite Beauty*, *infinite Goodness*, *infinite Glory*, *Excellency* and *All sufficiency*, the *Fountain* of *Power* and *Love*. *Cant. 1. 13. & 2. 1, 3. and 5. 10, 10, 16. Exod. 34. 6, 7. Gen. 17. 1. Isai. 42. 8. Psalm 16. 11.* Is it disadvantageous to be entitled to an *unalienable* and *everlasting Inheritance*, extending *infinitely* beyond the narrow *Circle* of *created Matter*, to be enriched with a *Pearl* of *immense Worth*, more valuable than if the vast *Volumns* of the *Heavens*, and spacious *Globe* of the *Earth* were turned into a *Mass* of *solid Gold*? Is it disadvantageous to be clothed with the *chiefest Robe* in

Heaven's *Ward-robe*, to have a *House* perfectly freed from all the *Decays* of *Time*, and *Wrecks* of *Matter*, built by God himself, to have *Treasures* that neither *Moth* nor *Rust* doth corrupt, nor *Thieves* break through and steal? *Lam.* 3. 24. *1 Pet.* 1. 4. *Matth.* 13. 46. & 6. 20. *Rev.* 3. 18. *2 Cor.* 5. 1. Is it a Loss to enjoy the *Friendship* and *Protection* of a God of infinite *Power* and *Almightiness*, before whom all the *Armies* of *Heaven* and *Earth*, and *Hell*, are as the *small Dust* of the *Ballance*? *Isai.* 40. 15. *Gen.* 17. 1. Is it a Loss to forsake that (viz. *Sin*) which is the greatest *Dishonour* of your *Nature*, and the most malignant *Poison* to your *Souls*? ... Can that be done too soon, which unless it be done, you are undone for ever? I mean turning to God by a sound *Conversion*, *John* 3. 3. What hinders your *Compliance*, O *Sinner*, with the *Invitations* of *Heaven*? You will say perhaps, that *Sin* is *pleasant*: Ans. It is true, some *Sins* do please the *Senses*, but it is as true, that their *Fruits* here and in *Hell* are *bitter*, *Prov.* 23. 31, 32. And are there not more safe rational and satisfactory *Pleasures* to be had in serving the most high God, and seeking the *Salvation* of your poor *Souls*? *Psalms* 4. 6, 7. & 23. 4. & 46. 23. *Matth.* 11. 40. *1 John* 5. 3. *Prov.* 3. 17. Don't say that you shall be reflected upon among your *Neighbours* if you turn religious, if so, what then, those *Reproaches* would reflect *Honour* upon you, for whatever you think, it is no small *Honour* and *Privilege*, to suffer for God and his precious *Truths*, *Phil.* 1. 29. *James* 1. 2, 3. *Matth.* 5. 10, 11, 12. And if once you obtained converting *Grace*, you would no more value the unjust *Reflections* of wicked *People*, than the *Dust* under your *Feet*. Don't say that you would loose some worldly *Advantage* by the *Profession* and *Practice* of *Religion*, if you did it would be infinitely more than made up, in the *Love* and *Favour* of God here and hereafter. Why then don't you labour poor *Sinners*, to turn to God? Why will you prefer any temporal *Enjoyment* before the *Safety* of your *Souls*? Did it not argue a vile *Temper* in *Esau*, to prefer a morsel of *Bread* before his *Birth-right*, which are both sacred and civil *Privileges*? Alas! the *World* and its *Enjoyments* are to you as *Jael's Milk* to *Sisera*, as *Delilah* to *Samson*; is it not a *Pity*, that Men should be such *Enemies* to themselves, as to prefer the disguised *Vanities* of a fading *World* to the real and eternal *Riches* of another, and a better? Poor *Sinners*, when you seek for *Rest* in temporal *Enjoyments*

joyments, you seek for the *Living* among the *Dead*, your laboured Pursuit is as vain, as if *Israel* had endeavoured to fix his *Abode* in the *Wilderness*, among *Serpents* and *Enemies*, or as if *Noah* had made the *Ark* his *Home*, when the *Waters* were fallen, *Why stand ye here* (viz in the *Market-Place*) *all the Day idle?* Matth. 20. 6. Have ye no *Work* to do for the immortal *God*, and your deathless *Souls*? *Why stand ye* so indolent upon the *Shore* of a vast *Eternity*, not knowing but the next *Tide* will sweep you off beyond all *Hopes* of a *Remedy*, and sink you in the dark *Retreats* of *Death*. Speak therefore in the *Language* of the poor starving *Lepers*, who sat at the *Gate* of *Samaria*, 2 Kings 7. 3, 4. *Why sit we here until we die? If we say we will enter into the City, the Famine is in the City, and we shall die there; and if we sit still here we die also.* Now come therefore and let us fall unto the *Host* of the *Syrians*: if they save us alive we shall live, and if they kill us, we shall but die. If we return to a *Course* of *Sin* we shall surely perish, Heb. 12. 14. If we abide in our present *Sloth* and *Security*, we shall pine away and perish for *Want* of *Bread*, if we stay here we must starve to *Death*, as sure as *God* lives, Luke 15. 17. If we go to *God* for converting *Grace* and pardoning *Mercy*, he can but deny us, we can but perish, but if he saves us alive (has *Mercy* upon us) we shall live; live spiritually, comfortably and eternally. Up then *Sinners*, *Awake*, arise and hasten, hasten, hasten to *Christ* for *Life*, for *Bread*, for *Mercy*: Behold *God's* *Stores* are open, the *Treasures*, *Mugazine* and *Ward robe* of *Heaven* is unlocked, *Isai.* 55. 1, 2, 3. *Rev.* 22. 17. *Zech.* 13. 1. And *Christ* carries the *Keys*, *Rev.* 5. 7. Apply to the *Lord Jesus* with the utmost *Speed*, and most intense *Vehemence*! May be you will meet with more agreeable and satisfactory, and unexpected *Entertainment*, as the poor *Lepers*, Luke 15. 20, to 25. You must resolve with *Esther*, to venture into the *King's* *Presence*, *Esth.* 4. 16. *And so I will go in unto the King, and if I perish, I perish.* She was resolved to interceed for her *People's* *Safety*, though it should cost her her *Life*; and should not you much more for the eternal *Safety* of your *Souls*; she met with a favourable *Reception* from an imperious *Man*, which banished her *Fears*, and encouraged her *Hopes*; he held out the golden *Scepter* which she touched, and offered to answer her *Request* to the half of his *Kingdom*, *Esth.* 5. 2, 3. And why may not the convinced *Sinner* much more expect to find

a gracious Answer from a good God, whose *Being is Love*, and who *delights in Mercy*, 1 *John* 4. 8. *Micah* 7. 18. Seeing he is now enthroned on Compassion, and holds forth (under the Gospel) the golden Scepter of Pardon, Peace and Pity, *Isai.* 61. 1. *Heb.* 4. 16. *Luke* 2. 14. Hence is there not Encouragement that the returning distressed Prodigal may be enabled by God, to touch the Scepter by the Hand of Faith that he may live?

Well Sinners, Are ye become *Gospel-proof*, got beyond *Bow-shot*, past all Feeling, that when we represent God's *Majesty* armed with *Vengeance*, seated on his dreadful *Throne of Justice*, wreathed with *Flames* and *Lightnings*, circled with *Clouds of gloomy Horrors*, encompassed with *Myriads of holy Angels*, casting with his unbear'd and unbroken *Arm Thunderbolts of Death*, or shooting the barb'd pointed terrible *Arrows* of his inflamed *Indignation*, and with the other holding a two-edged bright burnished glittering *Sword*, ready to be thrust into your *Hearts*, into the innermost *Recesses* of your unarmed *Souls*, and yet ye are not moved.

Or on the other hand, When we represent *Jehovah* seated on a *Throne of Love*, holding forth the *Scepter of Salvation*, and with the mildest *Grace* and most earnest *Imporunity*, inviting, inducing, indearing *Condescension*, *courting* worthless *Rebels*, *Captives*, *Beggars*, to accept of refined *Gold*, *Liberty* and *Life*, and that not only with the strongest *Arguments*, but with *Tears*, *Groans* and *Blood*, and yet you are not affected; O astonishing *Stupidity*! O *Rock*! O *Adamant*! What *Measures* would you have the great God take with you to reclaim you? Good God! What a wretched *Blindness* and *Obduracy* have Men brought upon themselves by *Sin*? Be astonished ye *Heavens*, and mourn O *Earth*! O ye blessed *Angels of God*, who *rejoyced* at the bringing of those glad *Tidings* of *Salvation* to a desolate *World*! Here is *mourning Work* for you, if ye were capable of it, to see the precious *Offers* of this great *Salvation* bought with *Blood*, basely slighted and neglected; but ye are incapable of *Grief*, being continually delighted with the bright *Vision* of your God, you can't lament with us, or be *Partners* in our *Pains*.

O ye blessed *Saints* of the triumphing *Church*! be ye astonished at the unparallel'd *Madness* of an insatuated *World*, in deceiving their precious *Souls*, and slighting such a dear, transcendently excellent, and unspeakably glorious *Redeemer*. The most of *Mankind* will not, alas, they

they will not earnestly seek after converting Grace! Can ye mourn with us blessed Souls? No ye are ignorant of our *Wo*, *Isai. 63. 16.* and continually delighted and ravished with the *Views* of your Redeemer's *Face*, and *Beauty*; Ye are always drinking the pure, sinless, soul satisfying *Sweets* of his life giving *Love*. Ye are always swimming in a calm *Ocean* of *Pleasure*, and imbibing the *Screams* of pure *Nectar*, that spring from the *Throne* of God, plucking *Apples* from the *Tree of Life*, sitting under the *Shadow* of God, the *King*, the *Lord of Hosts*, breathing perpetual *Triumphs*, and shouting continual *Hosannas*.

O but did ye see the dismal *State* of Things here, how wretchedly poor Sinners deceive themselves, with *Dreams* and *Delusions*, with false and foolish *Hopes* of *Happiness*, without the *Experience* of regenerating *Grace*, and in the mean time affront the God that made them, reject the *Redeemer* that died for them, and grieve the blessed *Spirit*, then surely if you had any *Room* for *Sorrow*, any *Access* or *Avenue* to *Grief*, you would fill the *Heavens* with *Sobs*, *Groans* and *Lamentations*, instead of your present *Songs* of *Triumph*. But blessed Souls, your *Tears* are for ever wiped away, those crystal *Fountains* which run so fast in this *Wilderness*, must now no more *gush* and *bleed*, no they are for ever *shut* and *sealed*, and ye have more delightful *Work* to do, in exalting of and rejoicing in your *God* and *Redeemer*! Who then *Lord God of Hosts*, shall *mourn* over a perishing secure, deceived unregenerate *World*? Why is not the bright *Pavement* of the great *King's Abode*, the crystal *Canopy* of the visible *Heavens* darkned, to testify it's *Sorrow* for a perishing deceived *World*? O thou beautiful *Eye* of *Heaven*! whose benign *Beams* create our *Days*, and make all *Nature* glad, why dost thou not forget to shine? Why art thou not covered with a cloudy *Dress*? Why ceasest thou not to run thy wonted *Rounds*, in order to lament the wretched perishing *World*? Wilt thou still lend thy *Light* to those who *love* to walk in *Darkness*, to those who prophanely *abuse* thy *Creatures Goodness*; and thou blazing *Moon*, with all the *Ranks* of lesser *Lights*, have ye no *Pity* upon your *Fellow Creatures*, who have *quenched* their once glorious *Light* in *Darkness*, and are hastening fast through their *Sloth* and *Delusions* to eternal *Death*; why are ye not vailed to testify your *Grief*?

O let all the lower *Creation* mourn for *Man*; sinning *Man* has stained it's *Beauty* and *Glory*; but what do I

say? My Request is answered, the whole Frame of Nature being oppressed with the Sin of Man, *travails* and *groans*, Rom. 8. 22. Surely if inanimate Creatures were capable of Sense and Sympathy, the *Winds* would whisper perpetual *Sighs* for, and the hard *Rocks* would break their long Silence, and *lament* over the cruel *Ingratitude* which unconverted Sinners are guilty of against God; and the stupid *Barbarity* which they exercise against their own Souls; the great *Ocean* and all gliding *Rivulets* which love to sport in meandrine *Circuits* round the *Globe*, would weep their useles Channels dry in doleful *Lamentations*, the pregnant *Clouds* would spend all their watery *Magazines* in *Tears*, the blooming *Trees* would lay down their *Honours*, and be cloathed with a Winter mournful *Garb*.

O ye *Saints* of God! Are your *Bowels* of *Brass* and *Iron*, that they won't move? Don't ye see the miserable State of the World? Look how fast and thick they move (Men of all Ranks and Orders) upon the sable *Road*, fearless and unconcerned, to the *dark Chambers* of *Death* and *Hell*. Very dear *Brethren*! Are not these miserably miserable Creatures, Objects of Pity? May not your Eye affect your Heart? Or have you forgot to Pity? Are the *Fountains* of your Sorrow congealed, and have ye no *Tears* to shed upon this mournful *Occasion*? God forbid! O let *Rivers* of *Water* run down your *Eyes*, because Men, unconverted Men, keep not your *Father's Law*: but obstinately flight the infinite Love of God, and thereby destroy their own Souls.

And thou my poor Soul, *Mourn, mourn, mourn!* O that my *Head* were *Waters*, and mine *Eyes* a *Fountain* of *Tears*! that I might sufficiently bewail over these miserable Sinners, whom I can't persuade! Let me, *Lord* of *Hosts*, be cloathed with *Sackcloth*, and covered with *Ashes*, that I may *mourn*. And now, high, holy and everlasting God, open the *Springs* of my *Sorrow*, and let them bleed to *Death*. Burden my Heart most blessed God, with as great a *Weight* of *Grief*, as the Frame of my Nature can bear; because of those deceived sluggish Souls, who will not quit their destructive *Delusions*, their damning *Lusts*, and turn to the living God. If I can do no more, good God! let me *mourn*; if I may not be indulged the undeserved *Privilege* of persuading any, any poor Sinner, to turn to thee, my God, then *Lord Jesus*, let me lament with all my Soul and Heart, with a bitter and perpetual, but sub-

missive

missive Mourning Grieve my distressed Soul, and all ye my mourning Passions, awake, awake, awake, and float in an incessant Vein of grieving Grief!

But if any poor Sinner should ask me, how he should seek this Change? I answer more generally,

1. *Early.* *Ecc.* 12. 1. Prefer nothing to this, let the first of thy Time, Thoughts and Cares be spent about it. When one asked the Lord Jesus leave to go and bury his Father first, he denied it, and would have the first Fruits offered to himself, *Matth.* 8. 21, 22. In *Bethesda* the Man that first went into the Pool was healed of whatever Disease he had, *John* 5. 4. The Israelites were obliged to offer their first Fruits to God, and a Curse is denounced against such as had in their Flock a Male, and vowed a corrupt Thing, *Mal.* 1. 14. Delay not a Moment longer: Don't you know the Deceits of your Enemies, "To day is cunningly stole away in Hopes of to morrow, and when to morrow comes, an ill Devil, as *Basil* observes, would have that Day for it self, and asks the other morrow for God," and thus not a small Number of unwary Sinners are tolled to Hell by the Threads of their good Resolutions.

2. *Earnestly*; as the poor Woman for the lost piece of Silver, *Luke* 15. 18. And that

1. Because the Good Conversion entitles us to is of great Moment, and is not to be obtained by small Diligence. It is a great Salvation; now what will not a Man do for the Safety of his Body? Eye for Eye, Skin for Skin, and whatsoever he hath, *Job* 2. 4. How much more should he be ready to lay down all for the Interest of his poor Soul?

2. Because *Christ* himself could not purchase our Happiness without great Labour and Agony. It cost Jesus mournful Tears, bloody Sweat, and mortal Wounds: Now seeing the Purchase was so dear to *Christ*, can we think to get an Interest in it (by Conversion) without Pains?

3. Because many powerful Enemies endeavour to detain us in a sinful and secure State, which are to be fought with and overcome, which how painful and difficult a Work it is to perform, is best known by those that have experienced it. The Enemies to be contended with are these three, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, each of which is too strong for us without supernatural Assistance.

4. Without

2. Without earnest Labour no Man is converted or saved, ordinarily. Hence we are commanded to strive to enter in at the strait Gate, for we are informed, that the Gate is strait and the Way narrow, which leads to Life, and that few find it, Luke 13. 24. Matth. 7. 13, 14. Three Things in Christ's Metaphor shew the Necessity of Pains, viz. The Gate, the Way, the Travellers.

1. The Gate is strait and difficult (Regeneration is the Gate by which we enter into the Way of Life) upon a twofold Account. (1.) It is hard to find. Therefore it is said in the Words, Few there be that find it. Why? because it is above Nature, and only revealed to some by God the Father, John 1. 13. Matth. 11. 25. (2.) It is hard to be entered into, for this is contrary to Nature, against the natural Bent and corrupt Tendency of the Heart, urges for that Circumcision made without Hands, the putting off the Body of Sin and Death, Col. 2. 11.

2. The Way is narrow in a twofold Respect. (1.) In Regard of Sin. The King's Road to the new Jerusalem is so narrow that it will not hold a Man & unmortified Lust together, it justles out one or both. (2.) In Regard of Punishment, it is *ad os tethilimine*, an afflicted Way, a Way hedged about with Thorns, but blessed be God, not hedged up, the Gate is not only hard to find, and to pass through, like that narrow Passage between two sharp Rocks, viz. Bozer and Seneb, through which Jonathan and his Armour-bearer went, in order to smite the Philistines, 1 Sam 14. 4. which resemble Presumption upon the one hand, and Despair on the other, between which a true Christian must travel. I say the Gate is not only strait, but the Way is difficult, and that not only in Respect of the Corruptions which must be subdued, but also of the Afflictions which must be patiently and cheerfully endured; hence it is said that through many Tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of God, Acts 14. 22. 2 Tim. 3. 12.

3. The Travellers in this narrow Way are but Few, and was it not so since the Foundation of the Earth? What became of all the antediluvian World, except eight Persons? 1 Pet. 3. 20. 2 Pet. 2. 5. What became of the many thousands in the four Cities of the Plain, Sodom, Gomorrah, Zeboim, and Admah? Does not the Apostle Jude inform us, Verse 7. That they are suffering the Vengeance of eternal Fire? Though the Number of Israel be as the Sand of the Sea, yet Mercy is extended but to a Remnant, Rom. 9. 27. Rom. 11. 5. There is a Remnant according to the

the Election of Grace, Rom. 11. 7. For many are called but few chosen, Matth. 22. 14. But

3. Ye must seek converting Grace perseveringly. Because many have perished who have made seemingly good Beginnings, but continued not, they seemed to do something, and suffer something, but not enough, not constantly, therefore their Endeavours proved abortive, Luke 13. 24. For many I say unto you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. The young Man in the Gospel did many Things well, but the World was glued to his Heart, Matth. 19. 22. Agrippa was almost perswaded, and therefore but almost saved, Acts 26. 28. Observe what the eloquent Apostle speaks to the Galatians, Chap. 3. Ver. 4. Have ye suffered so many Things in vain, if it be yet in vain? A Person starving with Hunger would not be contented with bare asking for Bread, unless he obtained what he asked; so Brethren, for Christ's sake, be not satisfied with your praying for Regeneration, except ye get what ye pray for. The Woman that had lost the piece of Silver, sought diligently till she found it, Luke 15. 8. Go thou and do likewise.

If you desire more particular Directions, I refer you to those mentioned in the close of the first Discourse, and shall only observe by the by, that Men are more willing to bear Directions than perform them, and more willing to perform them than quit Dependance upon them.

But before I conclude, I shall crave leave to offer a Word of Advice to regenerate Persons.

Dear Brethren in Christ Jesus, be entreated,

1. To acknowledge the pure Grace and Goodness of God to you in your Regeneration; which is

1. So distinguishing. May it not affect your Hearts to consider that God has passed by so many thousands of better natural and acquired Endowments, and revealed himself and his Son to you? That Prayer of Jesus methinks should dwell in your Thoughts, Matth. 11. 25. I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these Things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes, even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy Sight. And that of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 1. 26, to 29. For ye see your Calling Brethren, how that not many wise Men after the Flesh, nor many mighty, nor many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish Things of the World, to confound the Wise, and the weak Things of the World, to confound the Things that are

are mighty, and base Things of the World, and Things which are despised, hath God chosen; that no Flesh should glory in his Presence.

2. So Pure. Springing entirely from his own good Pleasure, *Matth. 11. 25. James 1. 18. Of his own Will begat he us. Eph. 2. 4, 5, 6. But God who is rich in Mercy, for his great Love, wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in Sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by Grace ye are saved. John 1. 13. Who hath made you to differ from another, and what have you that you have not received? 1 Cor. 4. 7.*

3. Precious. *Eph. 1. 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places in Christ. Therefore*

2. Bless and adore God for this inestimable Benefit, he hath so freely conferred upon you, with all your Soul and Strength, *Eph. 1. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.*

3. Depend upon him as the sole Original and Fountain of your divine Life, who works in you both to will and to do of his own good Pleasure, *Philip. 2. 13. 2 Cor. 4. 4, 5, 6.* Without it had been God's good Pleasure to awaken and convince you, ye had surely remained in the same deep Sleep of carnal Security, which the most of the World continue in; and after ye were convinced of your lost State, could ye have come to and complied with an offered Saviour, unless you had been drawn by and learned of the Father, no surely; you who are acquainted with God and your selves, know better than to think so foolishly. *John 15. 5. & 6. 44.*

4. Strive after Growth, in the earnest Use of appointed Means. *2 Pet. 3. 18. But grow in Grace, in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. 2. 2. As new born Babes, desire the sincere Milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby. Leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, not laying again the Foundation of Repentance from dead Works, go on to Perfection. Heb. 6. 1. Forgetting the Things that are behind, press forwards towards the Mark; reaching forth unto those Things which are before, Phil. 3. 13, 14.* It is a Metaphor taken from such as run in a Race, who lean forwards with their Bodies from eager Desire to get the End of the Race. So you must forget what is past, in Regard of resting upon it, and being contented with it, without further Progress, and stir up your selves to take hold on God, *Isai. 64. 7.* Now that ye may obtain Growth,

1. Be *thankful* for past Mercies, and make Use of them, as Encouragements to Faith in God, in the Way of Obedience. The People of Israel when they were brought through the Red sea in Safety, they praised God for the signal Deliverance he had honoured them with, though they were then upon the Borders of an howling Wilderness, just a going to encounter new Difficulties. *David* made use of God's Mercy to him in delivering him from the *Mouth* of the *Lyon* and the *Paw* of the *Bear*; thence he was encouraged to hope that that God who had been thus kind to him in Times past, would now deliver him out of the Hands of the uncircumcised Philistine.

O Christian! despise not the Day of small Things, *Zeck.* 4. 10. *Job* 15. 11. I know that Babes in *Jesus* are apt to be peevish and dejected if they have not a comfortable Sense of God's Love; but this is their great Sin and Folly, for we must live by *Faith*, and not by *Sense*. *Hab.* 2. 4. *Rom* 1. 17. *Gal.* 3. 11. & 2. 20. *Heb.* 10. 38. *2 Cor.* 5. 7.

2. Be *humbled* for past Sins, *Psalms* 52. 5. and endeavour to keep humble if you want to grow; let who will strut don't you do it. *Luke* 14. 11. *James* 4. 6. *1 Pet.* 5. 5.

3. Be *watchful* lest you be taken by Surprise, *Matth.* 24. 42. Go with your *Loyns girt* and your *Lamps burning*, and continue waiting for the coming of the *Bridegroom*.

4. Be *prayerful*. Be consciencious in the Performance of secret Prayer, *Matt.* 6. 6. Don't suffer your selves to be hurried away from it by a bare Repetition of the Heads of Prayer; but endeavour to be importunate and fervent, *James* 5. 16. *Rom.* 12. 12. Remember the *Incense* was put upon burning Coals, *Lev.* 16. 12.

5. Encourage *Faith* in God through *Christ*, for that is a root Grace, and all the rest do indeed languish and flourish with it, as it ebbs and flows. Therefore it is the Butt of the Devil's Malice, that which he vehemently opposeth. Hence we are bid to *fight the good Fight of Faith*, *1 Tim.* 6. 12. Remember I only speak to God's Children now, who have scriptural Evidences of a special Work of God's Spirit in them; as for others, I would not have them believe what is not, but experienced Christians are commanded to *believe* in the *dark*, *Isai.* 50. 10.

6. Try *Meditation* upon God's *Word* and *Works*, both of Creation, Redemption, Providence, upon the *Perfections* of God's *Nature*, the Greatness of his *Love*, your own *Frailty*, and the strict *Account* you must quickly make

to God, *Psalms* 63. 6. 77. 12. 119. 15, 78. 23. 48. 149.
1 Tim. 4. 15. *Gen.* 24. 63. *Josh.* 1. 8.

Avoid an over frequent *Examination* of your State in Hours of Darkness; I know you are prone to it, but it is very prejudicial, because you are then like to pass a wrong Judgment; for how can Objects be truly discovered in the dark: It is not the proper Time to judge of the Quality of Waters when they are muddied, and a wrong Judgment creates unnecessary Pain, weakens your Faith in God, and Love to him, and hinders you in the other Duties of Religion; wherefore it is much better for you to strive to renew your *Covenant* with God, by making a new and solemn *Surrender* of your selves to him and his Service, and strive to be faithful in the Performance of the other Duties of *Piety*, *Psalms* 119. 6.

7. If there be any Sin of *Neglect* or *Commission* that your Conscience accuses you about; regulate that Matter or expect no Peace, *1 John* 3. 20. *2 Cor.* 1. 12.

8. Use *Fasting* upon special Occasions, which is of great Use, *Joel* 2. 12. *1 Sam.* 1. 14. *2 Chron.* 20. 3. *Ezra* 8. 21. *Jer.* 36. 9. *Jonah* 3. 5. *Zech.* 8. 19. *Neh.* 9. 1. *Matth.* 6. 16. *1 Cor.* 9. 15. *Luke* 5. 35. *2 Cor.* 6. 5. *Acts* 15. 2, 3.

9. Endeavour to exercise the Grace ye have received. For to him that hath shall be given, *Matth.* 13. 12. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 25. *Rom.* 8. 1. Being drawn run ye, *Cant.* 1. 4. Your stony Heart being removed, make you a new Heart and a new Spirit, *Ezek.* 18. 31. Thus saith the Lord God, Repent and turn your selves from your Idols, and turn away your Faces from all your Abominations, *Ezek.* 14. 6. Put off concerning the former Conversation, the old Man, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts, and put ye on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness, *Eph.* 4. 22, 23, 24. And remember that by *Regeneration* ye are God's Workmanship, created in *Christ Jesus* unto good Works, that ye should walk in them, *Eph.* 2. 10. Don't say that you cannot stir up the Gift that is in you, or endeavour to exercise your Graces; you can endeavour, *Isai.* 64. 7. and if you do not, it is your own Fault; to say the contrary would be to make Men meer Blocks and Machines. Also it opens a Door to *Sloth*, and reflects dishonour upon God. But to him that ordereth his Conversation aright will be shewn the Salvation of God, *Psalms* 50. 23. But

10. If ye are born of God, seek your Father's Honour. *Mal.* 1. A Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Master,

Master : if then I be a Father, where is mine Honour? and if I be a Master where is my Fear? Ye should labour to honour God, (1.) By speaking well of him, *Cant.* 5. 10, 10. 16. (2.) By speaking boldly for him, as a Child for a Father, *Psalms* 119. 46 (3.) By bringing forth Fruits to him, *Philip.* 1. 11. *John* 15. 8. Not to your selves least you be found empty Vines at last, *Hos.* 10. 1, (4.) By being grieved at the Reproaches that are cast upon him, *Psalms* 69. 1.

11. Seek your Husband's Interest. O! let Zion lie near your Heart, and engross a considerable Part of your Thoughts and Cares, *Psalms* 137. 5, 6. Endeavour as Instruments in God's Hand, to convert Sinners from the Evil of their Ways, by mild and seasonable Reproofs, earnest Intreaties, and pious Examples, *James* 5. 20.

12. Remember God expects more from you than others, *Gen.* 18. 19. And well he may, for he has given more to you. Remember that Holiness is the Design of your Election, Vocation, Redemption, Regeneration, and Adoption, *Eph.* 1. 4. *2 Tim.* 1. 9. *Tit.* 2. 14. *1 Pet.* 1. 3. *1 John* 3. 1, 3. Be ye therefore Followers of God as dear Children, and walk in love... *Eph.* 5. 1, 2. Finally Brethren, Whatsoever Things are true, whatsoever Things are honest, whatsoever Things are just, whatsoever Things are pure, whatsoever Things are lovely, whatsoever Things are of good Report, if there be any Vertue, and if there be any Praise, think on these Things. Those Things which ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me do; and the God of Peace shall be with you. Amen, Amen.



Adoption




X Adoption Opened.



I. JOHN III. 1.

BEHOLD, what Manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of GOD.

 HE Penman of this sacred Epistle has been concluded by the universal Suffrage of the ancient Churches, to be the Apostle *John*; the amiable Signatures of his divine and calm Spirit breathes and glides through all it's golden Veins.

There is some Difference of Opinion concerning the Time wherein he wrote it; some ascribing it to an earlier, some to a later Date; but the most reasonable Conjecture is, that it was wrote a little before that awful Catastrophe was brought on the jewish Church and State, which the Lord Jesus had frequently foretold should be the just and equal Retribution of their infandous Obstinacy. This Conjecture is grounded on the Apostle's speaking of the last Times being at hand, which is generally understood to be the concluding Periods of the jewish State.

The general Scope and main Design of this sacred Epistle was to confirm the parthian Jews (to whom it was wrote) in all the main Truths of Christianity, both speculative and practical: Particularly, in the Belief of our Lord

Lord Jesus as being the promised *Messias*; and also, in the Necessity of internal and external Holiness, against the impregnated and impious Efforts of apostate quondam Professors, particularly, the infamous Gnosticks, the pernicious Brood of that grand Impostor, *Simon Magus*.

Hence this Apostle takes occasion in divers Parts of this Epistle to excite Christians to the Exercise of mutual Love, by a Variety of pregnant and pungent Arguments, as. the necessary Bull-works to screen them from the strong and virulent Arrests of infectious Seducers. Love is the Cement which unites Strength, and is not *unita Vis fortior?* The Want of this is the Bane of Society, and exposes them to the ravening Depredations of common Enemies. Surely there is a most cogent Motive of Love, in our Text, both to God our mighty Maker, and to Man our Fellow-Creature. *Behold, what Manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God.*

The Apostle having in the foregoing Chapter and last Verse, mentioned that great and necessary Qualification, *being born of God*, takes occasion in the beginning of this, to celebrate with Wonder and divine Transport, it's consequent Privilege, *Adoption*. *Behold, what Manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God.*

In the Words are these *four* general Heads,

1. A great and honourable Gift bequeathed, *that we should be called the Sons of God.*
2. The Donor of this specified, *The Father.*
3. The Donee, or Persons upon whom this Gift was bestowed and discovered, *upon us:*
4. The fontal or impulsive Cause of this, mentioned.

Let us a little explain these Particulars in the Order proposed.

As to the first general Head, *Hath bestowed, ... that we should be called the Sons of God.* Here are two Things remarkable.

1. *The Privilege conferred.*
2. *The Manner of conferring it.*

1. The Privilege conferred, *called the Sons of God.* *Ina tecna thou clethowen. Tecna a uiclo, pario, & ginnomi, nascor.* Erasmus and some others render the Word *tecna*, according to our Translation; but *Theodor, Beza, & Pasor*

think it is of a larger Extent, and signifies *Offspring, Proles, Soboles*, a general Word that imports Offspring, or Sons of every Age, Sex, Degree, in which Sense I rather take the Word. *Clerbomen, a caleo, voco*. This Word is not here inserted with any Antiphrasis, Contradiction to, or Opposition of the Thing spoken of, in Reality. It is not an empty Name, or vain Title, no, no; but the blessed Privilege it self is here asserted together with this honourable Badge and Epithet, as it's necessary Consequent or Effect, by a Metonymy of the Consequent or Antecedent, *Matth. 21. 13.* compared with *Luke 19. 46.* *Clerbomen, called*: This Word excellently holds forth the Nature and Dignity of *Adoption*. (1.) *The Nature of it*. That it consisteth in a forensick Declaration; and so is distinguish'd from natural Sonship. (2.) *It's Excellency and Dignity*. That this precious Privilege is not kept hid or latent, but declared and made manifest, not only in the Mind of God, but in the Conscience of Believers. It eclipses the relative Goodness of Benefits when we know them not.

2. The Manner of conferring this Benefit, *hath bestowed. Dedocen, a doc, dosa, dedoca*. There is no Difficulty that I know of in the Word; it shews with more than oriental Splendor, the admirable Freedom of God's Bounty in our Adoption, and cuts the Sinews of Merit. It's a Gift, no Debt; we have neither Wisdom nor Dignity to procure so inestimable a Benefit. But

2. The second general Head concerns *the Author or Donor of this Benefit; The Father; Ho Pater*. A demonstrative Article is prefixed, emphatically showing the glorious Dignity and matchless Greatness of the sublime Donor. *Pater, a Pao, pasco, quia Pater pasco liberos, velus Pastor pascit Oves*. The whole Trinity doubtless is intended by this; for all those sacred Persons act a Part in this glorious Work: But more particularly and expressly, the first Person, God the Father, called so, not only for the eternal Generation of his Son, *Psalms 2. 7.* But also for the Adoption of his People, *John 1. 12.* because from him the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named, *Eph. 3. 15.*

3. The third Head concerns *the Donee, or Persons upon whom this Privilege is bestowed. Hemin, upon us*. Not upon all and singular, not upon any one or every one, but upon us, Believers exclusively, who have been effectually called, converted from Sin, and united to Jesus, in which is the Foundation of Adoption.

4. The fourth general Head, *The fontal or impulsive Cause, Love*, called in the Original *Agape*, either *ab agan poiein, multum facere*, doing much; because it is effectual and operative. *Vel ab agan cata pan*. Because Love moves it self every Way towards it's beloved Object. *Vel ab agan pauesthai*. Because the Lover rests in the Object he loves. Or, *ab agan pao*, to love much. And thus it is eminently in the Cause before us. Had not the blessed Lord loved much, would he ever have taken a sinning Creature into so near a Relation to himself, as to have the Privilege not only of being the Servants of God, which is a great Honour, but the Friends of God, as was *Abraham*, which is much more? But to be the Sons and Children of God, is doubtless, the Flower of Mercy, the Crown and Garland of divine Love; so that Love here, surely signifies a vehement Affection to the Beloved, not only a generous Purpose of doing Good, but the actual Completion of it.

Now the Love of God is in general twofold, *Immanent* and *Transient*,

1. God's *immanent Love* is that perfect Property of God, whereby he is inclined to love *himself*. This Affection is terminated on no Creature, and is nothing else but God's pure and perfect Essence. This is not the Love specified in our Text.

2. God's *transient Love* is that Property or Attribute of God, whereby he is inclined to love *his Creatures*, according to the good Pleasure of his Will. And this Love is threefold, viz. Of Benevolence, Beneficence and Complacence.

1. The Love of *Benevolence*, is God's good Purpose before *Time*, of doing his People good *in Time*. Eph. 1. 4. *According as he hath chosen us in him, before the Foundation of the World, that we should be holy and without Blame before him in Love.* Eph. 2. 10. *For we are his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

2. God's Love of *Beneficence*, is his actual doing of them good *in Time*, according to his gracious Design from Eternity. Therefore they are said to be called according to his Purpose. The great Jehovah in all his Dealings towards his People in Time, acts according to the Pattern that was in his Mind from Eternity.

3. God's Love of *Complacence* is that whereby he *delights in the Work of his own Spirit wrought in his People.*

ple Cant. 4. These three last I take to be the Love meant in our Text. We find this fourth general Head ushered in with a double Emphasis, viz A Note of Attention, and a Note of Admiration.

1. A Note of Attention. *Idete, behold, ab eido, video, to see, to lift up the Eyes of the Mind to behold a Thing more accurately and intensely, as we lift up the Eyes of the Body to behold any remarkable Object that occurs. This Note of Attention is used in a fourfold Scope. (1.) To awaken the Attention. Isai. 65. 1. I said, Behold me, behold me, to a Nation that was not called by my Name. The universal Depravation of our deplorable Natures renders us totally averse to good; so that such shocking Memento's are most necessary for us, to rouse us from our lethargick Drouse. (2.) To excite Admiration, from the beholding some new and admirable Thing, Isai 7. 14 Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bring forth a Son, &c. (3.) To show the Certainty of a Thing spoken, Rev. 1. 7. Behold, he cometh with Clouds, and every Eye shall see him. (4.) To show the Excellency and Necessity of a Thing, John 1. 29. Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the Sins of the World.*

2. A Note of Admiration. *What Manner of Love; pota-
pos, this Word is used both to denote the Quantity and Quality of a Thing, Matth. 8. 27. It is as if the Apostle had said, what Kind, what Sort of Love is this? Surprizing, amazing Love! There is a vehement Emphasis in this Expression, of Astonishment and Transport. Hereby the Apostle plainly shows, that the Love of God is exceedingly apparent, & marvellously manifested in Adoption. What! For an all-sufficient, self sufficient, independent Jehovah, to adopt a Stranger into his Family, a Rebel into his Bosom? Is it not stupendous, transporting Love? This is proposed by Way of Interrogation or Question, but implies a vehement Assertion. It is as if the Apostle feeling himself incapable to comprehend this immeasurable Ocean of divine Love, addressed himself to Believers in a kind of Amaze, and said, Do you your selves speak or judge if you can, what kind of Love this is? It is deep, I cannot fathom it, broad and wide, I cannot comprehend it: Sure it is infinite Love, well becoming the infinitely glorious Majesty from whom it flows. Behold, what Manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God.*

From

From the Words thus explained we observe,

That the superlative Love of God is transcendently displayed in the adopting Strangers into his Family, and giving them the Privileges of Sons.

In treating upon this Observation, I would endeavour by divine Assistance, to speak to these three Particulars, viz.

1. *Explain the Nature and Kinds of Adoption.*
2. *Show the Prerogatives and consequent Privileges which flow from it.*

3. *Show how exceedingly the Love of God is displayed in it.*

And lastly, Shall endeavour to improve it (if God will) to our Edification.

As to the first proposed. I conceive *Adoption* may be thus described, that it is a gracious Declaration of the blessed God, whereby he admits and receives those who were by Nature Strangers and Enemies in Heart and Life to his Majesty; but now, through Grace are effectually called, justified, regenerated and united to Christ, into his Family as Sons, and communicates to them the Privileges of Children.

I shall endeavour to explain the several Parts of this Description. And

1. *Adoption is a Declaration.* So says our Text, called *the Sons of God.* This Declaration is expressed four Ways.

1. By *eternal Election*, or that everlasting Purpose in the divine Mind, Eph. 1. 5. *He having predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children.* In this Respect, the Elect before their Conversion (by a certain Figure of Speech, Prolepsis) are called *the Children of God,* John 11. 52.

2. By *Redemption in Jesus*, with whom they are united, Gal. 3. 26. *For ye are all the Children of God, by Faith in Christ Jesus*

3. By the *Gospel*, and its copious precious Promises, whereby Believers have ascribed to them that ample Dignity of Sonship, John 1. 12. *As many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God.*

4. In their own *Spirits*, or Consciences. There God testifies by his Spirit that they are his Children: Partly, by conferring certain Evidences of Adoption, and partly, by irradiating their Minds to perceive and acknowledge these Evidences, and therefrom to infer their Adoption.

2. *A Declaration of God.* He is the Cause of it, or the Person adopting, generally, the divine *Essence*, but more particularly and specially, according to the divine *æconomy*, *God the Father*; to whom it is specially appropriated in

our Text. It is a Father's Property to have Children; hence that memorable Saying of the Apostle to the *Ephesians*, Chap. 3. 15. *Of whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named.* But it is also ascribed to the Son to have Children, *Heb.* 2. 10. He is said to *bring many Sons to Glory.* And also to the Holy Spirit, who in this Regard, is called *the Spirit of Adoption*, *Rom* 8. 15.

3. A *merciful and gracious Declaration*; flowing freely from the unmerited Goodness and superlative Love of an infinite JAH, without the least Regard to the Creatures Desert. The intrinsic, impulsive Cause, is the peerless Bounty and inexpressible Love of God, as our Text plainly voucheth. The extrinsic meritorious Cause of this inestimable Privilege, is the spotless Merit of the only begotten Son of God, the Lamb slain before the Foundation of the World, *Eph.* 1. 5, 6. Our Jesus assumed humane Nature in an hypostatical Union with the Divine, and subjected himself, as Man, to the Law he made as God, that we might obtain the Adoption of Children, *Gal.* 4. 4, 5. *But when the Fulness of Time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.*

4. The *efficient Cause* is the *Holy Spirit*. It is he who by his *sacred and secret Whispers*, seals the People of God to the Day of Redemption.

5. The *instrumental Cause* is the *Word of God*. The soul-enriching Promises of the blessed Gospel, through which *golden Conduit* is conveyed to Believers the *Oyl of Gladness*, and a sure *Hope* which makes them rejoyce with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory.

6. The *final Cause* is *God's Glory*, principally bewrayed in his People's Imitation of him, *Eph.* 5. 1. *Be ye Followers of God as dear Children.* But then

7. The *Object* of this divine adopting Declaration, is *poor sinful Man*. Here let us briefly ruminat on their twofold Estate, viz. their *former and present* Condition.

1. As to their former or natural Condition. (1.) They were such as were *total Strangers* to God, far from the Knowledge of him, far from an Interest in him. (2.) *Implacable and revengeful Enemies* to his sacred Majesty, and that both in Heart and Life. Their Thoughts of him were ungenerous, groveling or blasphemous; wholly unsuitable to his *Dignity and Glory*. In their Lives they industriously prosecuted this hereditary *Spleen*, with basest *Virulency*

Virulency and Heat, constantly defacing the broken *Sbreds* of the divine *Image* in their Breasts: Thus he who in his pristine Bliss, was the *Crown* and *Garland* of this *Globe*, is by his Fall, become more abject and sordid than the most ignominious *Reptile* that crawls on Earth. *This they were.* But

2. As to their present Condition, they are thro' Grace, effectually called out of their former Security. *He hath called us with an holy Calling*, says the Apostle. They are united to Christ by Faith, justified &c. *Rom. 8. 1.* These Works of the Spirit do necessarily, as Preparatives, precede Adoption. Adoption is no Part of Justification, but an illustrious Degree of Dignity annexed to it. So that,

8. The *Manner of our Adoption* is (1.) By *Regeneration*, whereby we are made Partakers of the divine Nature; not in it's *Essence*; but gracious *Qualities*, Justice, Holiness, Goodness &c. *Col. 3. 10.* and receive Principles of divine Life to enable us to live to God. This saith Mr. *Burkit*, "is an inward Principle, a universal Principle, a God exalting Principle, an abiding Principle." (2.) By *Union with Christ*. While we are mystically united to him we are rendred his Brethren, having one Father with him; so that though Jesus, in Regard of his natural and eternal Generation, be the only First-born; yet through this blessed Union, his People have that honourable Name, *Heb. 12. 23. The Church of the First born.*

9. The *Terms of our Adoption*. We are brought from Darkness, and the Dominion of Sin and Satan, into the Family of the blessed God, and made household Friends and Children. Henceforward God carries towards us as a Father, yea, as a kind indulgent Father, and takes us under the gracious *Wings* of his divine *Protection*. He directs us and provides for us, so that we *securely* and *safely* rest in the *Bosom* of his *almighty Power* and *Goodness*.

10. There be *two Kinds of Adoption*, divine and humane. The first we have in some Sort treated of. The second, viz. *Humane* Adoption, may be described thus, to be an *Act of Love* or *Compassion*, ordinarily arising from the Want of Children, whereby a Person admits an Alien or Stranger into his Family, and communicates to him a Right to his Goods or Estate, to be enjoyed by him after his Decease. In this brief Description, we may gather the main Differences between a divine and humane Adoption.

1. They differ in their *Source* and *Original*. A humane Adoption is generally occasioned by the Defect of a natu-

ral Offspring; but the Divine flows from the Abundance of God's Goodness.

2. In the Persons adopted. In humane Adoption they are Strangers, or such as have no Right to Adoption; but in the Divine, though by Nature they are Strangers and Aliens, *Eph. 2. 12.* yet through Grace they are called and justified, and consequently, have a Right to the blessed Inheritance, even before the adopting Act.

3. They differ in *their Nature.* The Humane being but an external Denomination and Bequeathment of temporal Goods; whereas the Divine consists in a real Act of Jehovah, whereby he confers on his People spiritual Life and Holiness, the very *Transcript* of his own Nature.

4. The Humane confers the Inheritance to the adopted, after the Adopter's *Death*; but the Divine confers it while both *survive.* But I proceed to the

2. Proposed, which was to show the *Prerogatives and consequent Privileges of Adoption.*

I will not here essay to enumerate all and singular of them, only the more *eminent and special.* And

1. An *honourable and amiable Denomination* is one of the Privileges of Adoption. *They shall be called the Sons of God,* *John 1. 12.* As those who are humanely adopted, in a civil Sense, bear Name of their adopting Father; so those that are spiritually or divinely adopted, bear the Name of their celestial Father; as our Text testifies. Jesus is their elder Brother, they are not only called Friends, but Children. This is not an empty Name, but the Thing named is, in some Measure, conferred, viz. The Image of God, *2 Pet. 1. 4.*

2. The *Dominion over and Possession of the Creatures;* in as much as God not only created them for them, but hath given them a Right to them. In Christ all Things are ours, *1 Cor. 3. 21.* Many earthly Things are properly and proximately in our Power, many though at a Distance, serve us; the Sun, Moon and Stars, yea, the angelick Spirits, those *Nobles of the Court of Heaven* above, serve Believers, *Psalms 34. 7.* Even *penal Evils,* through the *mysterious Guidance of divine Providence,* promote their Good. They have the free (but lawful) Use of all terrene Enjoyments. *To the Pure all Things are pure,* *Tit. 1. 15.*

3. *Conformity to the Son of God* by a Communion of his prophetic, sacerdotal, and regal Dignity, *Rev. 1. 6.*

4. A fourth Privilege of Adoption, is *christian Liberty.* A temporal Son in a Family hath a Freedom above a Ser-
vant;

vant; Jesus hath purchased a spiritual Freedom for his Children, at the Cost of his dearest Blood, Gal. 5. 1. which contains these Things,

1. A Freedom from the Guilt of Sin; obtained by Justification, confirmed and applied by Adoption.

2. A Freedom from the Dominion of Sin, by Sanctification, Rom. 6. 14.

3. From the Condemnation of the moral Law, Gal. 3. 13. Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us.

4. From the Yoke of the ceremonial Law, which was nailed to Christ's Cross.

5. From humane Traditions and Institutions in God's Worship, Col. 2. 20, 21, 22.

5 Another Privilege is, the Spirit of Adoption, to which is opposed the Spirit of Bondage, Rom. 8. 15. Now this Spirit of Adoption hath a twofold Operation.

1. To ascertain us of our Sonship. Hence it is said that the Spirit testifies with our Spirit, or Conscience, that we are the Sons of God. And this the Spirit effectuates these three Ways, (1) By proposing Signs and Marks of a gracious Work, in the Word. (2) By working that Work in the Heart. (3.) By enabling the Soul, by comparing both together, to discern it's gracious State.

Altho' I solidly believe that ordinarily, "*Certitudo Argumentatione Reflectioneque acquiritur*," as one says, Assurance is acquired by Argumentation and Reflection. And tho' I do abhor the delusory Dreams of the enthusiastick Crowd, who depend, as it were, upon auricular Voices, and immediate Speeches from Heaven, without duly attending to, and comparing themselves with the written Word: Yet I conceive that it is a bold and dangerous meddling to limit the Power or Ways of omnipotence to Men's narrow Imaginations. In a Word, I think, holy what Rutherford, affectionate Ambrose, and a thronging Crowd of other godly Divines, that God doth perswade some Souls, immediately, by the Light of his Spirit working upon their Hearts a Sense of their Interest in his Love: But then they ought to, and will try this, by the written Word, with it's Effects, to know it's divine Birth. We read of the sealing of the Spirit, and sure, the Seal leaves it's Signature. I know that some Divines, of no small Figure, oppose this. I shall not assume the Arrogance to tarnish the Character of those great Men, only, I would venture to say, that I believe many incline to speak & write as it suits their own Experience best. But not to insist. 2.

2. The second Operation [of the Spirit is that by which he enables the Children of God to cry with a filial Boldness, *Abba Father*, or *Father, Father*, for so the Word *Abba* signifies in the Syriack, saith Mr. *Pool*; this Ingemination plainly shows the Vehemence of Believers Affection to God, when they are perswaded of his Love to them. A certain School man observes, "That the Jews would not suffer their Servants to call *Father*," but God suffers his Children, in all their *Pressures* and *Difficulties*, yea, in all their *solemn Approaches*, to claim this filial Relation to himself. O never enough to be admired Love! well might the Apostle as in a Maze, cry out, *Behold, what Manner of Love is this!*

6. A sure Title to the heavenly *Inheritance*, with the first Fruits and Earnests of it here, are the blessed Privileges of *Adoption*. Rom. 8. 17. *And if Children then Heirs, Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Jesus Christ*. They do inherit God himself, their Father is their full and final *Portion*. "A Man leaves his Heirs what he has, says Mr. *Burkit*, but God leaves his Heirs what he is." All his Attributes is for their Benefit, his Wisdom is theirs, to guide them, his Power, to protect and defend them, his Mercy and Love to support and refresh them. *Heirs with Christ*: He is the Heir of God, and Believers in him. "They are Members of Christ, saith Mr. *Burkit*, and shall be Heirs with him." In Jesus they have obtained the *Inheritance*. By Adoption they have also the Earnests of this *Inheritance*. Eph. 1. 13, 14. *In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise; which is the Earnest of our Inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchased Possession*

We advance now to the Prosecution of the third Thing proposed, which was to show *how exceedingly the Love of God is displayed in Adoption*.

These four Particulars demonstrate this Truth. 1. The Person adopting. 2. The Persons adopted. 3. The impulsive Cause of Adoption. 4. The Price of Adoption.

1. The *Person adopting*. Who is this? The great and glorious God. But for Illustration, let us passingly view these four *Properties* of the blessed God.

1. His Majesty and divine Glory. He is the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, the sovereign Ruler of Princes, that inaccessible Light which no Man can approach unto and live. The Angels those winged Seraphs of the Court above, veil their Faces before the dazzling Splendour of his Glory.

Glory. Is not this the *Sun* which *beautifies* and *illuminates* the *empyrial Heavens*, and *delights* all the *Sons of Zion*, that *Church of the First-born*, with perpetual and sweet *Transports*? What *Creature* breathing can sufficiently describe this *Glory*? Even a *Moses* must be hid in the *Rock*, and discern only the darkest *Glances* of it. The *Psalmist* when he beheld through the *liquid Ether*, the *starry Heaven*, and view'd the *Workmanship* of the *mighty God* therein, *Psal.* 8. 3. He was justly seized with a *Rapture of Amazement*, and cries out, *What is Man that thou art mindful of him?* And can we not, shall we not wonder with him, that a *God of such august and serene Majesty* and *transcendent Glory* should adopt such as we are. O! how marvellously does the *Love of God* shine in this adopting *Act*?

2. His *Independency* and *Sovereignty*. He is the independent and self-existent *Cause* of all created *Beings*. *All Things were created by him, and without him was not any Thing made that is made.* He could have made another *Species of Creatures* than *Man*, declaratively, to express his *Praises*; but he not only made *Man* happy in his primitive *Endowments*, but when he had lost himself, through *Grace* adopts him into his *Family*. ----

3. His *All-sufficiency* and *Self-sufficiency*. He has all *Things* within the *Compass* of his perfect *Essence*, whereby he is infinitely happy and blessed. "He stands in no more need of *Man*, saith *One*, than the superiour *Globes* of a *Fly* to roll them round their respective *Circles*, or the massy *Earth* of a *Grasshopper* to support it, or the *Moon* of an *Atome* to enlighten it." His *essential* and *primeval Glory* is *stable, permanent* and *eternal*, and can receive no *additional Perfections* from the *Creatures*, nor suffer any *Diminution* by them. If *Jehovah* had expected any *additional Glory* from his *Creatures*, it must doubtless, have *sullied* and *ecclipsed* the *Brightness* of his *Love*: But seeing there can be no such *Thing*, O! how apparently, how sweetly, how transcendently does the *divine Affection* shine? ----

4. His *Justice* and *Sanctity*. *Angels* and *triumphing Saints* justly cry out, *HOLT, HOLT, HOLT LORD GOD OF HOSTS.* He charges his *Angels* with *Folly*. *The very Heavens* are not clean in his *Sight*. Now, that such a *holy Sin-hating God* should adopt *Rebels* into his *Family*, how amazing, how astonishing is it! But we proceed to consider,

2. The *Persons adopted*. Not the great and noble, *1 Cor. 1.*

26. Let us a little perpend these *Things* relating to them,
1. Their

1. *Their Frailty.* What is Man but Dust and Ashes, a Worm, a Moth, an Atome? *Job 25. 6.*

2. *Impotency.* They can do nothing, either to *merit*, or *sotably require* such *adopting Love*; his best Performances are corrupted and of no Advantage to Jesus.

3. *Their Poverty.* They are by Nature poor, *Rev. 3. 17.* They have neither Food nor Raiment, and in Debt besides.

4. *Deformity.* They are deformed by Nature, and that not only *privatively*, by the Want of *Beauty*, but also *positively*, by the *Presence* of a spreading *Leprosy*. The Soul, in our apostate State, as to it's Qualities, is not only void of it's pristine *Beauty* and primæval *Glory*; but also filled with a hateful *Proclivity* to violate the Commands of God. Is it not astonishing, that the *Love* of God should *terminate* on such *Deformity*?

5. *Enmity.* *Rom. 8. 7.* *The carnal Mind is Enmity against God &c.* The Soul of Man is naturally as full of *Enmity* against God, as a *Toad* is of *Poison*. Sure, it's a *Wonder* that God should love such *Enemies* so much as to take them into his *Bosom*.

3. The *impulsive Cause* of *Adoption*, is not any *Dignity* or *Merit* in us; but the *pure incomprehensible & eternal Love* of God. What a *Wonder* of *Love* is this?

4. As to the *Price* of our *Adoption*. *It was not purchased with Silver or Gold, but with the precious Blood of the Son of God, as of a Lamb without Spot.* Not with a great Sum of Money, which the chief Captain purchased his Freedom with, *Acts 22. 28.* Nor with Abundance of Foreskins of the Philistines, whereby *David* purchased his Sonship from the King, *1 Sam. 18. 27.* No. The *Son* of God must descend from the *Bosom* of his *Father*, and assume the *Nature* of *Man*, and have his *Glory* veiled in a *Mantle* of *Flesh*. *Jesus* must be humbled and abased to the *Death*, yea, must become a *Curse* and *Sin* for us, that we might obtain eternal *Blessedness*.

A P P L I C A T I O N.

USE 1. This Truth we have insisted on may serve for a Use of *Admiration*: This seems to be the Use the *Apostle* himself makes of it. It was meer *Condescension* in *Pharaoh's* Daughter to preserve *Moses* an innocent Babe and a Stranger from perishing by Water: But, O how much greater Kindness was it in almighty God, to save guilty wretched Man from perishing by eternal Flames, and to take a Rebel into his *Bosom*! Did *Abigail* thus excuse her self, when but a Refugee *David* proposed
Marriage

Marriage to her, *That she was not worthy to wash the Feet of the meanest Servant of her Lord.* Good God! What may we say of God's taking sinful Man into his Family, and giving them the *Privileges of his Children*? May we not say with the Prodigal, *Lord we are not worthy to be called to thy Children*? From what, to what, has God brought Believers? From what a *deep Degree of extreme Misery*, to what a *Height of Dignity and Glory*? O! let us call to Admiration our Souls, and all that is within us at this blessed Love, this free and undeserved Love, this enriching and everlasting Love. Did the *Angels* wonder when they brought the happy Tidings of this Love to the World, did they look with Admiration into these Things, and will not *our Souls*? Shall *Sheba's Queen* wonder at the *Splendor and Order of Solomon's Court*, and shall not we wonder at the *Privileges here conferred*? What! to be brought freely from *Darkness to Light*, from the *basest Slavery* to the most *honourable Liberty*, from being *Heirs of Hell* to be *Heirs of Heaven*, from being *Children of Satan* to be *Children of God*, to have *Familiarity and Child-like Boldness* with the highest. *Wonder O Heavens, and be astonished O Earth at this!*

USE 2. Of *Examination*. If there be so many happy Privileges annexed to Sonship; we should examine our selves by the *Marks and Signs* of it. Some of which precede Adoption. Such as,

1. *Effectual Calling*. (1.) Have we heard and obeyed God's *Calls* by his *Word and Spirit*? (2.) Are we *converted* from Sin to God? *John 3. 5, 6*. (3.) Have we received *Jesus as he is offered*, by a lively Faith? *John 1. 12*.

2. Some are Concomitants of Adoption, and some follow after it. As (1.) *Child-like Love*. (2.) *Child like Fear and Reverence* to God, as a Father, *Mal. 1. 6. A Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Master*. (3.) *Child-like Boldness and Access* to God, as a Father, crying, *Abba Father*, *Rom. 8. 15*. (4.) *Fraternal Affection* to all the Faithful, as being Children of the same Father: *1 John 5. 1. Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him*. Yea, even Love to personal Enemies; *Matth. 5. 45*. (5.) *Child like Obedience*, whereby we aspire after the *Image of God*, *Acts 27. 23*. and his *gracious Presence*, *Psalms 16. 8*.

USE 3. Of *Comfort to the Children of God*. Look to the great Privileges God has given you by Adoption. (1.) *Your Name is changed*. You have the *new Name*, and the

Hidden Manna. (2.) You are advanced to honourable Relations. God is your Father, and Christ your elder Brother and Husband. (3.) You are through Grace, brought to a happy State, born of God, made Partakers of the divine Nature, made Kings and Priests to God, Rev. 1. 6. Privatively, ye are freed from the Guilt and Power of Sin. Positively, ye are made Partakers of all Things, 1 Cor. 3. 21. *All Things shall Work for your Good,* Rom. 8. 28. God hath a fatherly Care over your Souls, he blesteth you with all spiritual Blessings, he will not let Sin rule over you, yea, he bares your Offences as a Father his Child, Mal. 3. 17. He will comfort you in your Straits, instruct you in your Doubts, and support you in your Weaknesses. As to your Bodies, your Bread and your Water is sure. He that bears the Ravens, and cloaths the Lillies will not be deaf to your Cries. If the Lord afflicts you he doth it not willingly from his Heart, but as a tender Father, that you may not perish with the World, who are fed for the Slaughter, and whose Tables are their Snares. He pities his Lambs in Affliction, and hears their Sighs and Groans. Psalm 103. 13. *Like as a Father pitieth his Children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* He gives you an Interest in a Crown that shall never fade away. May not then the Children of God rejoyce in their blessed and bountifull Lord?

USE 4. Of Terror to all such as are not the adopted Sons of God, but the Sons of Belial. But who are these?

1. You that never have been effectually called from Sin, nor throughly convinced of the Vileness of it, though it may be you have heard the Word of God often, yet it hath not to this Day been as a two-edged Sword to you.

2. You who have never had your Hearts opened to receive Jesus, and who have no Communion with the Father, thro' him; For, says the Apostle, of the Children of God, 1 John 1. 3. *truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

3. All you that are openly prophane, of what Sort or Denomination soever.

4. All you Gallio's. The Time is coming when you shall be spued out of the Mouth of God. Sure, the Misery of such Men, without Repentance, will be exceeding great in the Day of God's Power; for, if they remain such, they shall be everlastingly secluded from all the fore mentioned Benefits, and be made Possessors of contrary Miseries. Instead of Love, ye shall have Hatred; instead of Singing with Angels, ye must take up with the Soub'tormenting Embraces

of grisly Flames, and Howlings everlastingly with those that perish. As ye shall not enjoy the Presence of God, so ye shall be sent away with a Curse, *Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* O that such would awake and seek for Help while Mercy is tendered in the Gospel!

USE 5. Of Exhortation. O let us seek to obtain this blessed Privilege and Dignity, Adoption.

1. It is possible, probable, yea, it may be certainly attained, according to God's firm and stable Promise, 1 Cor. 6. 17. John 1. 12. and the Experience of God's Children.

2. The Mean to attain it is plainly prescribed, which is both Rational and Easy, to receive Christ by Faith, John 1. 12.

3. It is an honourable Privilege.

4. It is a profitable Privilege. How great is the Happiness of those who have the Shines of the Face of God, and his perpetual Protection.

5. It is a necessary Privilege, universally and absolutely necessary; without it we must be miserable in Time and in Eternity. Does it not then highly deserve our Pains to obtain it?

I shall conclude with a few Directions. And

1. To the People of God that want the Sense of this Mercy. Some Things are to be avoided, and some Things are to be done.

As to the Things that are to be avoided, (1.) Beware of gross Sins against the Light of your Minds; for God is engaged to correct his wandring Children. Those Sins grieve the Spirit, and hinder his Sealing-Work. Those Sins bring spiritual Desertions, and cause us to mourn with David, Psalm 51. (2.) Beware of the Neglect of secret Prayer. (3.) Beware of Sloth. (4.) Of Pride.

Now, that which is to be performed is, (1.) The Exercise of Faith on Jesus; that being united to him, by the Help of Union with him, we may obtain Sonship. And to this End, we must use all the Means that increase Faith; such as the Word, Prayer, the Sacraments, and spiritual Conference. (2.) The Exercise of Repentance for Sins of Infirmary. (3.) Lessen not the Work of the Spirit within you; but be thankful for the smallest Discoveries of your Father's Face. But

2. To those that have obtained the Sense of this blessed Privilege. (1.) Exercise Child like Fear, Love and Zeal, for your Father's Honour. Let Love be the Spring of all your

your Performances. (2.) *Submit to your Father's Will and Pleasure.* 1. To his *preceptive Will.* Let a Child's Obedience run through all the *Veins* of your whole *Conversation.* 2. To his *providential Will.* Learn in every *State* therewith to be content. *Submit to your Father's Chastning, kiss with Reverence his sacred Rod.* Though there be *Frowns* in his *Face*, yet there is *Love* in his *Heart.* (3.) *Confide and trust in his fatherly Care*, for he careth for you. (4.) *Love and help the Children of God*, as being *Children of the same Father.*

Now, upon the faithful and persevering Performance of these, and the other necessary Duties, God in his own blessed Time, will *help* you to the full *Sense* of that your Souls long for, viz. your *Adoption.* So that *working out your Salvation with Fear and Trembling*, you will at last be received with a *Well done good and faithful Servants*, and enter those *triumphant Regions* where *singing eternal Requiems* will be your everlasting *Work*, constantly *admiring*, with the *glorified Saints*, the *amazing Love* that brought you there, and will have just *Occasion* to say with the *Apostle* in our Text, *Behold, what Manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of GOD.*

F I N I S.



A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE Author's great Distance from the Press has occasioned many Erratas, the most material of which, are here mentioned, which the candid Reader is desired to correct, with others of lesser Importance designedly omitted.

PReface. Page 4 line 10 for *Boyle* read *Boyse.* p. 5 l. 8 f. makes r. make. p. 10 l. 10 r. Runagadoes.
 P. 14. l. 11 r. his Holiness. P. 23 l. 35 f. precious r. previous. P. 36 l. 3 f. do r. can. P. 47 l. 45 dele and. P. 73 l. 1 r. your good. l. 36 r. the truth. P. 76 l. 10 r. himself. P. 77 l. 15 f. doubt r. don't
 P. 81 l. 29 r. Lyon-like. P. 91 l. 4 f. its r. is. P. 95 l. 35 f. Life r. lives. P. 99 l. 33 r. *Leta.* P. 102 l. 23 r. which is. l. 42 r. had felt. P. 120 l. 12 f. you are r. thou art. P. 131 l. 10 r. immerg'd. P. 144 l. 34 r. Chastlines. P. 149 l. 22 f. publish r. punish. P. 151 l. 22 r. irreligious. P. 153 l. 21 r. *Lapsu.* P. 156 l. 17 f. that r. at. P. 160 l. 1 r. greatest. P. 167 l. 4 f. you are r. thou art. P. 173 l. 3 r. affectionately.

