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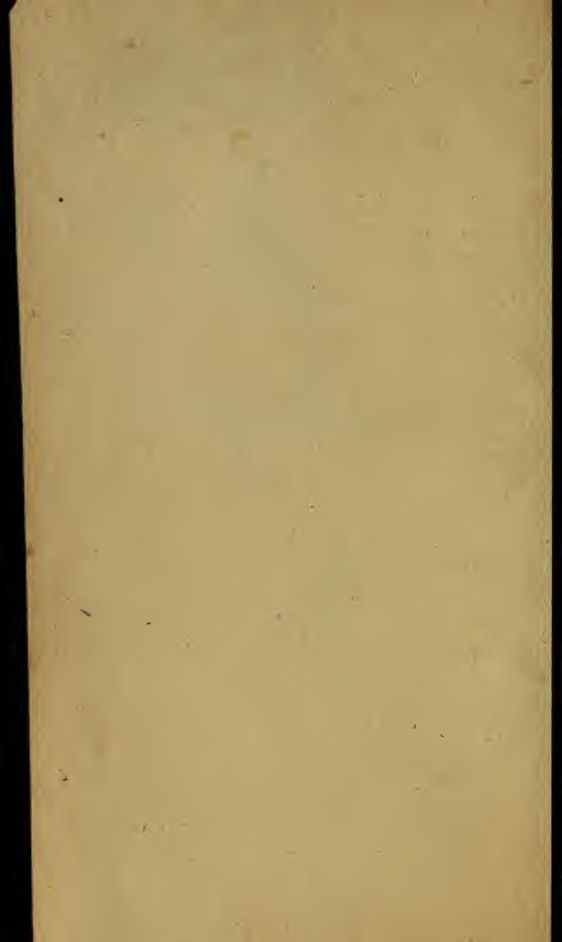
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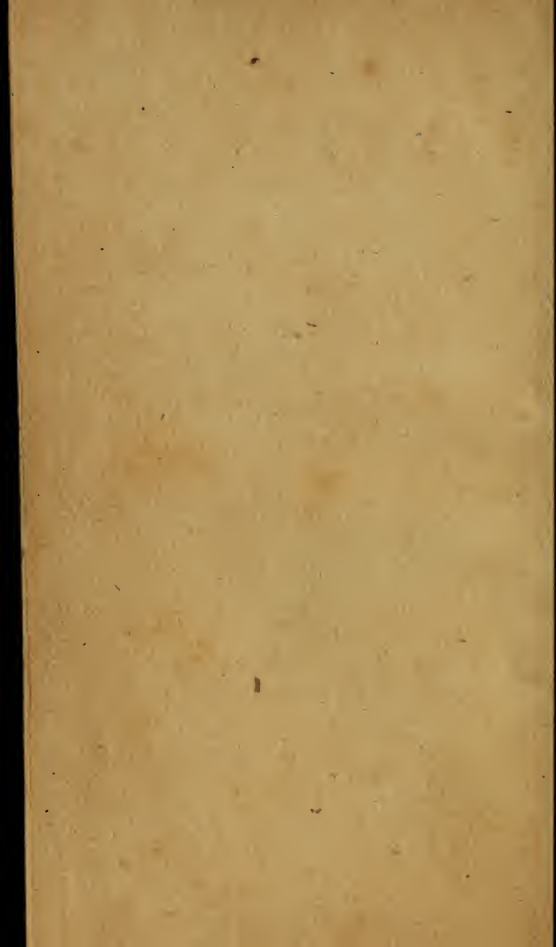
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O B E D I E N T
P A T I E N C E

I N
G E N E R A L ;
A N D

In XX particular Cases.

W I T H

Helps to obtain and use it ;
and Impatience repressed :

Cross-bearers less to be pityed,
than Cross-makers.

Written for his own Use, under the
Cross, imposed at once by God and
Man, and Published as now season-
able to many thousands who hold
fast FAITH and CONSCIENCE.

By RICHARD BAXTER.

L O N D O N,

Printed for Robert Gibs, at the Sign of the
Ball in Chancery-Lane, 1683.

T H E
P R E F A C E.

I Here offer to others the same which I have prepared for myself, and find necessary for my daily use. All men most savour that which they find most suitable to them. When I was young and lay under the sad suspicions of my own heart, and the doubts of my sound conversion, and justification, I was far more pleased with a Sermon that opened the nature of saving grace, and

A 2 helpt

The Preface.

helped me against such doubts, than with a Sermon of affliction, and its use; yea tho I began to be afflicted. But now this is the subject of my daily necessary thoughts: Mans implacable enmity maketh them somewhat necessary; but Gods more immediate corrections on my body, incomparably more. And while every day almost fills my ears, with the sad complaints of weak, Melancholly, afflicted, impoverish'd, sick, pained or otherwise

wise

The Preface.

wise distressed persons, and
and the weekly News-books
tell us of Foreign Wars,
Persecutions, ruines im-
placable contentions, malign-
nant combinations, against
the Church, pursuing Con-
science and obedience to
God, with diabolical rage
to drive it out of the world,
and of the successes of blood
thirsty Men, and the deluge
of Atheism, Idolatry, Sad-
ducisme, Infidellity, Ma-
bometanisme, hypocrisie, sen-
suality, ambition, worldli-
ness.

The Preface.

ness, lying, perjury, malignity, and gross ignorance, which hath even drowned the Earth, while there is little but doleful tidings, complaints and fears from Kingdomes, Churches, Cities, Families, and God in Judgment permitteth mankind to be worse than Serpents, Toads, or Wolves, if not than Devils to one another; and while wit and learning, reverend error and hypocrisie, are every day as botly at work, as any

The Preface.

Smith in his flaming forge,
to blow the coals of bloody
malice; and bating and de-
stroying others, even those
whom they pretend to love
as themselves, seemeth to
multitudes the most honour-
able and necessary work,
and the killing of love, and
of Souls and bodies, is taken
for meritorious of everlast-
ing happiness: I say,
while all this is so in the
world, and while all flesh
must look for pain, sick-
ness and death, and all men

The Preface.

are yet worse to themselves
and greater burdens than
all their Enemies are, I
cannot think a Treatise of
Patience needless or un-
seasonable.

R. B.

December the
27th. 1682.

The

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Obedient

Obedient Patience.

C H A P. I.

What true Patience is, and is not, towards God and Men. Here we possess our Souls in patience? What Impatience is worst? Wherein lyeth the sinfulness of Impatience towards God.

§ 1. **T**O what I have said for Patience from the *Sufferings of Christ*, in another Book for my own use, my condition calleth me to add some more, especially on the consideration of these Texts of Scripture, *Heb. 5. 8, 9.* *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered: Luke 21. 19.* *In your Patience possess your Souls. H b. 12. 1. to 14. Rom. 5. 3, 4. and 15. 4, 5. Heb. 10. 36.* *Yea have need of patience that after you have done the will of God, you may inherit the promise,*

Jam. 5. 7, to 12. Jam. 1. 3, 4. *Let patience have its perfect work,* 1 Pet. 2. 19. To the end, and 3. 9. Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12. 1 Pet. 4. 12, to the end, 19. *Let them that suffer according to the Will of God commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well doing, as to a faithful Creator,* Heb. 6. 15.

§ 2. *What is Patience,* 1. *Towards God,*
2. *Towards Man.*

1. Patience considered only Physically, as *meer suffering*, is no virtue or moral good. Devils, and Malefactors, and all Men *must suffer* whether they will or not. 2. Stupidity, or natural dulness is not Patience. 3. Nor to bear the loss of any mercy because we undervalue it; as bad Men can easily bear the loss of Gods grace, and all the means thereto. 4. Nor is it Patience but selfishness, and want of Love, in those that easily bear the loss or sufferings of Friends, (yea and of the Church or Common-wealth) so they be but well themselves, because they much care not for any but themselves. 5. Much less is it Patience desperately to despise and dare Gods Judgments, like Men that are mad or drunk, and take it to be valour to defie the Gallows.

lows. 6. And it is not holy patience when Men restrain their passions only, least they thereby afflict themselves, and not in obedience to God. 7. Nor when it is but the sufficiency of the worldly prosperity which yet is left, which maketh them bear some diminution: He that hath still enough to gratifie his flesh, may bear the loss of that which it can spare, yea though it a little pinch him. 8. Yea if a Man be in greatest want or pain and misery, and bear it quietly only because he hopeth for deliverance in this world, it is but prudent forbearance of self-afflicting, and not the obedient patience of faith. 9. Yea a presumptuous false hope of Heaven it self, and of Gods approbation of some bad cause for which Men suffer, may somewhat alleviate, the sufferings of ungodly Men. Some poor Men and sick Men think that they shall be saved from sufferings hereafter, merely because they have their sufferings in this life; as if affliction without holiness would serve. And many an erroneous person hath suffered the more easily for ill doing, by thinking that it was Martyrdom for the cause of God. *Clement, Ravilliack, Guy Faux,*

Garnet, many such Murderers, Knipperdolling, and others at Munster, endured much by such presumption.

§ 3. But true Patience is, when both body and mind, having a natural and due sense of the suffering, we yet restrain inordinate passion, (grief, fear and anger,) and their ill effects, especially repining thoughts or words of God, and use no sinful means for our deliverance; but still acknowledge the Sovereignty, Justice, Wisdom, and Love of God, and obediently submit our Wills to Gods, and approve and Love his Holiness and Justice, though we Love not suffering it self, and comfortably hope for a happy issue, even amendment and increase of Holiness here, and Heaven hereafter, where all our sufferings will end in Everlasting joy. This is patience.

§ 4. 2. Patience towards Men, is not
1. Foolishly to take hurt or wrong for none.

2. Nor to be indifferent towards Mens sins, as if they were a small and toller-able evil: Nor to let them alone in the way to Hell, and make our pretence of patience and quietness, an excuse for unbelief, and unmercifulness to Souls; especially when they are publick or com-
mon

mon sins, which are defended as well as Committed by Men pretending to Learning and piety, endangering the Church or Land, either by their increase, or by exposing us to the Plagues of God: In this Case, (though sober Wisdom must be used) it is sinful cruelty to pretend patience, Charity or Reverence to Men, for the omission of such duty as is needful to Reformation and deliverance: yea to speak easily of heinous sin, as *Eli* did to his Sons, on pretence of gentleness and patience is but to tempt Men to impenitence and damnation.

3. Nor is it *patience* but contempt of God, for Magistrates, Parents and Masters, to forbear necessary Justice and Correction, towards intollerable sin: Or for Pastors to forbear necessary Reproof or Discipline, to the corrupting and endangering of the Church.

4. It is not *just* and *moderate passion* that is sinful Impatience. *Fear* is necessary for self preservation: Christ was heard in the thing that he *feared*; *anger* is necessary to shew our Displacence at sin, and to repel evil: Christ looked with anger on obstinate sinners: And God is said to be *angry every day*, and his *wrath*

doth kindle the flames of Hell. *Grief* if moderate is but the necessary sense of evil, by which we difference it from good. God made our Passions for our good, and the right use of them is our duty.

5. Lawful and necessary defence of our innocency, our Reputation, our Estates, our Lives, our Liberties, our Country, is not sinful impatience, no more than to defend the Reputation, Estates or Lives of others, whom we must Love but as our selves. Selfish Malefactors, Persecutors, Destroyers, Reproved sinners, are wont to call them *impatient*, who let them not sin, slander, destroy and dominere without contradiction; yea that *praise not* the Plagues of the world and their destroyers. Christ is so accused for his words, of *Herod* and the *Pharisees*.

§. 5. But true Patience towards Men hath all these properties. 1. It maketh not a suffering or a wrong seem greater than indeed it is. Impatience maketh a tollerable pain or injury to seem intollerable: A tooth-ake seems as the breaking of the bones: A Man seems undone if he lose but his House, or his Land, or friend:

friend: A threatning of Men is a frightful thing: Martyrdome is more feared than Hell. To be Imprisoned or Robbed or Persecuted, or falsly accused, to be accounted wicked and guilty, where we are innocent, seem all unsufferable evils to the impatient; which a patient Man maketh not half so great a matter of. To be cast down from honour or preferment; yea to miss of his aspiring hopes, and have another set up before him, is a great and vexatious thing to the ambitious. To have a Mans opinion slighted, contradicted and confuted, his understanding villified, his worth and parts disgraced, his *Will* opposed, yea to be but mockt or scorned, seemeth a very troublesome injury to the proud, which patient Men would easily endure. Much of the wickedness and villainies in the world come from Mens impatient, over-great sensibility of their cross. The Thief ventureth on the Gallows and Hell because he cannot bear his wants: The Fornicator, Drunkard, and all the voluptuous, venture on everlasting misery, because they cannot bear the denying or displeasing of their fleshy appetite, and lust: The great

Tyrants of the Earth, depopulate Countries, raise needless Wars, and fill the world with Hellish wickedness, blood and misery, and their Consciences with the most heynous guilt, because they cannot bear an equal, or a seeming slight or wrong, or to see other Princes greater than they, or to be confined to moderate dominion (though large enough considering their account to God.) Murders are committed by the proud and impatient, because they cannot bear an injury or affront. Yea Sacred Church Tyrants rack and tear Christs Church, by their needless Impositions, and stick not at the cruellest persecutions and ru-
 inings, of Men better than themselves, because they cannot bear that Religion which is not subject to their Wills, or to see any teach the Flocks in any points, against their opinions; or worship God but in their words, or in obedience to their pleasure: Much less to have any that differ from them, to be esteemed and preferred before them. As *Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. 3.* by his Idol: They cannot endure any that bow not to their Idol Will: A Fiery Furnace seems not too hot for them, they can better bear

bear the most profane and filthy sinner, who hateth Godliness and God, than the wisest and best that will not honour and obey them. The sight of *Mordechai* depriveth *Haman* of all the pleasure of his power and wealth.

2. Patience towards Men doth not blind and pervert our judgments, to think that things and persons are other than indeed they are, or that the cause is worse or better than it is. It leaveth the Judgment impartial, and quiet, and sedate, to right considerations and conclusions. Impatience seldome useth a true Ballance. To a passionate Man or Enemy, all that their Adversaries say or do, doth seem injurious or bad: A Defenter from the Oracle of pride and dominations, seemeth a Fool, or Knave, or a Schismatick, if not unworthy to live as a man, at liberty on the Earth: All the undeniable good that appeareth in them goeth but for Hipocrisie: Yea if God say, that *disobedience* to him is as the *sin of Witchcraft*, and *Rebellion* against him as *Idolatory*, a Papal Spirit dare plead it for it self, as if it were as bad as *Witchcraft* to obey God, before him, and such as he, or as bad as *Idolatory*

not to rebel against Gods Laws, if such Command it. Yea if all others will not joyn with him in the false accusation, and defie Christian Love as much as he; but will speak for the innocent, and gainsay such unjust aggravations, he is not able to endure their Charity, but accuseth such as defenders of those, whom his pride and impatience hath feigned to be Criminal and intollerable.

3. Patience stops the injuries of Men that they go no further than Man can reach. If Mens scorns and slanders come to our ears, patience stops them from coming to the heart: If Men take away our Estates, patience hinders them from taking away our peace and comfort. If Men lay us in Prison or a Dungeon, patience disableth them to keep out our Heavenly light and consolation. If Men despise us, slight us, crosse our Opinions or Wills, patience doth not suffer this to vex us, or cast us into malicious discontent. But impatience openeth the door of the heart, to every crosse, or injury, or displeasure; And when Men can but touch our outside or our accidents, impatience doth more, and wounds the Soul. It tormenteth a Man
at

at the heart, because another hurts his flesh, or less than that, his goods, or name, or some superfluity, which even the flesh might spare.

4. Patience keepeth Men from revenge and all desires of it: It hath no tendency to do hurt. Yea it forgiveth injuries, and desireth God (on his just terms) to forgive them. Yea it is still joyned with a true desire of the good of those that do us wrong, and with just and prudent endeavours of their welfare. *Malchus's* ear is healed by Christ, who prayed for his Enemies, as he taught *Stephen* and all his Followers to do. Its true; we cannot forgive the sin as it is against God, nor the future punishment; but we may pray God to give Men Repentance and forgiveness. But impatience is a hurtful and revengeful disposition: It thirsteth after it: It delighteth in it, and rejoyceth to hear of an adversaries sufferings.

5. Patience will keep a Man from seeking his own *defence* and *right*, not only by unjust means, but by means otherwise lawful, when it is like to do more hurt to others, than good to him: If it be like to hurt the Soul of an Enemy,

by hindring his conversion to a Christian Life, it is not our defended outward Estate, that will compensate such a hurt and loss. This is the sense of Christs Command, of giving our Garment to him that sueth us at Law, and of turning the other cheek to him that striketh us, *Mat. 5.* That is, patience must submit to tollerable injuries, rather than by impatience to strive by violence and self defence, when it will but exasperate another whose Souls is precious, and whom we must love as our selves, yea we must not fly to the Law or Magistrate to defend a right which we can spare, when patience and submission will do more good to him that wrongs us, or to others, than the vindication of our right will do to us or them. But the meaning is not that *Intollerable injury*, may not be opposed, nor the *Commonwealth* have the preservation of the Law, and that Theives or Murderers be tolerated; nor that all Covetous, Malicious, Oppressing Men should be encouraged to injure others, by knowing that they will never seek their right. Its more for *Order and Common good* than for *our selves* that wrongs must be resisted.

§ 6. By what hath been said, we may understand what it is in *Patience to possess our Souls*. 1. A man loseth himself, or Soul, when he lets in the Enemy or evil into it, that before was but without the doors. His Soul must be Garrisoned with Patience, against sufferings, which are more grievous at the Heart, than in the outward accidents or the Skin: The Spirit of a man, if sound, will bear his outward infirmities, but a wounded Spirit who can bear. Patience in true Believers, and waiting hopefully on God, doth keep the Garrison of the Heart, when the Out-works, our Estates, our Reputation, our Friends, our Health, are taken from us: For 1. It keeps the Soul against self afflicting. 2. Against temptations to Sin by any unlawful means. 3. Against backsliding by forsaking duty, and not continuing in the use of appointed means. 4. Against sinful doubts, that God forsaketh us, or intends our hurt. It keeps up the peace and comfort of the afflicted, which is our strength. 5. And by all this it helpeth to secure our Salvation. 6. And so far as outward deliverance or ease, or safety is good for us; it is the likeliest way to have

it, *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.* Patient enduring and turning the other cheek, doth shame Afflictors, and sooner make them forbear us, than impatient violence and self defence: He that resisteth stirs up the wrath of his Afflicter; when he that blesteth him, and doth him good, and really manifesteth love to him, doth heap coals of fire on his head: He that cannot bear one blow is like to bear two: And he that cannot bear a lesser abuse, shall bear a greater. *Be patient Brethren, and establish your hearts, the Judge is at door, and the coming of the Lord is nigh, Jam. 4. 8, 9.*

But this is not a Rule for Government, nor to whole Kingdomes, as if they must forbear a necessary self-defence against destroying Enemies; but for private men whose self-defence would hurt the Common good.

§ 7. *But is all Impatience equally sinfull.* No; here the difference is very great.

1. Impatience towards men is a lesser sin, than against God: Man is a Worm, and may do wrong, and deserve anger and accusation: But against God there is no pretence for this.

2. Impatience

2. Impatience towards Men that *deserve anger*, and which doth exceed only in *degree*, is not so bad, as to be angry without *just cause*. Anger is oft-times a duty, as it is a displeas'dness at any evil, and a just repelling of it.

3. Anger which desireth not anothers hurt, further than just Correction is necessary to his or others good, is not so bad as that which tendeth to hurtfulness and revenge.

4. Anger which is short (though too much) and is laid by when it hath done its duty against evil, is not so bad as that which continueth, and is turned into malice and cannot forgive: *Let not the Sun go down upon thy wrath.*

5. Impatience which breaks forth into sinful words (as Cursing, Swearing, Railing, &c.) is far worse than that which doth not.

6. Impatience, which is but such necessitated sense or passion, as is the effect of natural bodily infirmity, is no sin at all farther than sin did bring that Infirmity; as some Children cannot choose but cry: Some Women cannot choose but be afraid at sudden frightening occasions. One may make the stoutest Man
some-

sometime to start. Sick people and aged feeble persons, are naturally less patient with matters about them, than strong and healthful Men. Some constitutions, especially of Women, can no more avoid some hurtful fear, grief, trouble of mind and anger, than a Man in an Ague can forbear to shake: Especially Melancholly and Hysterical persons. And God condemns not persons for being sick or weak, Infants or Aged. The will hath but a Political and not a Despotical power over many passions, as it hath over the Tongue and Hand.

7. Impatience which infecteth not the *Judgment* and *Will*, but only consists in *troublesome passion*, is far less sinful than that which doth. When it blindeth and perverteth a Mans Judgment, especially in great points, to think ill of Godliness or Duty, or to accuse God, or distrust his promises, or when it corrupteth the *Will*, and *Love*, and desire, and turneth it from God or any good, this is the damning sort of passion. So that passion of Lust and pleasure, in sensual Youths, in Drunkards, Fornicators, Gamsters turneth their hearts to sin from the Love of Holiness. It becomes dead-ly,

ly, wickedness when it captivateth the Judgment and the Will. And so when it vitiateth a Mans Conversation, and carrieth him against Conscience and Reason to iniquity. When Hypocrites cannot suffer for Christ and Righteousness, nor endure contempt and poverty in the world, they will force their Judgments to believe that such suffering is not necessary, and that its lawful to do that which will deliver them, much more if it tend to their wealth, honour and preferment. When sensual Men cannot bear a holy sober temperate life, they can make themselves believe that it is unnecessary. This is the damnable sort of impatience.

8. Some excess of impatience in the cause of God, is more excusable than when it is in our own cause. Zeal is a passion, but a great duty: *Phinehas* seemed to have been irregular in his zeal, but his Justice was imputed to him for Righteousness, and on it God stayd the Plague. Had not *Jehu's* zeal been too much for himself, though it seemed cruel, God would have excused it. Christ scourged the Merchants out of the Temple, and the Disciples remembered, the
zeal

zeal of thy House hath eaten me up. God speweth the lukewarm *Laodiceans* out of his mouth. Indeed it is an aggravation of the sin to farther on God a censorious, persecuting, envious, dividing, hurtful zeal: But when it is but some excess of passion or impatience with sin, and maketh a Man, but too eager in doing good, and not to hurt or injure any, the fault is small.

9. There is some passion that may be too much, and yet doth but drive a Man to God and to his duty: Some excess of fear and sorrow may make a Man pray harder, and fly from Temptation, and from sin the more, and live more watchfully and value the mercy of God more thankfully; but there is impatience which quite unfitteth Men for their duty to God and Man: When an impatient froward heart, maketh one unmeet for Prayer, or Meditation, or any holy and comfortable thought of God, and unable to rule their sinful thoughts, and unfit to converse with their Families and Relations with any kindness, fruitfulness or peace, this is a very sinful passion. When an impatient heart doth live in discontent with Gods provision
and

and disposal, and falleth Melancholly by that discontent, and giveth Satan advantage thereby to delude their imaginations, and hurry them into desperate Temptations, and sometimes to go mad, and sometimes to make away themselves, or at least to be unthankful for all Gods mercies, this is a very bad impatience.

10. A passion towards Men about small matters, which is but a sudden displicence (as anger at a provoking word or accident, which soon passeth away) is a small matter if it should be causeless, in comparison of a prophane impatience with Mens duty : When Men cannot bear a plain reproof, nor a searching book or Sermon, nor holy discourse, nor a Godly Life; when they think all too much, or Prayer or Preaching still too long, and can endure many hours more easily at a Play, or in a Tavern, or in Common or vain talk, or worldiy business, than one hour in any Spiritual employment; when they bear more easily with a Swearer, a Jester, an ignorant, carnal, worldly Companion, than with one that seriously discourseth of Death, and Judgment, and the world to come, this is a malignant sort of impatience.

In

In a word, bad Men are incompetent Judges of patience and impatience. They take that Man for a peevish impatient person, who is angry with their sin, and giveth them necessary reproof, or is not as cold as *Eli* to sinful Children or Servants, or is of a quick and eager temper, or sheweth but half that zeal and fervency in holy things, which the nature and weight of the matter doth require: And they will praise that Man as a mild and patient person, who is senseless of the greatest things which should affect him, and will quietly let Men sin and perish, and suffer them to be as bad as they will, and never speak sharply or disgracefully of their sin, nor cross and contradict them in the most dangerous error, much less correct inferiors for doing evil, but be indifferent in every cause of God, and live like a Man asleep or dead, when sin should be resisted, or duty done.

11. That impatience is worst which sets Men upon unlawful means of deliverance: As lying stealing, defrauding, unlawful wayes and Trades of getting, pleasing Men by sin; yea miserable Witches make compacts with the Devil, and

and some go to real or feigned Conjurers , to obtain their Wills , in their impatience : But that is a less sin, which ventureth on no forbidden remedy.

12. That impatience is the worst, which is justified, and not repented of, when Men say as *Jonah*, *I do well to be angry* ; and that deliberately when the passion should be over. And that is less (and more pardonable) which is confessed and lamented, and which we sincerely pray and watch against, and fain would be delivered from.

§ 8. Quest. *Wherein lieth the sinfulness of impatience towards God, or under his hand, when Men are his instruments, or permitted by him to afflict us, or in any other tryal which is of God.*

If we see not the evil of it we shall not be diligent to avoid it: To many take it rather for a suffering than a sin.

Ans. 1. Impatience towards God doth signifie answerable *unbelief* : Did we believe his promises that *all shall work together for our good*, and of all the benefit that we may get by patient suffering, it would do much to pacifie the Soul

Soul. But we are discontented at his usage, because we cannot trust him. —

2. Yea this sort of impatience implyeth some degree of Atheism or Blasphemy: For it implyeth some Murmuring against Gods Providence, and that implyeth some accusation of God; and all accusation of God implyeth an answerable degree of Blasphemy; and consequently denyeth God to be God. For if he be blame-worthy in any thing; he is not absolutely perfect: And if he be not perfect, he is not God?

3. Impatience signifieth strong *self-willedness*? When *self-will* is Mens Idol it usurpeth Gods prerogative, and when it should follow his Will by obedient submission, it sets up it self, and *must needs* be fulfilled, and cannot endure to be crost: As if we were Gods, that must have the disposal of all that shall befall us, and nothing must be otherwise than we would have it. Self-will is the great Idol of the world.

4. Impatience signifieth an answerable degree of *over-loving* the *flesh* and *world*; which also is a kind of Idolatry. Were it predominant it were mortal: *For to be carnally minded is death, and if*

if any Man (so) love the world , the love of the Father is not in him : Follow any impatience up to its Spring , and you will find that it all cometh from this Carnal Worldly Creature, Love. If we did not over-love our ease , our lives , our reputation , our provision and Estates , our Children or Friends , or any Earthly thing , we could patiently bear all our losses of them.

5. Impatience sheweth that we are answerably wanting in our esteem of Christ, and Grace, and Glory, and that we live not as we ought on the hopes of Heaven. If we did, God and our Saviour would be enough for us : Our Heavenly Treasure being safe would more satisfy us : Great Men can bear easily the loss of a peny or a pin : The things of the flesh are less in comparison of Christ and Heaven, than a pin is to a Lordship. Sense would do less to trouble us, if we lived by faith.

6. Impatience sheweth that we are too *unthankful* to God for all his mercies. A true Christian never loseth the tenth part so much as he possesseth : When he loseth health, and wealth, and and friends , he loseth not his God or Saviour

Saviour , nor his right to everlasting life : Yea when God taketh away one or two of his temporal gifts he leaveth us more than he taketh away. And what unthankfulness is it to forget all that we have received, and possess, and hope for, because that something is taken from us? Yea if God take away our health or wealth at last, should all the years that we unworthily possess them, be unthankfully forgotten? —

7. Impatience sheweth that we are too much *unhumbled* for our sins , and too insensible how ill we deserve of God. He that deserveth the Gallows and is pardoned, should not be impatient of a short Imprisonment , and to pay the Jaylors fees. Can we believe that our sins, are so many and great as we customarily confess them , and that we deserve Hell fire, and yet impatiently repine at disgrace or injuries from Men, or at the loss of Goods, or health, or friends? This bewrayeth an unhumbled and unmortified Souls (in such a degree) how humble soever Mens words and confessions are.

8. Impatience sheweth that we do not well understand our selves, or the Provi-

Providence of God. We neither understand well our disease, nor the meaning of our Physician : Did we know what a worldly heart is, or a hard heart; or a heart that hath not by Repentance got out the Core of sin, and how useful affliction is to heal all these diseases, we should not be impatient of the sharpest cure.

9. Impatience sheweth that we have not such a Love of Holiness as we ought to have : Else we should think no affliction too dear a means to procure the increase of it : When God tells us that he Chasteneth us to make us partakers of his holiness, and that it may bring forth the quiet fruit of righteousness; and that it may be good for us that we are afflicted, by reducing us by Repentance from our wandring folly, and worldly vanity and deceit : A due esteem of so great a benefit would make us take affliction for a gain. At our true Conversion we do in heart, resolution, and vow, sell all for the precious Pearl, forsake all for Christ, and Grace, and Glory : And should we not forsake that which affliction takes from us, for the same use, if we be really of the mind
 C. that

that we profess. A little Grace is better than all that is taken from us.

10. Impatience, when it is great and tormenting, is a degree of likeness to Hell it self. Hell is a State of Sin tormenting the Sinner (God justly deserting and afflicting such). Their own wickedness continually teareth and vexeth them, and depriveth them of all sense of Gods Love and Mercy, which might ease them. And what a resemblance of this hath the impatient Soul; which continually vexeth it self with its own *self-wills*, and *fleshy mind*, and *worldly desires*, which are all unsatisfied, and hath no mortification, obedient submission, faith, or hope, to relieve and ease it, but is night and day a self-tormenter.

Such use to say, *we cannot help it: Our thoughts and passions are not in our power: We cannot choose but be continually troubled with discontent, and anger, and grief, and fear.*

11. *Ans^r.* This sheweth a further evil in your passion, *viz.* That you are overbrutish, and that Reason it self is dethroned, and hath lost its due government of sense and passion. When a man can give you great and undeniable Reasons enough, against all your discontents, and

and yet they are impotent, and cannot prevail. God gave you reason to bear rule over passion, and he hath furnished you with Arguments, which should easily suffice. If your Reason be enslaved, and faith turned out of doors, and passion rule, whence came this but by your own willful sin? You say, *You are not able to bear what you complain of.* Why, then you shall bear more; God will make you able to bear more whether you will or not, if you cannot obediently bear his tryals.

CHAP. II.

Arguments and Helps for Patient and Obedient Sufferings in particular instances.

HAVING thus far considered of Patience and Impatience in the general, it will be useful to apply some special Remedies to many particular Cases: And first I will name the several Cases, which I mean to speak to: And they are

- I. Gods afflicting hand upon our Flesh, in Pains and Sicknes.

- II. The Sentence of Death

III. Loss of Goods and Estate, and suffering Poverty and want.

IV. The Sickness and death of Friends.

V. Unfaithfulness of Friends.

VI. Persecution by wicked men and Enemies.

VII. Dishonour and loss of reputation, even to scorn.

VIII. The unrighteousness of Rulers, and the wrath of powerful Men.

IX. The Treachery, and abuse of Servants, and hearers, and other inferiours.

X. Great and strong Temptations of Satan, &c.

XI. Trouble of Conscience, and doubts of pardon and Salvation.

XII. To lose the preaching of the Gospel, and other ordinary means of Grace.

XIII. When God seemeth to deny our Prayers, and not to bless his Word and Mercies to us.

XIV. When all our duties and lawful endeavours seem frustrated by God.

XV. The great weakness of our Faith, Hope, Love, and other Graces.

XVI. The Misery of the Unconverted World, which lyeth in ignorance and wickedness.

XVII. The great weakness, scandals, and

and divisions of *Christians* : The great and manifold troubles of the Church.

XVIII. The Triumphs of Sin and Wickedness.

XIX. Publick and National sins, plagues, and miseries, especially by war.

XX. The uncertainty of deliverance here, and the fewness of those that shall be saved at last, and the delay of our Salvation. Each of these require some special helps for Patience, besides the Common Helps.

CASE I.

In Pains and Sickneses of Body :

Particular Helps.

OF the First of these I have spoken already in the Meditations on Christs Sufferings, and oft elsewhere. I shall now briefly add,

I. *Sinful Souls!* Look back upon the folly, which was the cause of all thy pains. As *Adam* and *Eves* sin brought sufferings into the world, upon our natures, so my own sin is the cause of my own particular suffering. A sinful pleasing of my appetite with raw Apples, Pears, and Plumbs, when I was young,

did lay the foundation of all my uncureable Diseases : And my many offences have since deserved God's Chastisements ! While Conscience so justly accuseth thy self, dare not to mutter discontents and accusations against God. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord because I have sinned against him.* My pain is to me as the distresses of Josephs Brethren was to them, Gen. 42. 21. *We were verily guilty concerning our Brother in that we saw the anguish of his Soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear : Therefore is this distress come upon us,* and Gen. 44. 16. *What shall we say unto my Lord ! What shall we speak, or how shall we clear our selves : God hath found out the iniquity of thy Servants.* So may I say : How oft hath God checkt my vain and wandring imaginations, and carnal thoughts, and I did not sufficiently regard him ; And if God find out my sin, and my sin find out me, why should I blame any but my self and sin ?

2. I can see the necessity of Justice towards others : And why should I not see it towards my self ? What is a Kingdom without it, but a Wilderness of wild beasts, or a Land of Tories ? What is a School without it, but a Masterless House
of

of Rebellious folly? What is a *Family* without it, but a pernicious equalling good and bad. If God made no Laws to Rule Mankind, he were not their moral Governour, but only a cause of Physical motion: If he make no Laws, than there are no Laws in the world but Mans: And then there is no sin against God, and Law-makers themselves are Lawless, and can do nothing for which they need to fear the displeasure of God: But if God have made Laws, and will not by execution correct disobedience, his Laws are contemptible and no Laws, because no Rules of Judgment. And should *I alone* expect to be free from Fatherly Justice, and that my sin should have no correction and rebukes.

3. It is but the same vile flesh that suffers, which must shortly rot and turn to Earth, and if *I can* submit to that, why should *I not* submit to present pain?

4. As sin made its entrance by the *senses* into the Soul, God wisely driveth it out the same way, and maketh the same passage the entrance of repentance. It is *pleasure* that tempteth and destroyeth the sinner. It is *smart* and *sorrow* which contradicteth that deceitful pleasure,

and powerfully undeceiveth brutish sinners. And when Repentance is necessary to pardon and Salvation, and if it be not deep, and true, and effectually, it will not serve: why should I be impatient with so suitable a remedy and help, as my bodily pains and weakness are. Had I been in this pain when I was tempted to any youthful folly, how easily should I have resisted the temptations which overcame me.

5. The great *benefit* that I have found in *former afflictions*, assureth me that they came from Fatherly Love; yea have been so merciful a work of Providence, as I can never be sufficiently thankful for: What have they done but keep me awake, and call me to repentance, and to improve my short and precious time, and to bid me work while it is day? What have they done but keep me from Covetousness, Pride, and Idleness, and tell me where I must place all my hope, and how little the world, and all its vanities do signifie. And shall I think that the same God, who intended me good by all the rest of the afflictions of my life, doth now intend my hurt at last. Experience Condemneth my impatience.

6. As Deliverances have eased many a pain already, and turned all into thankfulness to God, so Heaven will quickly end the rest, and turn all into greater thanks and joy. And can I be impatient if I firmly believe so good an end of all?

7. What? did Christ suffer for my sin, and shall I not patiently bear a gentle rod?

8. What do the Bruits that never sinned, endure by Man, and for his sin? They labour, they are beaten, and hurt, and killed for us, and eaten by us? What then do sinners deserve of God?

9. How much sorer punishment in Hell hath God forgiven me, through Christ? And how much sorer must the unpardoned endure for ever? And cannot I bear these rebukes for pardon of sin, when they are intended to prevent far worse?

10. How do I forsake all, and how could I suffer Martyrdom for Christ, if I cannot bear his own Chastizements? Are these sharper than the flames?

11. God hath from my youth been training me up in the School of affliction, and calling on me, and teaching me to prepare for suffering, and am I yet unprepared.

12. Impatience is no remedy, but a great addition to my suffering; both by adding to my sin, and by a foolish vexation of my self. If God afflict my body, shall I therefore foolishly vex my Soul?

Lord all these reasons do convince me of my interest and duty: I am fully satisfied of thy Dominion, wisdom, and perfect goodness, and that all that thou doest is well done, and should not be accused. I am fully satisfied, that I ought with an obedient will to accept of this Chastisement, and not to murmur against thy hand. But the Grace and strength to do this must come all from thee. O strengthen thy Servant that he faint not, nor lay by his faith and hope, or sin against thee.

Quest. But is there no means but such Reasoning with our selves to be used, to help us to obedient patience in our sicknesses and pains?

Answ. What means but intellectual can be fit to quiet Souls? Opiate Medicines, that quiet the body, cannot cause the submission of the mind. But 1. Preparitorily, it is of great advantage not to use the body too tenderly in our health: Pamper it not, and use it not with too great indulgence, as to its appetite, ease
and

and pleasure. Be as careful of its health as you can, but not of its sensual desires. As they that fondly indulge their Children, and let them have what they would in health, cannot rule them in sickness; so is it with our bodies, use them to temperance and seasonable fasting, and daily labour, and a Dyet and Garb not over pleasant: As *Paul* teacheth *Timothy*, 2 Tim. 2. 3. *Endure hardness as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ: They that live in sensual pleasure are dead while they live. They that must have sport, and meat, and drink, and ease, because the flesh desireth it, and must take nothing that appetite, or sloth, or fancy is against, do cherish the Flesh in such a state of self-pleasing, as will hardly be brought to patient suffering.* —

2. Read the sufferings of Christ with due consideration.

3. Read oft the Histories of the Martyrs sufferings.

4. Go oft to the Hospitals or the sick that lie in pain, that you may see what is to be expected.

5. Look on the Graves, and bones, and dust, and you'll perceive, that it is no wonder if such an end must have a painful way.

6. Get

6. Get but deep Repentance for sin, and holy self-displeasure, and revenge will make you consent to Gods Correction.

7. Get but a sense of the danger of prosperity, and bodily delights, and ease, and how many millions are tempted by it, into the broad way of Damnation, and what those poor Souls must suffer for ever, and you will the easier bear your pains; and choose to be *Lazarus* rather than *Dives*, and a *Job* rather than a *Nero*.

8. But there is no effectual cure, till *Faith* and *Hope* have such fast apprehensions of the Glory, where all your pains will end, as may Teach you to take them but as Physick for your everlasting health. Therefore Prayer for Grace, depending on Christ, obedience to the Spirit, and a fruitful Heavenly Life, are the true preparations for patient sufferings.

CASE II.

Under the Sentence of Death, against inordinate fears.

II. **T**H E next Case that requireth Obedient Patience is the Sentence of Death. Of

Of this I have also spoken so oft, that I shall now use but these short remembrances.

1. He that would not die (when he knoweth that there is no other way to Paradise) would have no more than he shall possess on Earth : Which he may easily know is transitory vanity , mixt with so much vexation more than most of the Bruits themselves have, as would make Man as unhappy a Wight as they , if not much more : And Mans nature which abhorreth death, doth abhor the ending of its being, activity and delights : And will any Mans reason then direct him to choose such an end of all ? And to despair of ever having any life, activity or pleasure after this ? Doubtless nothing, but Hell is more contrary to our interest : And our interest if known will be our desire and choice, Who would willingly die as Bruits ?

2. If it be such brutish unbelief and desperation which maketh Death fearful, as if there were no better to be had, Reason should make such enquiry and search, whether there be no hopes : And if this be but faithfully done, the light of nature and the Gospel will confute such

such desperation, and give man the joyful prospect of happy immortality. 'Tis the darkness of ignorance, error and unbelief, that makes us fear that, which should be our joyful hope.

3. But if it be the fear of Hell or future punishment that makes us afraid of death, (as, alas, to most there is greater cause than they will believe) such fears, should drive Men presently to the remedy. We are not in Hell, where there is no hope, but on Earth where mercy is ready to save us, and seeketh to us, and beggeth our acceptance. If you fear death and Hell, fly presently to Christ for grace; Repent unfeignedly of all the sin which is your danger: Give up your Souls to be saved by Christ on his own reasonable terms, and then you may boldly and joyfully hope that he will save them. All your fears, if you will truly repent and trust in Christ, may be turned into assurance of Salvation, and glad desires to be with him.

4. Did we not all our Life time know that we must die? And should a Man therefore live in continual terrour? If not, how little doth the case and reason differ at the last, from that which he was all his life in.

5. All

5. All that have been born into this world since it was made, have quickly passed out again. Death is as common as Birth. And hath God made all Mankind to live in continual terrour, so much more miserable than the Bruits that know not that they must die? Shall I wish alone to be exempted from the Case of all Mankind.

6. Yea, all the Saints, that ever were on Earth (save *Enoch* and *Elias*) died. All that are in Heaven have gone this way before me. Faith can see beyond the Gulph or Stream, which they are safely waded over; and see them stand safe and joyful on the shore of Glory. And should I not long to be with so desirable Company. But of this I have spoken more elsewhere.

7. Do we beleive in Christ, that he hath done and suffered all that he did, to purchase Heaven for us, and his intercession, and grace is to bring us to it, and when all's done, would we not come there, and had we rather stay in a sinful, malignant, vexatious Earth.

8. Are we in good earnest when we pray, and labour, and suffer for Heaven, and make it the end of all our Religion
and

and Obedience, and make that the business of our lives, and yet would we not go to that which we spend our lives in seeking.

9. If our fears be unreasonable, necessitated by Nature, against the convictions of Faith, even those fears should make us desire death, as that which Faith tells us will end them all, and be our only full deliverance.

10. Is it not unnatural and contrary to the very interest, and tendency of all our faculties, to fear and flee from that which is our own felicity and joy? Doth our Heavenly State differ from the best on Earth, more than a Kingdom from a Prison; and shall we fear it, as if it were evil? and fly from the only hope and happiness of Souls.

Que. These Reasons to Godly men are undeniable; but the fears of death will not yeild to reason: Have you no other way of Remedy against it.

Ans. Souls are wrought upon by Soul-operations and remedies. But further,

1. When Fear cometh from Natural averseness to die, and Strangeness to the State of separated Souls, and from some unrevealed

ed things of the unseen World, its wisdom to cast those dark and unknown frightful things, quite out of our thoughts, and quietly to shut our eyes against them. When *I* was young, *I* was wont to go up the *Wrekin* Hill with great pleasure (being near my dwelling) and to look down on the Country below me, and see the Villages as little things: But when *I* was weak with age and sickness, the last time *I* went up, if *I* did but cast my eye downward my Spirits failed, and *I* was ready to fall down in sudden death. Were *I* chained fast to the top of a high Spire Steeple, *I* am sure that *I* could not fall, and yet *I* am confident, that one look down would suddenly kill me. What then should *I* do? As on the Hill *I* fixt my eyes on the earth at my feet, til *I* came down; so *I* would in such a height, either look only upward, or shut my eyes, and take heed of looking down to the Earth: So do here. If Faith and Reason tell you, that death is not to be so feared, and that all your hope and comfort must be beyond it, and that you are safe in Gods promise, and in the hand of *Christ*; but yet the thoughts of a Grave, and of Separation from the Body, and of all

all thats unknown to us in the next World, is frightful to you, shut your eyes, and think not on those things; wink and say, They belong not to my thoughts.

But then joyn the other remedies.

2. Look upwards, and dwell on the delightful thoughts of all that revealed joy and glory, which is ready to receive us, and of the company that is there, that Hope and desire may conquer Fear.

3. And especially trust Jesus Christ with your departing Souls, and trust him quietly and boldly, as to all that he hath revealed, and you know; and as to all that's unrevealed and unknown; He is fully able, wise, and willing. Trust him for he commandeth it. Trust him, for he never deceiveth any. He hath saved all departed Souls, that ever truly and obediently trusted him. Cast away all distrustful, caring, fearing thoughts, that would take his work out of his hand: Against all such even wink, and trust him: It is his part and not yours to know fully what he will do with you, and to receive you into his prepared Mansions, and to justify you against the accusations of Satan, and the guilt of pardoned Sin; and to bring you into the *Jerusalem* above, and

and present you spotless to his Father. Cast therefore all these Cares on him, who hath promised to care for you. Commit your selves to him, and trust him with his own which he hath wonderfully purchased : Suspect not his power, skill, or will : And beg his grace to increase your Faith, that you may not fear nor faint through self caring and unbeleif.

CASE III.

Under Poverty and Want, through losses, or any other Causes.

III. **A** Nother Case that needeth Obedient Patience is Poverty and want ; either through losses, which come by the afflicting Providence of God, or by robbery , or by oppression of unjust men, by violence or injurious suits at Law, or by the failing of our Trade or Calling, or by multitudes of Children, or by sickness, lameness, and disability to work, or by the unhappiness or miscarriages and debts of Parents, or by rash Suretiship, or any other way.

Poverty hath its temptations, and they may and will be felt, but must not be over-felt. It is some tryal to want food and

and necessary cloathing and habitation : It is more to be put to beg it of others, or be beholden to them, especially who give it grudgingly : But yet to a single man these are comparatively smal. Hard fare and scant, with patch'd or ragged Garments, may be consistent with health, when fulness causeth mortal diseases, to the Rich. But it is far harder to bear the wants of an impatient Wife and crying Children : to have many to provide for, and to have nothing for them : And it is yet harder to be in debt, and bear the importunity, frowns, and threatning of Creditors : what should the poor do in this distressed case, and how should it be patiently indured ?

I will first premise this counsel for prevention of such necessity and distress, and then tell you how to bear it patiently.

1. Let not your own sin bring you into Poverty, and then if it be by the trying Providence of God without your guilt, its the more easily born. Some run themselves into want by idleness, refusing diligent labour in their Calling : Some come to poverty by base and brutish sensuality, by pampering the flesh in
Meats

Meats and Drinks; their appetites must be pleased till necessity displease them: Some by covetous gaming losing their own, while they gaped after anothers: Some by foolish pride, living above their estates in worldly pomp, in houses, furniture, apparel, and retinue: Some by rash Bargains, and covetous venturousness: Some by rash imprudent marriage: Some by filthy beastly lusts; and many by unadvised Suretiship: Willfulness and guilt are the sting and shame of Poverty.

2. If you have little, live accordingly, and suit your diet and garb according to your condition, with a contented mind: Nature is content with little; but pride and appetite are hardly satisfied: Course Diet and Usage are as sweet and safe to a contented mind, as daily feasting to the voluptuous and rich.

3. If your labour will not get you necessaries for life and health, beg rather than borrow, when you know you are unable and unlike to pay. Its far easier begging before you are in debt than after: Two such burdens are heavier than one: Such borrowing, if you conceal your disability to pay, is one of the worst sorts of Theivery, and a great addition to your misery.

4. Draw

4. Draw not others by Suretiship or Partnership, or unfaithful trading into suffering with you. Be not guilty of the sufferings of others: It is more innocent, and more easie to suffer alone.

5. Therefore Marry not till you have a rational probability that you may maintain a Wife and Children: The Case of absolute necessity to the lustful is commonly excepted; and so it ought when it is but *harder living*, that a Woman is by such a Man put upon, and she knowingly consenteth to the suffering: But I know not how any such Mans necessity can warrant him to make Wife and Children miserable, and that by fraud and without her knowing consent? Nor do I think, that any Man can be under such necessity, which may not be cured by lawful means: Its a shame that any should need such a remedy; but I think Christ intimateth a better than such a wrong to others, if no less would serve, *Math. 19. 20.* and *18. 9.*

II. *But what is to be done for Obedient Patience when Poverty, (however.) is upon us.*

Ans. 1. Find out all your sin that caused it, and repent of that, and see that
that

that you are much more grieved for that than for your *Poverty*: And presently fly to Christ by faith, till your Conscience have the peace and comfort of forgiveness.

2. Remember that whatever were the means or second causes, Gods Will and Providence is the over-ruling cause, and hath chosen this condition for you, whether it be by way of Tryal (as to *Job* and the Apostles) or by way of punishing Correction. Therefore consider whose hand you are in, and with whom it is that you have to do; and apply your selves first and principally to God, for Reconciliation, and pardon of the punishment, and for grace to stand in all your Tryals. Behave your selves in all your wants, as a Child to a Father, as if you heard God say, *It is I that do it: It is I that corrects thee, or that tryes thee, or that choose thy dyet and Medicine according to thy need, and for thy good.*

3. Think of all those Texts of Scripture, from the Mouth of Christ and his Apostles, which speak of the temptation and dangerousness of riches, and the difficulty of the Salvation of the rich, and how few such are found Christians or saved;

saved; and how commonly they prove worldly sensual Bruits, and Enemies, and Persecutors of the faithful, *Mat. 19. 23, 24. Jam. 4. and 5.*

And then think of all those Texts that tell you, that Christ himself was poor that he might make many rich; and that the Apostles were poor, and that Christ tryed the Rich Man; whether he were sound, by bidding him *Sell all and give to the poor, and follow him*, and tryeth all his Disciples by taking up the Cross and forsaking all. He shewed what the Spirit of Christianity is when he caused all the first Believers to sell all and to live in Common: And he blesteth his poor, that are poor in Spirit, because that *theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*, *Mat. 5.*

4. Study well the great advantages of Poverty, and the particular danger of Riches. The Damnation of Souls cometh from the love of this World and fleshly prosperity and pleasures better than God, and Holiness, and Heaven. And what stronger temptation to this can there be, than to have all fulness and pleasure, which the flesh desireth. Tho it was not for being Rich that *Dives*, *Luk. 16.* Was damned, nor for being poor

poor that *Lazarus* was saved; yet it was Riches which furnished *Dives* with that pomp and pleasure, which drew his heart from God and Heaven; and Poverty kept *Lazarus* from those Temptations. Doth not reason and experience tell you, that its very much harder for a Man to be weaned from the Love of this world, and to seek first a better, who liveth in all plenty and delight, than a Man that is in continual affliction, and hath nothing in the world to allure him to over-love it? O what a help is it to drive us to look homeward for a better Habitation, and to save us from the deceitful flatteries of the world, and the Lusts of brutish flesh, to be still wearied with one cross or other, and pincht with wants, that even the flesh it self may consent to die, or not be importunate with the Soul to serve it any longer. A Man in miserable poverty is most unexcusable if his heart be not in Heaven.

5: To be overmuch troubled at Poverty is a sin of dangerous signification. It sheweth that you over-love the flesh and the world, and do not sufficiently take God and Heavenly felicity for your

Portion. No Man is much troubled for the want of any thing but that which he loveth: And to overlove the world is a sin, which, if it prevail against the greater Love of God and Glory, is certainly damning. And he that taketh not Gods Kingdom and Righteousness as better than the world, and seeketh it not first, cannot obtain it. If God and Heaven seem not enough for you, unless you be free from bodily want, you trust not God aright.

g. 7
6. Doth it not properly belong to God, to dyet his Family, and give to every one what he seeth best? If he had made you Worms, or Dogs, or Serpents, you could find no fault with him: May he not diversifie his Creatures as he please? Shall every fly and vermine murmur that he is not a Man: And may he not as freely diversifie the Provision of his Creatures, as their Natures? Must all be Masters, and yet none be Servants? Must the Rich be bound to relieve the poor, and must there be no poor to be relieved? *The poor you have alwaies with you*, saith Christ: How shall Men be rewarded at last; as they Cloathed them, fed them, visited them, &c. if there were

were none that stood in need thereof? Is not God wiser than we to know what is best for us; and can he not give us all that we desire if he saw it best? And do you think, that he wanteth so much love to his Children as to feed and cloath them? Were it for want of Love, he would not give them the far greater gifts, even his Son, and Spirit, and life everlasting: If this were the Tryal of his Love, you might say that he most loveth the worst of Men, who more abound in Riches than the most cruel and Persecuting Tyrants, the most wicked sensual profligate Monsters: Were Riches any special Treasure, God would not give them to such flagitious Enemies, and deny them to humble faithful persons. Its no small sin to murmur at God for maintaining and governing his Family according to his Wisdom and Will, and for not being ruled by the desires of our flesh.

7. Do you not see that Riches bring more trouble to them that have them than Poverty doth to contented persons. They that have much, have much to do with it, and many to deal with, many Tenants, Servants and others, that will

all put them to some degree of trouble : They have more Law Suits, losses, crosses , and frustrations than the poor. Their food and rest is not so sweet to them, as to poor labouring Men : Their bodies are usually fuller of diseases : Theives rob them , when he is fearless that hath nothing which other Men desire : He that hath little hath a light burden to carry , and little to care for.

8. And do you think that a Man will die ever the more willingly or comfortably for being rich ? No ; the more they love the world, the more it teareth their hearts to leave it ? O what a horror it is for a guilty miserable Soul to be forced to quit for ever all that he flattered his Soul in as his felicity , and all that for which he neglected and sold his God and his Salvation ! No Man till it comes can fully conceive the dismal case of a dying Worldling.

CASE IV.

Under the sufferings and death of friends.

1. *Of Children.* 2. *Of ungodly Kindred.*
3. *Some dear friend, who dyed in pain or misery.* 4. *Some Pillars in Church or State.*

IV. **A** Nother Case which requireth *Obedient Patience* is the sufferings and death of Friends, whether near us, as Wife, Husband, Children, or more remote, as those that have been most kind to us, most faithful to God, or most useful to the Church.

It is not only lawful but a duty, to be duly sensible of such a loss: To be void of natural affection, and to bear all Mens sufferings too easily, saving their own, is the odious quality of the basely selfish.

And alas many good Christians are yet with greater reason grieved, for the death of wicked Children or Relatives, lest they be in helpless misery: And some Parents mourn for their dead Infants as doubting of their Salvation.

Somewhat should be said against impatience in every one of these several cases.

As to the last,

I. Faithful Parents have no just cause to be impatient at the Death of Infants.

For, 1. For my part I think that God hath promised their Salvation: I speak not of the Infants of Heathens or Infidels, or of Hypocrites, but of sincere Christians, (one at least) or such pro-
 parents as take them for their own. I believe that it is not another but the same Covenant, which Baptism sealeth to the Child and Parent, and that as true
 faith is the condition to the Adult, so to be the Child of a true Christian is all, the condition to an Infant, to be dedica-
 ted to God and accepted by him; And I beleive that it is the Parents duty to dedicate him, and enter him into Co-
 venant with Christ: And that all that so
 come to Christ are received by him, and none cast out. And that this Co-
 venant on Gods part pardoneth their Original sin, and puts them into an
 Infant right to Salvation: and that all such so dying are saved by promise.
 And if any thing hinder actual Baptiz-
 ing, as long as a Beleiver is justly suppo-
 sed to devotch himself, and his Child to
 God, as far as in him lyeth, it is not
 the

the bare want of water or the outward Ceremony, that depriveth such of part in Gods Covenant. —

All this I have elsewhere opened and confirmed. But if this should prove an error, yet all grant that there is more *probability* of Gods special mercy to the Children of the Faithful than to others: But I think there is more. —

2. And they are taken out of a dangerous and troublesome world? What abundance of sad thoughts must they have undergone, and what abundance of temptations, and what abundance of sufferings of many kinds, if they had lived till old age? Had it been but the fear of dying, to escape it is no contemptible mercy. To be at the harbour so easily and quickly while others must be tost many score years on so tempestuous and dangerous a Sea, is matter of rejoycing. And tho confirmed Grace be never lost, such as I, who incline to think that the Grace given to the Infants of Beleivers as such, is as losable as *Adams* or the Angels that fell was, must with *Augustine* take it for a mercy, that their possible apostasie is by Death prevented. For my own part when I see how many Children of

extellent Men, prove wicked, and scourges to the Church, and what a miserable world it is that we are in, even sunk into darknes, wickedness, and self-destruction, like the Suburbs of Hell, I have many times rejoyced, but never grieved, that I never had a Child. And why then should I mourn if I had one, and God had quickly taken him away.

II. I confess the death of *ungodly Kindred*, is a humbling case: To think where they are, as Gods Word tells us of all the unconverted and unholy, and to think that they are past all help and hope, remediless for ever. But yet we have all this to command our patient submission to God.

1. God, who is absolute Lord of his Creatures, is wiser and more merciful than we, and doth all well, and to his Glory: And his Will is still fulfilled, which is the end of all: And if we knew what he knoweth, we should rest satisfied in his works, as better than our Will and way would have been.

2. When we come to Heaven we shall be fully reconciled to all the severest Providences of God: For our mind and Will shall be conformed to Gods,

3. We

3. We should rejoyce with the blessed, as well as be sorry for the miserable : And O what worlds of Glorious Angels and Spirits are there for us to rejoyce with, which in proportion should quite over ballance our sorrow for the damned.

4. The desiracon of the wicked should call us to think how unspeakably we are beholden to God for our selves, and so many of our friends, and all the faithful, that he did not forsake us, and cut us off in our impenitent state?

5. What are your kindred, that they should be more lamented than all the rest of the ungodly World ? How incongruous had it been for you to cry and mourn inordinately for the death of some one person, when the Plague lately took away in this City an hundred thousand ? And when the world lyeth in Heathenism, Infidelity, Mahometanism, Popery, Ignorance and Ungodliness, is it congruous for you to be over troubled for one, because he is kin to you ?

III. But suppose the Case be the death of some dear friend of ours ? When we think of the great pain in which they dyed, or of the Grave where now they lie corrupting, or of our former familia-

riety, our present losses, we are apt to over-grieve. But

1. We alwaies knew that they must die? Do nor as many die as are born.

2. We had a long time to prepare each other for our parting: And doth it now come as an unexpected thing? What else did we live together for, but to help each other to prepare for death?

3. Should we not be thankful to God for the use and comfort of them so long.

4. Is it not matter of greater joy, than our loss should cloud, that they have ended all their work and suffering, and have safely escaped all their Enemies and dangers, and are past all fears and sorrows, and are everlastingly delivered from all the guilt and power of sin, and have the end of all their faith and patience, their work and hope, and are triumphing with Christ and all the blessed in Heavenly endless joy and Glory? Do we believe this, and yet do we not rejoyce with them, but mourn as those that have no such faith or hope?

5. And as to their late pains, it is none when it is past: I would not now wish my self that I had never felt the pain thats past: Much less do they wish it that

that are with Christ? And yet we are apter to keep imprinted on our minds, the groans and dying sorrows of our friends, than all the former comforts of their lives, or all the joy that they have now with Christ, and shall have for ever.

6. Though natural affection be laudable, usually much faultiness sheweth it self in our overmuch sorrow: . 1. It sheweth that we prepared not for it as we ought to do. 2. It sheweth that we have too great a love still for this world and present life. 3. And that our belief of Heaven and the blessedness of the Spirits of the just with Christ, is very weak, and too little effectual. 4. And it sheweth that we expect a longer life on earth our selves, than we have just cause to do. If we knew we should die the next day or week, it would be folly to mourn for our parting from a friend that dyed but the day before. Would we not have their Company. And where can we have it but where we are to be our selves? And are we so sottish as to forget how quickly we must follow them and be gone? If we love their Company, we should rejoyce that we shall quickly

quickly meet them, and live with Christ and them for ever. I have oft thought (and mentioned it) how like it was to this our folly, when I have seen a Man fetch his beasts home out of Pasture, and when one hath gone through the Gate, another hath lookt and mourned after him, not knowing that he was presently to follow. Alas, it is want of conversing by faith with the Saints above, which maketh us over grieve for the miss of them, here below.

And as to the loathsomeness of the Grave and rottenness, it is the fruit of sin, and we alwaies knew that flesh was corruptible. It is made of that which lately stood on our Tables, the flesh of Sheep, and Beasts, and Swine, and Birds, &c. Turned into the flesh of Man: And before that, it was grals growing for the food of Cattle in the Fields: But the Soul corrupteth not: And if it change the rags of flesh, for a building in the Heavens, why should we repine at this? The Soul is the Man: And God will change these vile bodies, and make them incorruptible, and Spiritual, and immortal, like to the glorious body of Christ. *Phil. 3, 19, 20.*

IV. But our sorrows seems to be more justifiable, when we mourn for the loss of the Pillars, or useful Servants of the Church. Their death is the loss of Souls, yea of many, and a sign of Gods displeasure to a Land. But as to this also;

1. Magistrates, and Ministers, and all are mortal: They have their works and time, and then they must go home. They came not to abide on earth, but to do their Message and be gone: When they have faithfully finished their course, they must go to their Masters joy, that he that soweth, and he that reapeth may rejoyce together.

2. Thank God for the Good he hath done by them, and pray for a Succession of more. God will not serve himself here by one Generation only: As the same Rose or other Flowers, which you get this year, will not serve you for the next; nor the same fruit or Crop of Corn, but every year must bring forth its own fruit; so must it be with serviceable men: *Elisha* must have his time and part as *Elias* had; and a *David*, *Solomon*, *Hezekiah*, or *Josiah* live not here alwayes. Every Generation must have its proper Servants, work, and honour. If

some have till evening born the burden and heat of the day, allow them their rest, and let others work the following day.

3. And God hath the fulness of the Spirit in Christ, to send forth on Successors: And he is the Lord of the Church, and knoweth whats best, and what the People are fit to receive: Christ lived on Earth to no great age, and he tells his Apostle, *That it was expedient for them, that he go away, that the Comforter might come*: God will choose his own Servants, and their times, and we must submit to his disposal.

4. *Paul* was permitted at *Rome* to dwell two whole years in his own hired house, and receive all that came to him; preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord *Jesus Christ*, with all confidence, no man forbidding him. But I have been permitted above forty years to preach the same Gospel, though long a Law, and Bishops, and Justices did forbid me, (save that for nine or ten years, they confin'd my vocal preaching to my house). *James* was cut off near the beginning of his Apostleship. *Steven* was sooner cut off than he

he. Some excellent Ministers hath God taken away young.

5. Christ is more worthy of their company than we are: Heaven is more worthy of them than earth, than those that hate them and abuse them, *Heb. 11. 28.* *Of whom the World was not worthy.* The world knoweth not the worth of a Saint, nor how to use him, or what use to make of him.

6. We know not from what approaching evil God in mercy taketh them away. We have lately lamented the death of many excellent persons, Magistrates and Ministers: But the Storms that are now assaulting us, tell us, that it was a reasonable and merciful change to them. Christ saith, *Joh. 14. 28.* *If ye loved me, ye would rejoyce, because I say I go to the father.* They mourn not for their own removal: Would you wish them here again from heaven? You do not mourn, that Christ, and *Abraham*, and *David*, and the Apostles are gone to heaven, nor that *Lazarus* hath changed his beggery for *Abrahams* bosom; nor that the Martyrs are gone thither: The ancient Churches were wont with thankfulness to recite the names of their departed Pastors
in

in their Liturgies, and to keep dayes of
 thanksgiving (which we call Holy-dayes)
 in memorial of their Martyrs. They may
 say, as Christ, *Wee're not for me, but for
 your selves and your Children* : for those
 that must indure the storms that are
 coming upon us, and must be sifted by
 Satan and his Ministers, to try whether
 their Faith and Constancy will fail. Christ
 purchased them for heaven, and he will
 have them there. It is his Will and pray-
 er, *Joh. 17. 24. Father I will that those
 whom thou hast given me be with me where I
 am, that they may see the Glory, which thou
 hast given me* : (a better sight than we see
 here, when we are laid among Malefa-
 ctors in Gaols, or scorned for preaching).
 If our hope were in this life only, we were of
 all men most miserable : And do we love
 them so little as to wish them with us
 in so miserable a life ? Is vanity and vex-
 ation, and the portion of the wicked,
 better than the *Jerusalem* above ? Our
 Cows, and Sheep, and Hens, &c. when
 they have bred up their young ones at
 great pains and love, must part with
 them for us to kill and eat, yea, and with
 their own lives also : And shall we grudge
 that our Friends and we must die to go
 where

where God will have us? If God should not take our Friends or us, till our Wills consented, I doubt we should stay here too long, unless pain constrained us to consent: But God is fittest to choose the time. *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of all his Saints, Psal. 116. Even the hairs of their Head are numbered: It is not then for want of Love to them that they are taken away by death. They rest from their labour and their works follow them? Were we not fools and slow of heart to believe what the Gospel saith of blessed Souls, we should know that they ought to suffer with Christ, and then to reign with him, as he suffered, and then entered into his Glory.*

And, as *David* said of his Child, we shall come to them, but they shall not return to us.

CASE V.

*Unkindness and injury of friends,
and Relatives.*

V. **A** Nother Case that calls for Patience is the *unkindness of freinds, and their injurious dealing with us: Husband and Wife often prove burdens and continual* griefs

grieffs to one another. Parents and Children prove worse than strangers: Those that we have obliged by our benefits are ungrateful, and those untrusty whom we have trusted.

1. It must be so: Man will be Man, uncertain and untrusty: *David* and *Paul* say that all Men are liars; that is, such as will deceive those that too much trust them. They are all sinfully ignorant, erroneous, mutable, and selfish: If interest, change, or Temptations comes there is no hold of them, if God do not hold them up. Did you not know Man till now?

2. It is Gods just rebuke for your too much trust in Man, and for your erroneous overvaluing Man: And it is his merciful remedy to drive you home from Man to God: This deceit and failing of your friends is part of the curse pronounced, *Jer. 17. 5, 6.* *Cursed be the Man that trusteth in Man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, &c.* But blessed is the Man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is, for he shall be as a Tree planted by the waters, &c.

3. The

3. The failing of Man doth but tell us what we are our selves, even untrusty and mutable as other Men: It should help to humble us for the badness of our nature, and drive us, to seek to Christ for his confirming grace, and not to trust our selves too far.

4. And it should call us to examine whether we never wronged and deceived others? Have we not put the best side outward, and seemed better to our friends than we are? Have we not been less helpful, friendly and comfortable to them, than we promised, or then we should have been? And deceived their expectations? Have we not by our failings, or provoking harshness been their grief? Or worse, have we not pleased them in their sin, and been Temptations and snares to their Souls?

5. Is there any friend that is nearer to you than your selves? And is there any that hath hurt you half so much as you have done your selves? Alas how little suffer we by friends or foes, in comparison of what we suffer by our selves.

6. Christ went before us in this kind of suffering, to teach us what to expect from Men,

Men, *Peter* denyed him with Cursing and Swearing, and that after warning and contrary protestations: And all his Disciples forsook him and fled. And yet he forsook not them, but dyed for them, and as soon as he was Risen, kindly comforteth them, *Go tell my Bretheren, and tell Peter, saith he, I go to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.*

7. Were your friends so much obliged to you, as you were to God and to your Saviour; or did they ever promise and vow more to you, than you did in your Baptism to Christ? And have you faithfully performed all your vows, and answered all your obligations. Did you ever oblige any by such benefits as God hath bestowed upon you? No not by the thousandth, thousandth part. And have not you more unthankfully injured God, than ever any friend did injure you? Let this then provoke you to repentance.

8. If it be an unkind Husband or Wife; first see that you be innocent and give no provocation: If you have deceived them by seeming better than you are, or if you be a burden to them, no wonder if they deceive you, and be a bur-

burden to you. And next remember that you had your choice, and that after time of deliberation : If you have by blind love, or passion, or Covetousness, or careless haste, deceived your selves, repent, and make the best of it for the future that you can. Sin will not be without its sting.

9. If you Love God and them, why are you not more grieved that they wrong God, and that they hurt themselves, than that they wrong you and deal unkindly by you. They do a thousand fold more wrong to Christ, and more hurt to their own Souls, than they can do to you.

10. I fear most of us too little consider that friends over kind and so overloved are oft more dangerous than the unkind, yea than Enemies? To be crossed by them may many waies do us good, but to overlove them hath more danger and hurt, than I will now digress to mention: Corrupted Love is the sinfull-est and worst affection.

11. And why do you not consider the benefit and comfort, which you have had by your friends, as well as the injuries? What if they now deal unkindly

kindly by you? Have they not many years been kind and useful to you? And should that be forgotten? And if you compare them, was not the kindness longer and greater than the unkindness: If *Job* say, *(shall we receive good at the hands of God and not evil,* we may much more say so of Men.

12. Perhaps God permitteth it, that you may be the less grieved to part with them at death? I have noted it in some of my nearest acquaintance that have lived in the greatest endearedness, that a little before death some unkindness hath fallen out between them, perhaps else death would have torn their hearts more grievously than that unkindness did. When God would separate *Paul* and *Barnabas* for his work, a little dissension became the Cause. And when *Paul* was to be offered up, almost all his old Companions forsook him, 2 *Tim.* 4. 16. Who would have thought that *David* should ever have dealt so unkindly by *Mephibosheth*: But his prosperity was less sweet and less ensnaring by it.

13. It is purposely to keep us from heart Idolatry and drive us to God our sweet friend, that he permitteth friends

to fail us. It is not them but God that we live upon, and that we must trust to, if we would not be deceived: It is not they but Christ that are our Treasure: God never dealt unkindly with us: He hath promised that he will never fail us, nor forsake us: 2 Tim. 4. 16. When Paul had said, *At my first answer no Man stood with me, but all Men forsook me, (he addeth) yet the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, &c. Davids Lovers and Friends stood aloof from him, when God was his hope, Psal. 38. 11, 15. and Psal. 14 4, 5. I looked on my right hand and beheld, but there was no Man that would know me: Refuge failed me; no Man cared for my Soul. I cryed unto thee O Lord, I said, thou art my refuge and my Portion, &c.*

14. I confess that the case of a bad or unsuitable and unkind Husband or Wife, is a very sharp Tryal: They are near you, even in your bosome, bed and heart: They are still with you, and a contentious Woman is as a continual dropping, saith Solomon. To have a discontented, displeased, angry, provoking person alwaies with one to the death, is a greater affliction than any that ordinarily cometh from Enemies. But yet let such consider,

1. That

- ✓ 1. That it is a just chastisement for their sin, and may help to a more deep repentance: 2. As it is a great and constant tryal, so it calleth for great and constant patience, and exercise of Grace: And what is liker to increase grace, than great and constant exercise? 3. It is a great and constant preservative against the flatteries of this world, or building a Palace or Fools-Paradise on Earth; it is a daily voice to such, saying, *this is not your rest; Look up and long for better Company and friends.* 4. And as near as Wife or Husband is, God is much nearer to us, and *his Grace* is nearer us, even within us; and should make us rejoycingly forget all other joyes or sorrows, in comparison of him.

15. The same I say of wicked Children: The affliction is grievous; but 1. It calleth Men to examine how they have done their duty towards them; have you lovingly, familiarly, and unweariedly instructed, exhorted and admonished them? Have you not thrust them into Company, Callings or Places of Temptations, for a little Worldly wealth or Learning or Reputation? Yea have you kept them from Temptations by

by prudent watchfulness and convincing dissuasions? Have you taught them as is required, *Deut. 6. 11.* Or have you not slumbered over so great a duty; and lookt God should save them meerly for being yours.
 2. But remember that all the Children of God in Glory will be dear and comfortable to you, as if they had been all your own.

CASE VI.

Injuries from malicious Enemies?

1. *Personal.* 2. *Persecuting.*

VI. **A** Nother tryal, which requireth Patience, is *injuries from Malicious Enemies.* Either *Personal Enemies,* or *such as hate and Persecute us for our Duty.* As to the former sort consider,

1. We have the greater reason to be patient, when we consider what poor and worthless Worms we are; and that enmity and injury against such low and little Creatures is a smaller fault, than if it were against some nobler or excellenter Wight. We make no great matter of beating a Horse or Dog. Tho' this must not diminish their Repentance, it must diminish our impatience.

2. And we are so bad, that we give oc-

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caſion

caſion of hatred and hard thoughts of us to our Enemies; and tho' this juſtifie not their miſtakes, who take us to be worſe than we are, yet it Commandeth us, who tempt them to it; the more patiently to bear it. They miſtake us moſtly by thinking that the ſame ſins that are in us are predominant, and in a greater meaſure than they are: They call us Erroneous, Proud, Hypocrites, Covetous, Unpeaceable, &c. And when we know that there is in ſome Errour, ſome Pride, Hypocriſie, and the reſt, the Conſcience of this muſt make us the eaſier bear with, and forgive the falſe accuſers, that charge us with more than we are guilty of.

3. And when we conſider we were Enemies to God, and have far more wronged him by ſin than any can wrong us, and yet he forgiveth us; it muſt teach us to forgive the wrongs and enmity of others: Yea God hath made our forgiving others, a condition of his full forgiving us; and we cannot pray to him for forgiveness, and conſequently not expect it, on any lower terms; yea we muſt learn of God to Love our Enemies, and pray for them, and do them good, and not

not to seek revenge and satisfaction.

4. Which of us hath done no wrong to others? Have we unjustly censured none? Nor spoken evil of them, or been angry, or reviled them without just cause? Have we never tempted any to sin, nor encouraged them in it; nor omitted any duty which we owed them? If we have we may see Gods Justice permitting injuries against us, as an equal castigation.

5. However Conscience tells us that we have deserved a thousand fold worse from God: And he useth to make the sins of Men, the Instruments of his punishments on Earth: God punished *David* by the permitted sins of *Absalom*, and *Shimei* (tho he caused not the sins.) And *David* the more patiently endured it, as acknowledging the Providence of a correcting God.

6. Its your own fault if all your Enemies wrongs do you not much more good than hurt. God hath told you how so to improve them: And if you do, you may well be patient with that which is your benefit and advantage; yea and thankful too, which is more than patient. But if you do not so improve them, you have more to be grieved for than their

injuries, even your own sin and omission, which loseth so gainful an advantage.

7. If they repent, God will forgive them all their greater wrong against him; (O what a deal doth he forgive at once to a converted sinner) and then sure you will easily forgive your mite: But if they repent not, instead of impatience and revenge, pity them and lament their case: For they will suffer more than you can now desire: Would you have them suffer more than Hell?

8. Your happiness and all your great concerns are out of the power of all your Enemies: It is but matters of little moment that they can touch you in. They cannot take away your God, your Saviour, your Comforter, your Glory; no nor the least of your Grace: They cannot deprive you of your knowledge, or of Love to God, of faith, or hope, or peace of Conscience, or Joy in the Holy Ghost: They cannot bring back the guilt of any pardoned sin, nor cast you into Hell?

9. And if impatience open the door of your heart, and let that in, which your Enemies could bring no nearer you than

than your Estate, your Ears, or your flesh at most, it is not they but your selves that are your chief tormenter. And will you torment your selves because another wrongeth you?

10. Do you not observe how sin hath set all the World in a State of Enmity to God, and all that is holy, and to the way of their own Salvation: And that all the un sanctified world is in a War against God and Goodness, under the unknown conduct of the Devil: And do you make a great matter then of some petty injury or enmity to you? This is more foolishly selfish, than if you should complain of a Souldier for taking a pin off your sleeve, when an Army is plundering all the Town, and setting all the Country on fire, and murdering your neighbours before your face.

So much for patience, in case of personal enmity and injury.

II. But if it be in the cause of Persecution for your duty to God, impatience then is far more culpable. In this Case I premise this advice.

1. Search diligently least some personal Crimes of your own be in the cause as well as your Religion: Sometime the

sinful miscarriages of Christians doth provoke the adversaries to think the worse of their way of Religion for their sakes, and so to persecute them for truth and duty, but provoked to it by former sin. In this Case your first duty is to repent of the sin which first provoked them, and openly confess it and lament it: for while you remain impenitent, and hide or justify your gross iniquity, you harden them that afflict you, and you provoke God to let them loose: Especially when you can aggravate all the miscarriages of your persecuters, and cannot bear the naming of your own sin, but take it for enmity or injury to be called to repent.

If it be any sin of ours that have made us stink in the nostrils of our persecuters, we cannot comfortably suffer or expect deliverance, till we repent.

2. Let us search with the severest suspicion and impartiality, that it be indeed truth and duty, and not error and sin, for which we suffer. I doubt not but men may be persecuters and injurious, who do but afflict men for sin and error, when it is done for such as are but those tollerable infirmities, which all Christians in one kind or other are liable to: Or
when

when the punishment is greater than the fault deserveth; and when its done in malice against the piety of the persons, or tends to the hinderance of piety, and injury of the Church of God. But yet the guilt of his Persecuters is no justification of any one that suffereth for his sin or Errour, nor should abate, but increase his Repentance, in that he occasions by his scandal the sin and misery of his Persecuters. *Peter* justly calleth us to make sure, that none of us suffer as evil doers; much less as impenitent persons that cannot endure to hear of it. I am one that have been first in all the storms that have befallen the Ministry these twenty years last, (to look no further back:) And yet my Conscience Commandeth me to say, as I have oft done, that many through mistake, I am perswaded, now suffer as evildoers for a cause that is not good and justifiable. For the great difference among sufferers proveth that some must needs be mistaken.

3. If we be sure that our cause is good, let us also make sure that we *use it well*: A good cause may be abused: Let us see,
 1. That we mixt no error with it;

2. That we do not manage it partially and uncharitably: That we make not the Contrary worse than it is. 3. That we delight not to represent our adversaries more odiously than there is cause: 4. That we deny no just honour or obedience to our Governours: 5. That we shew not the same Spirit of Persecution which we exclaim against, by differing from them only in the manner of expression: If they unjustly say that *Men are so bad as to be unworthy of liberty, Tolleration, or Estate*, and you as unjustly say that *Men are so bad as to be unworthy of Christian Communion*, you agree in unjust Condemning others, and only wrong them several wayes. 6. Let us see that while we are restrained from some part of our work, we neglect not that which none forbiddeth us. Are we not shamefully guilty in this: None forbiddeth Ministers to Catechize those that are under sixteen years of age, or to teach them by Preaching, or to Pray with them, and yet that is commonly neglected. None forbid us to confer daily with our ignorant or vicious Neighbours to try if we can convert them; nor to win them by kindness, as Christ

went to Publicans and Sinners : None forbids Religious people to Catechize, and teach their Families, and read good Books to them, and pray with them, and openly sing the praises of God, as *Daniel* openly prayed in his house, to be examples to ungodly Families about them. And yet how much is this neglected : And a dumb, and negligent Father and Master of a Family will condemn himself by speaking against dumb and negligent Ministers, and against those that restrain him from some publick duties: Some think that if a Law were made (which God prevent) against all Catechising and teaching mens Families, and against praying, and singing the praises of God, it would by opposition stir up some to do it better, that now neglect it, so prone are they to that which is forbidden : And since it is come into the heads of some Clergy-men, to preach openly, that it is unlawful to receive Dissenters to their Communion, and they intend to forbid them and excommunicate them, that they may be uncapable of publick trust or votes, I hear that some intend to communicate, who before condemned it as unlawful, and sharply censured those that did it.

But when you have made sure, that you suffer not as evil-doers, upon mistake, but for your duty and for righteousness, consider these following reasons for your patience.

1. If you believe not that nothing is done against you by Man, but what falls under the over-ruling disposing will and providence of God, you deny his government, and are unfit to do or suffer: Though God causeth none of the malice, and sin of the Murderers of Christ, yet as to the effect of their free sinful volitions, there was nothing done, but what Gods counsel fore determin'd for the redemption of the world: And if you believe this, dare you impatiently grudge at the Providence of God.

2. Though you are innocent towards your persecuters, and you suffer for well-doing, you are not innocent towards God, who may use bad men for just Chastisement.

3. It is an unspeakable mercy to have unavoidable deserved sufferings, to be made the sanctified means of your salvation, and to be for ever rewarded, for bearing that which else would have been but the foretaste of Hell, Sin brought
unavoyd

unavoidable pain and death on all Man-
 kind. No power, or policy, or price
 can save you from it. If you deny Christ
 and sell heaven to save your lives, you
 shall die for all that; and he that so sav-
 eth his life shall lose it, and lose his Soul
 also by such self-saving: *It is appointed*
to all men once to die, and after that judge-
ment. A Martyr doth but die, and so
 doth his persecuter; and death to the un-
 godly is the door of Hell. And is it not
 a marvellous mercy, that suffering but
 the same death, in faith, and hope, and
 obedience for Christ, and for your duty,
 shall procure you a Crown of Glory. E-
 ven as the same outward blessings: which
 to the wicked are but the fuel of Sin and
 Hell, are by Believers improved for Grace
 and Glory; so is it also with the Case of
 Suffering: And what a terrour is it to
 Conscience, when the Sentence of death
 shall be past upon you, to think. *Now*
that life is at an end, which I sold my soul
to save! O that I had rather chosen to die
for my duty, than by my sin; this death
would then have been the entrance into hea-
ven, which is now the entrance into misery.
 This made many dying Christians in Cy-
 prians charge to be hardly comforted, be-
 cause

cause they had not dyed Martyrs, that Death might have been a double gain to them. Is it not better have a glorious reward for dying than die for nothing.

4. It is no small benefit to be called out to the exercise of that, which every one must resolve on, and be prepared for, that will be saved: that we may not be deceived, but know by experience, whether we are sincere or not: What ever worldly Hypocrites think, Christ was in good earnest, when he said, *He that forsaketh not all that he hath, even life it self, cannot be his (sincere) Disciple*, Luke 14. 26, 30, 33. Holyness here and Heaven hereafter is that which Christ came to procure for his own, and that which all must choose and trust to as their hope and portion, that will be his: Worldlings never make this choice, but being doubtful of the Life to come, prefer the present prosperity of the flesh, and will be religious onely in subordination thereto, and hope for heaven (if there be any life to come) but as a reserve and second good, because they cannot keep the world; which they will not lose for the hope of heaven, as long as they can keep it, but will rather venture their Souls than

than their bodies : This being the true difference between the faithful and the worldly hypocrite, all that will be saved must be such as would let go life, and all the world, rather than by wilful sin to forfeit their Salvation, if they were called to it; Tho' all be not actually put upon the tryal, and seeing it is so easie for a prosperous Man to profess Christianity with a worldly mind, and say that *He would rather die than wilfully sin*, being in hope that he shall never be put to it, it is a great advantage to our assurance of Salvation, to find that we can suffer in a time of tryal, and so that our resolution was not false; for so far as any Man loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him: The heat of Persecution withereth the Corn that groweth on the Rocks: They are offended and go sorrowful away, because they cannot make sure both of Earth and Heaven. And as the Faithful have the fullest proof of their sincerity in the greatest sufferings, no wonder if they have the greatest comfort: No reasoning will so fully answer all their fears and doubts; whether they are sincere, and should not forsake Christ in suffering.

5. Believers should much more pity their Persecuters than themselves: If a mad Man in *Bedlam* should Spit in your face, would you have your action against him, or would you not be sorry for him? They are preparing fuel for themselves in Hell, while they make a Purgatory for you on Earth: O think who it is that ruleth them, and how he will reward them, and how dear they will pay for this for ever without Conversion; and pray *G.* God to have mercy on them in time. If the Righteous be scarcely saved, and must suffer before they Reign, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? It is a Righteous thing with God to recompence Tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you that are troubled Rest with Christ, *2 Thes. 1. 6, 7.* Do but believe that dreadful reckoning of their day thats coming, when in vain they will wish the Hills to cover them, and shall receive according to their works, and then you will rather weep over their foreseen misery, than make too great a matter of your suffering by them. They know nothing but present things like beasts, but you fore-know the things to come: As God beareth with

with them, because he knoweth that their day is coming.

6. And remember that if you suffer for Christ and Righteousness, the wrong is much more to him than to you: And he will Judge them that do but neglect his Servants, much more that persecute them, as doing it all against himself: And the cause and interest being much more his than yours, cast it upon him, and trust him with his own cause? Who is to be trusted if he be not? And when is he to be trusted, if not when we suffer for him? An honest Matter would bear out his Servant who suffereth for obeying him, and will not Christ? Do you think that Christ will be too slow, or deal too gently in his revenge? Sure you would wish no greater punishment to Persecuters than he hath threatened. It were better a Millstone were hanged about their neck, and they cast into the Sea, who offend but his little ones? On whom this stone falls it will grind him to powder.

7. The promises made to them that patiently suffer for well doing, are so many and great that I will not recite them, supposing you cannot be ignorant of them.

And

And do you not believe the word of
 ✓ Christ? He hath bound himself to save
 ✓ you harmless, and to be with you in
 your sufferings, and never to fail you
 ✓ nor forsake you; and to give you for all
 that you lose for him an hundred fold (in
 value) in this world, and in the world to
 ✓ come Eternal life: If we trust these promi-
 ses undoubtedly our patience and choice
 will shew it: He that is offer'd a Lordship
 in a Foreign Land, if he will leave his
 Native Land and friends where he liveth
 in Poverty or Prison, if he trust the pro-
 miser, will leave all and go with him: But if
 he dare not venture, he doth not trust him.

8. Do you suffer any thing but what
 ✓ Christ foretold you of? Did he not tell
 you that you must sit down and count
 what it will cost you to be a Christian be-
 fore you undertook it? Did he not tell
 you that you shall be hated of the
 ✓ world, because you are not of the world;
 yea hated of all (worldly) Men for his
 Name sake? And did you not profess to
 take him and his Salvation on these
 ✓ terms? And to consent to his condi-
 tions? If you thought them too hard you
 might have refused them. What Hy-
 pocrites are they that silence Christs Mi-
 nisters

nisters for scrupling to engage them in Covenant to Christ at their Baptism, by the Symbolical transient Image of a Cross, as obliging them to be the Soldiers of a Crucified Christ, and when they have done, abhor all that in Christianity which will bring the Cross, and will rather venture on Hell than bear it? Yea will lay the Cross by Persecution upon others! Its true, that it was in your Infancy that this Covenant was made by others for you: But did you not own it at age, when you called your selves Christians? Alas Hypocrisie undoes the visible Church: Men mean nothing less than what they vow? They think that resolution for suffering, or Martyrdome is proper to some rare extraordinary Saints, and will not believe that none is a true Christian nor can be saved without it; that is, without preferring Heaven before Earth, and the Soul before the Body: Take any of these worldly Hypocrites aside, and seriously ask him, (in *France* or *Flanders*) how dare you persecute the Servants of Christ; And they will say, it is not long of us, we cannot help it; the Law and Magistrates command us: We shall suffer our selves if we
do

do not obey them, would you think that these Men did stand to their Baptism? As if, they plainly said, *what ever Christ saith, we will do any thing again't him, and his Servants that Mans Law bids us, rather than we will suffer our selves*: How far are these Men from being ready for Martyrdome, yea or being Christians or the Servants of God. If you are Christians you have bound your selves by Covenant to take up the Cross and follow Christ, tho to the death and to chose rather to suffer than wilfully to sin.

9. And did not you as Christians list your selves as Soldiers under Christ, against the Devil, Flesh and World. And is he a Soldier indeed that expecteth to have no Enemies? And that murmurith because he must come in danger, and see any Warr? Did you not know that there is a War throughtout all the World, between Christ and Satan, between the Womans and Serpents Seed, and is hurting and killing any wonder in a War? Or that he that is born after the flesh should persecute him that is born after the Spirit.

10. What hath a Christian to do in this life, but to prepare for a safe and hap-

happy death? And if you had done this, you had prepared for Persecution and Martyrdome it self. If you are ready to die by sickness, why not by fire, or sword, or halter, if God will have it so? Do you not know that most sicknesses do by their length put the body to more pain than ordinary Martyrdome, before they kill Men? How easie a Death is hanging in comparison of dying by the Stone in the Bladder, or by the Collick, or many other sicknesses? Yea the painful death of burning being soon dispatcht, is little to these. And sure a Fine, or Prison, or Poverty is yet less then any of these. O sloathful Men! unfaithful to your selves that have lived so long unprepared for death, when you had nothing else to do in the World. Your flying from suffering by sin, doth shew that you have neglected the great work of Life, or that that which you lived for is yet undone. You would have been ready to suffer, if you had been ready to die. And doth this seem strange to you, after all your warnings and professions?

II. Have you a due estimate of worldly things? Are you Crucified to the World, and it to you by the Cross of Christ?

Do

Do you account them as loſts and dung for him? Do you uſe them as if you uſed them not, and poſſeſs them as if you poſſeſt them not? Do you Judge of them as death will teach you to do? If you do, ſure you will not count that Perſecution, that taketh them from you, an unſufferable thing; nor be impatient to be deprived of them.

12. Had you rather be in the Caſe of the proſperous Perſecuter; or the Perſecuted Believer? If the former, you are no true Chriſtians? If the latter, murmur not when you have that which you prefer? Sure a true Martyr at the Stake, or with *Daniel* in the Lyons Den, would be loth to change ſtates with *Nabuchadnezzar* or *Darius*.

13. Do you think Chriſt loved *Stephen* the firſt Martyr, or *James* the firſt Martyred Apoſtle, or *Peter* and *Paul* that dyed for the Goſpel, leſs than he loved thoſe that overlived them and ſuffered no ſuch thing? Is not the Crown of Martyrdome the moſt glorious? Why are they ſaid to live before the reſt a thouſand years? Had you not now rather have *Stephens* place in Heaven than theirs that ſuffered nothing for Chriſt? And if it be beſt at laſt, is it not moſt Eligible now.

14. Ar

14. Are you afraid of Men? You have a greater than Man to fear, and greater hurt than Man can do you, *Luke 12. 4.* *Fear not them that can kill the Body, and after that have no more that they can do, but fear him that can destroy Soul and body in Hell? Yea, I say, unto you fear him.* Are you afraid of a Prison, or death or fire: Fear more Hell fire, and death, everlasting. When *Bilney* burnt his finger in the Candle, he remembered that Hell fire was more intollerable.

15. Wherein hath Christ been more an Example to you, than in patient and obedient suffering, even unto death, and to the most accursed shameful death? Do you think that he only suffered to keep us from all suffering? *Peter* saith, it was to leave us an example; and *Paul* saith that we must be conformed to him, and partakers of his sufferings: Why else doth Christ call us to bear the Cross? And is it not joyful to see the footsteps of Christ in the way we go, and to know that we follow him.

16. Sure that is not a state of greatest fear and sorrows, in which Christ hath Commanded us to rejoyce with the greatest joy: But so he hath done in the Case of
of

of Persecution, Mat. 5. 10, 12. Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven, 1 Pet 4. 12, 13. Think it not strange concerning the fiery Trial, but rejoyce, in as much as ye are partakers of Christs Sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed you may be glad also with exceeding joy. Heb. 10, 34. They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods knowing that in heaven they had a better and enduring substance. So Heb. 11. throughout.

17. God hath promised you that all your sufferings shall work together for your good, Rom. 8. 28. and taught you how to make them your exceeding gain: Practice this art, and you will be more patient; when you find the benefit and feel that you are more than Couquerors. Our Victory is by patient suffering: The worst men may conquer our Bodies by force, but our Souls are unconquered, and we are conquerors of the temptation and real hurt, while we keep obedient patience. When its said of Job, In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly, Satan was conquered and missed his end, while he seemed to prevail upon his flesh.

By Persecution you may learn.

1. What a nature is in lapsed Men: 2. That there are Devils that keep up a War against Christ. 3. How great their powers are in the world, by Gods permission over wicked Men. 4. How wonderful a work of God it is, that the Godly can live in so much peace and safety as they do, among those that are the very Servants of the Devil; even as *Daniel* was kept in the Den of Lyons, because God shut their mouths. 5. How great need there is of Sanctifying grace? 6. How great a mercy our Conversion, which carrieth such a nature in us. 7. It calleth us to continual Christian watchfulness, to *beware of Men*, and especially of their Temptations, and to be wise as Serpents, and innocent as Doves. 8. It driveth us to constant Prayer and dependance upon God for help and safety. 9. It teacheth us to keep up faith and hope, as having our eye continually on God and on the Heavenly inheritance; without which we have nothing to support us. 10. And it assureth us that there is a day of Judgment in which Christ will call over again in Righteousness, all the false Judgments and actions of

of this world : He that maketh all this use of Persecution , will have gain enough to plead for patience.

18. To review this last ; if you believe in Christ indeed , you do believe that he will come again to Judge the World in Righteousness ; and to set all strait that here was made crooked by the falshood and malignity of Men. And will not the foresight of that day resolve you patiently to suffer ? Faith may foresee how poor blinded Persecuters will then have their eyes opened , and see him with terrour whom they Persecuted in his Servants , and how he will silence and condemn them , with *Depart from me ye Cursed into Everlasting fire , prepared for the Devil and his Angels : Mat. 25. 41. 2 Thes. 1. 6, 10, 11, 12. and 2. 12.* If the forethoughts of that day do not quiet or resolve you , alas , you have greater matter of fear and trouble than Persecution , even your own unbelief : Pray more for faith , than for deliverance from Men.

19. Consider comparatively what Man is that hurteth you , and what God is who hath promised to help you and reward you. Man is a worm , blinded and mad

mad by the deceit of Satan ; They know
 not what they are doing, against them-
 selves and God ; as well as against you :
 They are all the while going towards
 the Grave, and their Souls towards the
 dreadful bar of God : Their bones and
 dust are no whit terrible : If God will
 here have mercy on them, he will make
 them know, *Who it is that they Persecute,*
and how hard a work it is bare foot to
kick against the pricks, and make them, as
Paul, themselves undergo such Persecuti-
 ons for Christ, as they madly used against
 others : They will say, as *Paul,* *I was*
mad against them : And his case tells you,
 that if the very Captain of the Persecu-
 ters were but Converted, tho by a voice
 and Miracle from Heaven, the rest in-
 stead of taking it for a Conviction, would
 presently persecute him themselves. But
 if God let them go on, alas, where will
 they shortly be : O pray, pray hard for
your Persecuters as Christ did, before
 they are past Prayers and hope in Hell.
 But are these poor wormes to be much
 feared ? How oft are we charged ; *not to*
fear them, Luk. 12. 4. Mat. 10. 28. Job.
 24. 27. Jer. 46. 27, 28. Ezek. 3. 8, 9.
 The fearful (that fear Men) are num-
 bered

bered with *unbelievers*; and are shut out among the Dogs, if fear prevail against their faith, *Rev. 22.*

And then think what that God is, that hath promised our defence. When infinite *Power*, *Wisdom* and *Love*, is set against a few Wasps and Wormes, shall our fear of them be greater than our trust in him? If it were but an Angel from Heaven that appeared for our defence or encouragement, against a Dog that barked at us, it were a shame to us not to trust him. If God be for us, who shall be against us? Read of *Psal. 91.* and *Rom. 8.* and *Mat. 6.* See *Isa. 8. 13, 14.* and *41. 10, 13, 14.*

2. Can any thing do you greater good, that can outwardly befall you, than that which both assureth you of your right to Heaven, and puts you presently in possession of it? And this will be the fruit of Martyrdom. O what a change will that day make? From torment to our Master's joy? From the raging Army of the Devil, to the Heavenly Chore of Saints and Angels? A strong faith would make us long for such a day. As Children of God, and joynt Heirs with Christ, if we suffer with him, we shall be glorified

ied with him: And the present sufferings are not worthy to be compared to the Glory, *Rom. 8. 18. 2 Cor. 4. 16.* For which cause we faint not; but tho our outward Man perish, our inward Man is renewed day by day: For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are Eternal. *Wherefore let them that suffer according to the Will of God commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well doing, as to a faithful Creator, Pet. 4. 19.*

CASE VII.

Oppression and injustice by Men of wealth and power.

VII. **A** Nother Case that requireth Patience is *Oppression by Men of Wealth and Power* in the World, and injustice of ungodly Governours. Justice is so much due to all Mankind, and injustice so odious, that we are ready to take it the more heynously when we can-

not have our right. Oppressing Landlords raise their Rents to such a height, that poor Men with the most tiring care and labour, can hardly live. And some Rich Men do think that their Wills must be poor Mens Rule, and that they must deny them nothing that they Command, as if the poor were slaves, that had no property or benefit of the Law. And worst of all, when in too many Nations on Earth, Rulers are unjust, and haters of just and upright Men, and either break all bounds of Law to ruin them, or else turn the Law it self against them, and when they justifie the wicked, and Condemn the innocent; yea when Piety, and Honesty, and Conscience are made the most intollerable Crimes, and filthiness and sensuality do pass for works of one that may be trusted; these Cases call for extraordinary Patience, and it is the more grievous because that Magistracy is a special Ordinance of God, and the Image of his supereminance and governing power shineth in it: And to have Satan get possession of it, and turn it against God himself who made it, and make that the Plague and Calamity of Mankind, which was instituted for order, justice

justice and defence, and the upholding of Goodness and suppression of sin, this is a most grievous Case. The same I say of cruel Masters Tyrannizing over their Servants, and wicked Parents oppressing virtue in their Children: Here Patience is of great necessity.

And 1. We must here be very careful to distinguish between true Power and its *abuse*, and not to think evil of power it self because it is abused. And this must be the more carefully studied, because here practically to distinguish is exceeding difficult. For the best things when corrupted are the worst. It is hard to love rain and waters in a deluge, when it drowneth the Country, Men and Beasts? One that had seen the Fire of *London*, or yesterday the burning of *Wapping*, might be tempted to take fire to be more terrible than amiable. If Physicians killed twenty for one that they cured, Men would grow into a dread or hatred of their profession: And as to Rulers, Judges, and all sorts of Magistrates, the Case is the same. They are Gods Ordinances (in general) and good in themselves, and if well used, would be the great blessing of the World; Gods

ordinary means to protect the innocent encourage the Godly, and bring ungodliness to shame; To keep rich Men from oppressing the poor, and the unruly multitude from popular rage against their Neighbours, or Superiors; to keep up equity and Justice, and to frustrate Treachery, Perjury and fraud; in a word, to be Gods Ministers or Officers for the Common good, and to see his Laws obeyed by the Subjects, being themselves the most zealous in obeying them, and to be a terrour to Blasphemers, Fornicators, Murderers, Thieves, Oppressours and other evil doers, and a praise and defence to them that do well.

There are two Cases which are no better than ruin to Mankind: That is, to have no *Government*, and to have *utter Tyranny*, which designeth the undoing of the Subjects, Souls and Bodies, by forcing them to sin against God to their Damnation (as far as force can do it) or Commonly to die as Martyrs, and which is used to subvert the Government of God, and to set up wickedness and Will, and to destroy the Common well fare.

And there are two Cases which are such

such as we must submit to : One is the *tollerable injustice, and oppression of ungodly Rulers*, who will kill, and ruin, and persecute some particular innocent men, but yet are for the common peace and welfare, and do *more good* by their Government than hurt by their abuse : These must be patiently indured, so far as the evil cannot lawfully be remedied. The other sort is the *defective government of good Rulers*, who endeavour the common good, and promote Piety, and suppress Sin, but with such mixture of failings as follow their personal imperfections, and with such blots as *David* had in the Case of *Mephibosheth* and *Uriah*, and as *Asa* had that oppressed man of the People, and as *Constantine* had in the case of *Crispus* and *Athanasius*, and as *Theodosius Senior* had in the case of the *Thessalonians*, and as *Theodosius Junior* and *Anastasius* had in the case of the *Eutychians*, and as even our King *Edward* the sixth had about the death of the Duke of *Somerset*, and he about his Brothers death. *Grotius* owneth the old saying, that the names of all good Kings may be written *uno annulo* in one ring : I think that is too hard a censure. But even the best

are men : And as a Physicians faults tho few, cost the Patient dearer than all their Neighbours faults do : So a Princes faults, tho he be extraordinary good, may cost a Kingdom dearer than the faults of thousands else. Yet these honest Princes are so great blessings to the World, and so rare, that it is a happy Nation, that hath no worse, and must be very thankful for them.

But there is a fifth sort imaginable in *Eutopia*, and those men of so perfect wisdom and goodness, as that all their Government is just. Short of Heaven, there is little or no hope of this, unless there be a golden Age to come, or such a Reign of Christ for a thousand years as some describe, which is but the reign of wisdom, justice, piety, and love. But when God hath some great blessing for a Land he useth to raise up Rulers better than the rest of the Nations have ; and when sin provoketh him he removeth them quickly from an unworthy Land, as he did *Josiah*, and our King *Edward* the sixth, and *Jovian* in the Roman Empire : yea, sometimes a wicked people and Clergy prevail against a godly King, as they did against *Ludivicus Pius* in *France*.

2. Because bad Rulers are a great National Judgment, it calleth a Land to search after and repent of National sins; for it is for such that this Calamity usually cometh: When *Gildas* describeth the horrid wickedness of the *Brittish* Kings, he describeth the great wickedness of the Clergy and people as the deserving cause. And no wonder when in the dayes of *Hezekiah* and *Josiah*, tho the Kings were excellently good, yet the unreformed obstinate Clergy and people so provoked God that he would not spare them, but cast them off into Captivity and ruin. But usually God gratifieth their pernicious desires, and giveth them such bad Kings as they would have, as he did *Saul*, *Jereboam* &c. and permits people to please themselves to death.

3. Take heed that selfishness and error cause you not to judge worse of Governours than they are, and to take just restraint or punishment for oppression, and to think all unjust that is displeasing to you. This error is Common to the selfish, partial sort of Men, that Judge Men and actions by self interest.

4. Take heed least overmuch love to your Estates or Liberties make some injustice and injuries done you, by Rich Men or Rulers, to seem much greater than they are; and it be your vice that rendereth them unsufferable.

These things being avoided, bear your oppressions with these considerations,

1. God permitteth it for your sin, or for your tryal: Therefore be humbled under it as Gods hand, and bear it obediently till he deliver you.

2. If wealth and power be so lyable to make Men Oppressors, do not you desire them, but thank God for a safer station, and bear that which keeps you from it.

3. The sin of oppression is a far greater evil than the suffering of the oppressed: Therefore rather pity them as miserable, than your selves.

4. Consider how much more many Millions have suffered by Oppressions, than ever you did or are like to do. How many thousands were killed and ruined by *Alexander*? How many thousands by *Julius Cæsar*? How many thousands in many *Roman Civil Warrs*,
under

under *Anthony, Marius, Scylla, Sejanus* &c. How many Churches corrupted and Persecuted by *Constantius, Valens, Gensericus, Hunnerichus*; &c. What a Multitude did *Justinian* Murder in *Egypt* in blind zeal for Christ? How few Ages have escaped the guilt of innocent blood? How many thousands did the Popes cause slay in the *Palestine Wars*, and in the *Italian frequent Wars*, and the *Rebellions against the Emperours, Fredericks, Henries*, &c. How many thousand Christians called *Albigensies, Waldensies, and Bohemians* did they Murder? How many destroyed in *Piedmont, Rhetia, and Germany*? How many thousands Murdered at once in *France*, and oft besides? What dreadful work hath the Inquisition made in *Flanders, Holland, Spain, and Italy*? What a dreadful case was *Ireland* in, when two hundred thousand *Protestants* were Murdered, and thousands more stript and utterly undone? *Queen Maries Bonfires* were surper. than we have yet felt; while Satan in all ages filleth the World with Wars and blood; a little tollerable oppression by Landlords or inferior Rulers should not be over tenderly and impatiently complained

plained of, by Tenants, Servants
any others.

5. Innocency is a sound and health-
ful state, and can bear much? *Peter* b
Servants be patient when they suffer un-
deservedly; but its not thanks-worth
to be patient when they are beaten for
their faults. Peace of Conscience ma-
eth all sound within; and then a Man
may bear the more easily all that befall
leth him from without: When he can
say, it is not for my sins he may con-
-fortably commit his cause to God.

6. Whoever oppresseth you, God will
never do you wrong, and it is his hand
-that your great concerns are in: He will
use you with merciful Justice, yea and
deliver you from all the oppressions
Men.

He suffereth men of the world to op-
press the just, that they may be driven
-him by Prayer and Faith, and may be
-saved from damning worldly love, and
God may have the glory of their deliv-
rance. How great a part of the Psalms
are written upon the occasion of oppre-
sions, plots, and cruelties of wicked
enemies: And what abundance of prom-
-ses of deliverance from such, are re-
corde

corded in the sacred Scriptures.

7. Patience and Faith are a thousand times better than money, or liberty, or any thing that oppressors can take from you : Do you but take the advantage of oppression to exercise these, and all is turned to your exceeding gain.

8. In this also nothing befallerh you, but what Christ foretold you of, and taught you in what manner to bear. The prosperity, power, and oppression of the wicked, had almost stumbled *David* himself, till he went into the House of God, and understood their end ; They are like Gallants sporting and feasting in a sumptuous house, which is to be blown up or set on fire before the frolick is well ended, and then who will be found among them ? He will think himself happy that can say, *I was none of them* : Yea in Judgment how fain would they as *Pilate*, wash their hand from innocent blood ? And even of omissions, much more of Oppressions, say, *Lord, when saw we thee Hungry, Naked, in Prison, &c.* *Qui punitur vincit.* Christ hath foretold you of all this, and taught you to Love your Enemies, and bleis them that curse you, and pray for them that hate and persecute

secute you, and turn the other cheek to him that striketh you, and go two Miles with him that Commandeth you to go one, and give him your Coat that sueth you for another Garment: That is, rather suffer than seek private revenge, yea or seek to right your selves, when it will do more hurt to the Souls of others by scandal or alienation or exasperation, than it will do good.

Righting ones self against injuries, especially of powerful oppressions, will cost one more than patient putting up all will do: As I went along the street a Tory in *Latin* reviled me, and struck me on the head with his staff; I took little notice of him, and went on my way and the hurt was small: I saw another stricken and he stroke again, and it raised a tumult, and he and others were sorely hurt, and went to Law after for reparation.

He that cannot bear one blow, must bear many: And he that cannot bear to be oppressed in his Estate, perhaps may lose his liberty or life: We live in a World of wicked Men; and the wicked will do wickedly: And two Rogues by Perjury may take away the lives of the
 most:

most innocent and excellent Members of the Common-wealth or City? And what Conscience make such wretches of a malicious Oath, that use to adorn their Sentences with [*God damn me*] and with direful Oaths?

Is not your oppression a reproof for your unthankfulness, that God by wonderful restraint, hath saved your lives from perjury and oppression so long? Is it not a wonder of Providence that perjury hath Murdered no more? Yea that till Popery made it seem needful to their ends, few in many years did ever suffer by it: Is it not a wonder that the worthiest Men both Lay and Clergy, are not utterly destroyed, as to liberty and life, when two or three Atheists, Infidels, Papists, exasperated villains, may swear them to the Goal or the Gallows almost when they will? Yea, when even *Walsh* the Papist Priest, out of *Keting* tells you that his Irish men, have in all Ages lived in continual war, and murdering one another on the lightest causes, yet if Irish Papists will come hither out of their own Land, and set up the trade of swearing Men to death, I know no remedy but to die in patience. I know some (the most

most innocent and worthy Men that I know) who dare not let strangers speak with them, least they should Swear Treason against them: For my own part before my weakness confined me to my Chamber, I long confined my self to my House, and refused to speak with unknown persons (to my grief forced to reject the presence of Foreigners that came in want on begging) least they should be Men that would Swear me to the Gallows, if they could but say that once they speak with me or saw me: And as the world now goeth if we escape with our Lives by such avoiding human converse with unknown persons (as we fly from Wolves and Serpents) we shall esteem it a very great protection by the Providence of the all Ruling God. I doubt not but (while I am sharply accused by some for coming too near the Papists and Conformists,) there are no small number of them, whose Faces I never saw, nor ever had any thing to do with, who would confidently swear some Capital Crime against me, had they but the least advantage of Speech or Presence, to make it seem but a possible thing, only because I am accounted an Adversary to their

their side and Opinion in Religion.

And why should all this seem strange or intollerable to us? When Christ doth so often tell us, that Rich Men are usually the worst, and that he sent out his Apostles as Lambs among Wolves? And when we know how Christ, and his Apostles were used by the Rulers and Teachers, of the People; yea and Christians after them in most ages to this day.

9. Consider how great the Temptations are, of Men that are in power, wealth and pleasure; and then you will pity them and pray for them: Who knoweth what you would have done your selves if you had their Temptations? They have a stronger worldly interest to tempt them against that Law of Christ, which calls them another way, than other Men have. They have more full and constant provision for all the desires of the flesh: They are more than any other Men, assaulted by subtile designing seducers, who have their worldly ends (on Church-pretences usually) to attain by their seduction: They are more in danger of the infectious breath of flatterers, and the false accusers of Godliness and good Men than any others: They use to be deprived of
the

the Common needful benefit to Mankind, of faithful and plain dealing Friends and Monitors, and truth is usually kept far from them, and out of such a hearing as if needful for Conviction. And to live continually under such dangerous Temptations, needeth more than Man for their preservation, from deceit, and sin, and the ruin of themselves and hurt of others.

10. Our obedience to God were far from a tryed praise worthy degree, if it cost us little or nothing: And doubtless **G** Christ will bear all your charges. Oh what an excellent Servant is that, who will chearfully do all his duty, to an unjust and abusive Master? What an excellent Child is that, who useth all due Reverence, Obedience, Love and Patience, to a froward, harsh, yea and a Malignant Father. Not disobeying God, nor hazarding his Soul by wilful sin, or forsaking Godliness, and yet not dishonouring his Parents, or disobeying them in any lawful thing. What an excellent Wife is that who constantly and patiently performeth all loving and chearful duty, to an abusive, furious, drunken, prophane, Malignant Husband: This requireth abundance more grace, than to live in chearful

love and duty to a Godly, tender, loving Husband. The former sort is called, *more acceptable to God*, and the latter sort of duty, is *no glory*, 1 Pet. 2. 20. To suffer for sin, is indeed a bitter suffering, even for that which is worse than suffering: 1 Pet. 3. 17, 18. *It is better if the Will of God be so, that we suffer for well doing than for evil doing: For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust; 1 Pet. 2. 11, 12. For hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered he threatned not, but committed all to him that Judgeth righteously. O follow this excellent example: There lyeth more of Christianity in learning of Christ to suffer from foolish wicked Men, than most will think of.*

Col. 3. 22. Servants obey in all things your Masters according to the flesh; not with eye service as Men pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God; and whatever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord and not to Men, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the Inheritance, 1 Pet. 2. 18. Not only

only to the good and gentle but also to the froward: These are the excellent Precepts of Christ.

It is therefore inconsiderately said by many, (*If I had deserved such usage, I could have born it.*) As if suffering without sin were not a lighter burden than sin and suffering for it. The oppressor hurts himself an hundred times more than he can hurt you, (if you do no worse to your self than he doth) as guilt of oppression is as *James* calls it terribly, a cause to such (*to weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon them? Their Riches are corrupted, and their Gold and Silver Cankered, and the rust of them shall eat their flesh as fire, and they heap up Treasure for the last daies. The cries of the Poor labourers oppressed by them, are entered into the Ears of the Lord; They live in pleasures and wantonness on Earth, and nourish their hearts, in feasting and fulness, and condemn and kill the just, who resist them not. Be patient therefore Bretheren to the coming of the Lord, Jam. 5. Luk. 18. God will speedily avenge his elect that cry to him, tho now he delay.* —

CASE VIII.

*Superiours sufferings by bad Children, Ser-
vants, Tenants, or Subjects.*

VIII. **A** Nother Case, that needeth Pa-
tience, is the suffering of Sa-
periors by bad Children and Servants,
Tenants, Tradsmen, and others, whom they
must use and trust. Of bad Children I have
partly spoken before: Natural love maketh
this one of the heaviest afflictions in the
world: When Parents have been at all
that suffering, care, labour, and cost,
which go to the bringing of Children in-
to the world, and bringing them up from
the breasts to maturity, and teaching them
their duty to God and Man, and prepa-
ring them to be useful to themselves and
others, that after all this they should
prove brutish fleshly Sots, that are slaves
to their bellies, and wallow in the sink
of filthy lust, and favour nothing but
pride and fleshly pleasure, and the belief
of Gods word hath no power to change
them, yea perhaps prove haters of seri-
ous holiness, and enemies of Good men,
and plagues to their Country, and
fight against the only means of their
own

own and other mens Salvation. Oh, what a heart breaking affliction is this?

• Yea, when in Case of the most ungodly error, or swinish appetite and lust, the counsel, the tears, the prayers of Parents cannot move them, to any true repentance or reformation: I confess, I that never had a Child, am no fit Judge of the heavyness of this Cross.

I have written my thoughts to such miserable youths, and partly to Parents, in a small Book, called *Compassionate Counsel to Young-men*: I here briefly adde,

I. In this sad Case, make not light of it, or as ungodly Parents do, that are troubled more for their Childrens wastefulness and want than for their Souls; And yet be not over much cast down: Neglect no means (prayer, counsel, company, &c.) which may tend to their recovery, while there is any hope; And especially look back (not with despair, but) with true repentance upon your own sins of youth against God, your Parents, and your selves. And then examine, whether you have dealt with Christian wisdom and fidelity to have prevented their misery, in their education. Did you with love and diligence labour

to make them understand the things of
God and their Salvation? Did you la-
bour to bring it to their hearts, that they
might fear God and his judgements, and
know the evil and danger of sin? Did
you labour to make Religion pleasant to
them by shewing them the goodnes of it,
and avoiding harsh averting wayes? Did
you watch over their wayes, and keep
them from a custome of pleasing their ap-
petites over much? And did you ingage
them in wise and godly Company, and
use them in religious Exercises, and keep
them from the infectious company of bad
licentious youths, especially in places of
Plays and Gaming, drinking and idle-
ness, wicked Schools, or Academies,
where temptations are too strong for
fleshly unexperienced youth. If you have
failed in these duties, and have sent your
Children among the vicious, sensual and
malignant, whether on pretence of lear-
ning, Ministry, Courtship, breeding, or
gainful Trades; no wonder, if both they
and you do suffer by it, and if they be
plagues to their Country and to you,
who have been plagues and treacherous
to them, and sent them as into a Pest-
House, or a Stews, and then are greived
for their diseases.

2. Be humbled for the vitiousness of your own natures, which had the root of all these sins, and conveyed them originally to your Children.

3. Let it make you the more sensible of the greatness of Gods Mercy, which hath healed your natures, and pardoned your sin, and saved you from that wilful sottishness and wickedness, which others are given over too, of which you were in danger.

4. The thoughts of the far greater misery of most of the world, who lie in Idolatry, Infidelity, wickedness, or Error, may somewhat drown the sense of a particular affliction; As the common plague in *London* did overcome the sense of the loss of our own friends; and the Common fire overcame the sense of the loss of our Houses.

5. Yet while there is life there is hope: God hath waies enow to humble and break the stiffest and the hardest heart:
P. Therefore pray for them and warn them to the last.

6. Grace maketh all Christs Members dear to us as well as our own Kindered: Christ himself answered when they mentioned his Mother and Bretheren, that they

they that heard Gods word and kept it were his Mother, Sisters and Bretheren : And when one said, *Blessed is the Womb that bare thee*, he said, *yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and do it.* Therefore rejoyce in the welfare of all the Children of God in Heaven and on Earth, who will be as dear to you, as your own Children.

7. Submit to Gods absolute Dominion who best knoweth what to do with his own, and never did wrong to any, nor can do, and will satisfie all at last of the Wisdom and goodness of all his dispensations.

II. Bad Servants also are to some an exercise of Patience, some will not learn nor be reformed, but hate goodness and live wickedly : Some in Drunkenness, Filthynefs, Gaming, and Play-houses : Some deceive and rob their Masters ; some are Eye Servants and Slothful, and make no Conscience of any fault or neglect which they can but hide, or excuse with lying : Some burn their Masters Houses, or undo them, or at least much damage them by heedlessness, carelessness, and forgetfulness ; and the best oft times prove very costly by such neglects.

In all these Cases 1. Repent of all your neglects of them: If you have not diligently taught them the principles of Religion, which should have made them better, or if you have not seriously endeavoured their true Conversion and Sanctification, and bringing Heavenly things to their hearts, which would have kept out the Love of sin; or if you have not taught them a Conscionable life, by a careful example of it in your selves; be humbled, and acknowledge the justness of your Correction, and bear as the fruit of your own sin.

2. Be sure that the sin and misery of your Servants be more grievous to you, than your own loss and suffering by them: It is but temporal things that you lose.

3. Remember what unprofitable and unfaithful Servants we have been to God, and how much more he daily beareth with in us all.

4. Remember that the frailty of Man is such, that nothing will be done perfectly which imperfect persons do: The wisest and best are lyable to many oversights, forgetfulness, and omissions, and have much which must be born with.

5. Be

5. Be the more careful that you fail not in any of the duty which you owe to them or any others: For our own sin hurts us more than theirs.

III. What I say of Servants, may serve as to the Case of bad Tenants who will not pay their Rents: And bad Tradesmen that unconscionably borrow and break, and live on other Mens Estates and ruine others by their falseness. God will permit Mans badness to shew it self; and he will have all worldly things appear to be transitory, unsatisfactory, and accompanied with vexation.

IV. As to the patience necessary in Princes and Magistrates to bad provoking Subjects, I am not to meddle with it, being discharged by Rulers from being a R Moniter to them.

CASE IX.

False accusation, - defamations; duty made odious crimes; reputation ruined.

IX. **A** Nother Case that needeth Patience is, *False accusation, defamization, and taking away our good name; when innocent Men are Proclaimed to be guilty of odious Crimes, which they detest far more*

than their accusers do: Yea when the most Conscionable Men, that most fear all sin, are defamed by their Teachers themselves, as well as by the brutish Rabble, to be the worst Men in the Land, unfit for human converse, or to be Members of any Society, and unworthy to live, at least out of Goals. Sin is so much worse than Poverty, or any bodily suffering, that the imputation of it unjustly seemeth a greater tryal, than to be taken for a Beggar, or Leper. But the great tryal is, when Godly Magistrates or Ministers of Christ are taken for Rogues, Traytors, Schismaticks, unconscionable villaines, by which their endeavours for the Souls of Men are rendered useles; And worst of all, when a Malignant generation shall make the generality of Men fearing God, and living Religiously, to be taken for the most wicked dangerous Hypocrites in the land. By this young and unexperienced persons, and the ignorant Multitude, are brought to a contempt or hatred of serious practical Religion, and made the Enemies of their best friends, and of the means of their own Salvation.

I. In this sad case, we must not on pretence of patience, and contempt of ho-

honour, be insensible of the snares that are laid by Satan to deceive the multitude, and undo Souls; nor of the heinous wrong thats done to Christ, and the Christian Religion and Name: Yea this horrid Crime when it is common, doth so much threaten the destruction of a Land, and the removal of the Gospel, that it should make us all mourn and earnestly pray, that God would not leave so bad a people, that say, *Depart from us, we would not the knowledge of thy waies.* What wonder if Christ give up that Land to darkness and deceit, and Satan, and take away his Gospel, when the practice of it is made a common scorn, and taken for an intollerable evil. When Gods peculiar peeple were delivered into Captivity, the reason is given 2 Chron. 36. 14. *All the Chief of the Priests and the people transgressed very much, and the Lord sent his Messenger, because he had compassion on his people, and his dwelling places? But they mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets, till the Wrath of the Lord arose against his people, and there was no remedy* Jer. 5. 5. *I will get me to the great Men, and speak to them; for they have*

- known the way of the Lord. But these have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds: Therefore a Lyon shall slay them, &c.

When Christ and his Apostles were taken for intollerable, God would tolerate the Nation no longer, but gave them up to the cruellest destruction that hath been heard of in the world, and the remnants of them are scattered, cursed people in all Countries to this day. When they cryed of such as *Paul*, *Away with such a fellow from the Earth*, it is not fit that he should live; God concluded, *Away with such a wicked Nation, scatter them as cursed over the Earth*. They that will themselves escape the destruction in such a Land, must mourn and cry for all its abominations, *Ezek* 9. 4. And must grieve for the reproach of the Solemn Assemblies, *Zeph*. 3. 18. And a *Noah*, *Daniel*, or *Job* in it, may save none but their own Souls.

But yet as our Reputation is but our own personal interest, whether we are defamed for the Common cause of Conscience and obedience to God, or whether it be by any private malicious slander against our selves, we may bear it patiently.

For

For, 1. What is our Reputation, but the *thoughts and words of Men* concerning us? And how small a matter is this as to our selves? If they think well of you, you are never the better, and if they think ill of you, you are never the worse. If you be poor, or sick, or pained, will it ease you or make you Rich, for Men to think and say that you are well or Rich? And if you be rich and well, will it make you poor or sick for Men to think or say that you are so? And as the thoughts of Men alter not your state, so what is *Man* that his *thoughts* should be so much regarded by you. Thoughts are such unseen transitory actings of the mind, that we have much a do to make Men believe that there is any Law for them, or any great sin in them, or that God himself regardeth them. And when a Man is asleep, or thinks of other things, those thoughts are all laid by; and he must quickly die, and lie in darkness, and then what are his *thoughts*; or what is it to you what that rotten Carcass lately thought of you when it lived?

2. The usual cause of Impatience under personal disgrace and slander, is *Pride* in our selves, which is matter of a

thousand fold more hurt and grief, than the loss of our *Reputation* is. Pride is an over-valuing our Reputations or honour with Men. A desire to be better thought of then we deserve, as to *Greatness*, *Wisdom* or *Goodness*, or else an over-great esteem and desire of that Reputation, which is indeed our due, did you not over-value it, you could easlyer spare it, and bear the loss of it. Oh fear the Devillish sin of Pride a thousand fold more than any dishonour. A truly humbled Soul can easily bear the thoughts and words of Men, as to its own interest: For he knoweth his own failings, and liveth not on Man.

3. If you will not be Hypocrites let there be some proportion between your Confessions to God, and your sense of the accusations and reproaches of Men. In Prayer you study enlarged Confessions, and how much evil do you (truly) say of your selves: And if another should wrongfully add somewhat more, methinks you might endure it: Is it not an incongruous thing to hear one in Prayer an hour together on a day of humiliation accuse himself to God of the breach of every one of the Ten Commandements;

or for troubled fearful persons, in all their discourse with Ministers or friends, to accuse themselves as utterly graceless, and resist all that can be said to the contrary; and yet for the same persons to be disquieted, and impatient, if another accuse them over-much, yea or less than they accuse themselves? There is some Hypocrisie in this.

4. Praise is a more dangerous thing to us than dispraise: and therefore our friends usually hurt us more than our Enemies. Flattery is pleasing to nature, and dispraise displeasing: But it is *Pleasing* things only that are overloved; and things overloved that undo the Soul. Praise is the usual fuel of Pride, and Pride the ready way to ruine: But dispraise calleth us to examine and Judge our selves, and is a help to Humiliation. And tho' praise be due to all that is good, and other Men owe it to wise and good Men; yet the wisest and best are so apt to be tickled and pleased with it, that they seldom escape some degree of proud infection by it.

5. It is Gods Judgment to which we stand or fall: If he call us his Children it is a small matter what Men call us:

If he justifieth us, who is he that shall condemn us: As Paul saith, *It is a small matter to me to be Judged of Man, or at Mans bar or day; I have one that Judgeth me, even the Lord.* 1 Cor. 4. 3. What Man can make a great matter, what Men think or say of him, who believeth that he must live or die for ever, as God shall Judge him, and not as Men Judge him.

6. The thoughts and words of Men, do not so much as touch our skin: If they be let in to our hearts, and made our pain, it is not they but our selves that do it.

7. What kind of Men be they that slander, reproach and scorn Men for their duty to God or Man? Is it not miserable fools. led blindfold towards Hell in Satans Chaines? And are we not happy and safe in Christs Justification? And will a Lord or Prince be cast down if a Bedlam shall revile him, or because a Child of seven years old thinks meanly of him? How easily do Learned Men bear the contempt of the unlearned, and Great Men bear the obloquy of Beggars? It is not wise or Godly Men that dishonour you for being wise and Godly, but only
only

but only the ignorant and ungodly that speak against that which they never knew.

8. If it be for your obedience to God, the reproach is more against him than you: It was he and not you that made the Law which you obey. He that accuseth any one for obeying his Father, Master or Prince, doth most accuse them that Commanded him. If it be a fault and dishonour to mind Heaven above Earth, and to obey God and his word, before Man, it is long of God that so Commanded us, and not of us: And if they accuse God, be sure he is sufficient to confute them, and to defend himself; he will stop the mouths of all Blasphemers, and you may boldly trust him if you suffer for him, and your cause be his. A barking Dog may sooner stop the course of the Sun, than a Blasphemer conquer God.

9. Yea, it is one of the greatest Honours in the World to be dishonoured for God. You are deeplyest engaged for his cause, and he for you: You are principal Soldiers in his Army; for suffering is the Victory of the Soldiers of Christ. It Gods Name, and cause, and interest, and promise cannot put Honour on you, nothing can.

10. The reproacher more dishonour-eth himself than you: It is a dishonour indeed to be a false accuser and slanderer, but none to be a patient sufferer. ✓✓

11. And tho we be not guilty of that which malicious Lyars accuse us, we are guilty of many other sins, which God may correct us for by their tongues. ✓

12. Christ went before us in this kind of suffering. *He made himself of no Reputation, but endured the Cross, despising the shame; He endured the contradiction of sinners against himself,* Heb. 12. 2. &c. He that came into the World to destroy the works of the Devil, and to save Men from sin, was said to be a sinner and to have a Devil, and to do his Miracles by the Devils help: They accused him to be a Glutton and a Wine-bibber, and a Sabbath-breaker, and a Familiar with *Publicans* and Sinners, and a despiser of Traditions, and Ceremonies, and Church Government, and an Usurper, and a Traytor against *Cæsar*, and a Blasphemer against God; and that it might be believed, Crucified him as such between Malefactors, as worse than *Barabbas* a Murderer, and fastened his Accusation on his Cross, and to this day they call him a deceiver.

ceiver. And his Apostles were accordingly accused; *Paul* was called a Pestilent fellow, a mover of Sedition, that taught Men against *Cesar* and the Law, and turned the World upside down, not worthy to live upon the Earth. The Apostles were made a gazing stock, the scorn of Men, the filth and off scouring of all things. And did we not resolve to follow Christ and them, and to bear this Cross.

13. But O what a joyful support to us should it be, to foresee by faith the approaching day, when all this will be set right, and Godliness will be a dishonour no more; when Christ will come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that now believe? *2 Thes. i. 10, 11.* And when these accusers and slanders will all be silenced, confuted and confounded: And sin will be an everlasting shame. O what a change will that day make: Then who will have the Honour and Glory, and who will be cast out as the dung?

Object. But odious lies are divulged, Printed, and believed of me, and strangers and posterity will not know but all is true.

Answer.

Ans. And what if it be so? It toucheth you not now; and neither your body in the grave will feel it, nor your Soul in Heaven. Be patient Bretheren to the coming of our Lord, *Jam. 5.* Lies and false History are the Devils way by which he deceiveth most of the World: Its little thought by the Readers how much History is false. *Turks* and *Heathens* think odiously of *Christians*; and *Papists* of *Protestants*, and by Multitudes of lies cherish hatred and blood guiltiness in their followers. Pity the lyers, alas it is they that are the sufferers, that by this are hardened in Mortal sin. O what a blessed day is at hand, when all these slanderers will change their tune, and God will openly Justifie his Servants.

And in the mean time the wicked will believe the Father of Lies, and we cannot help it: But the faithful honour, upright Men not the less, but the more for calumnies which they endure, and had they not been prone to over honour them, holy daies and Relicks had not been used as they are.

Let it be your care to give the lyers no occasion by your sin; and then mourn for

for the success of Satan, but joyfully wait ✓
for the Judgment of God.

CASE X.

Vexatious strong Temptations of Satan, especially to Melancholly persons.

A Nother Case that needeth Patience is, *Molesting strong Temptations of Satan, especially to afflicted, sad discontented, and Melancholly persons.* As to alluring Temptations to sinful Love and pleasure, it is abhorrence and watchfulness, and fear that are more necessary than patience. ✓
But vexing Temptations, which would draw Men to murmuring, anger, malice, fear, hurtful grief, and such other sins, must be overcome by patience and watchfulness conjunct. But because against this I have written a Treatise of *the Cure of Mellancholly and overmuch sorrow*, and another of *the true method of Peace of Conscience*, I will here only say this little following.

1. God did not think meet to keep Innocent *Adam* and *Eve*, no nor *Christ* ✓
himself from being tempted. This life is appointed for Tryal and Conflict in order to a better. Not to be tempted, were

were not to be Men on Earth ; There is no Crown of Glory, but to them that overcome ; and no victory, where there is no fight or strife : It is not force but temptations, by which Satan conquereth the world, and which all must conquer, that will be saved. Yea Christ was tempted to the most odious crime, to worship the Devil. But to be tempted is no sin of ours : Resist and conquer and it increaseth our acceptance with God, and (which some call our merit) our fitness for the reward. It may be an advantage to our own confirmed rooted Faith and holiness, and to our greater Glory in Heaven.

2. Satan is a conquered enemy : Christ our Head was tempted that he might overcome him for us : And as he said, *Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world ;* so we may beleive and rejoyce, that he hath overcome the Devil, that we might overcome him. *He was tempted, that he might succour them that are tempted,* Heb. 2. 18.

3. All that are in Heaven (that had the use of Reason) came thither by overcoming of temptations on earth. And would you go a way different from them all ?

4. The

4. The Tempter cannot do what he will, but what God permitteth him; who hath promised to restrain him, that he may not over power us, 1 Cor. 10. 13. There hath no Temptation taken you, but such as a common to man: But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will w^lth the Temptation also make away to escape, that he may be able to bear it.

5. God seeth oft-times, that we have need of *troubling Temptations* to humble us, and to awake us from carnal security, and make us more hate the sin that we are tempted to.

6. But alas! we commonly are guilty of giving the Tempter his advantage against us: We provoke God by sin to turn him loose upon us, and we give him entertainment by long parleys with him, and by thinking over all that he hath against us, and leaving our imaginations open to his access, and oft also our eyes and ears to feed them. In these cases true Repentance is needful to our deliverance from temptations: Yea and our own mistakes, corruptions, discontents, impatience, and sinful passions are the very strength of the Tempter, and he findeth

eth within us, the fire which he bloweth up: In this Case, the Cure must be mostly wrought upon our selves.

7. Strong Love and Resolution rejoyce to conquer strong Temptations: As strong Men love not to be tied to the work of Children and Women, but would have such, as exerciseth their strength. Its the joy of friendship, to undergo much for a friend: *Cant.* 8. 7. Love is strong as death: Many waters cannot squench it, nor the floods drown it. If you would give all the substance of your House for Love, it would be utterly contemned. *Jacob* will serve long and patiently for Love. And when Satan sheweth his malice against Christ and us, strong Love would do as *Sampson* and *David* by the Philistians, go out against them in Gods strength and overcome them. And tho we are weak, Gods grace is sufficient for us, and his strength is manifested in weakness.

8. Remember who the Tempter is that you may meet his Temptations with hatred and abhorrence. God did in mercy put an Emnity against Devils into our Natures, as soon as the Devils Enmity had conquered Man, that so we might abhor

honor whatever we know to be from
 them. What if the Devil appeared to
 you in some shape, and perswaded you
 to despair, or to Blaspheme God, or to
 doubt of the life to come, or to any o-
 ther sin or mischief? Would it not be
 sufficient preservative to know that
 it is the Devil that makes the motion.
 do not think that the present forward
 servants of the Devil would obey him
 as they do, if they saw him to be the
 Tempter. If he brought the Cup to the
 Drunkard in a known Apparition and
 shape, sure it would go down with ter-
 rour if at all: If he brought a Harlot to
 the Whoremongers bed, it would cool
 his Lust: If he appeared and perswaded
 the Malignant to hate, deride and per-
 secute Men for obeying God, it would sure
 abate their rage. And why should it
 not work alike in troubling Temptati-
 ons, when you know they come from
 him; (which the nature and fruit of
 them may make you know.

9. Let Temptations move you to study
 their confutation: Know every snare,
 and the remedy, God hath furnished you
 in Scripture with Armour against all,
 if you will use it.

10. Long for the blessed day when the Tempter and Troubler shall be cast out, and never more molest the faithful Soul, with any motion against God or comfort.

CASE XI.

*Settled doubts of sincerity and Salvation :
Temptations to despair.*

XI. **B**UT it is yet a heavier affliction, when a Soul is in a settled doubtfulness of its sincerity, Justification and Salvation; yea and strongly perswaded that he hath no grace, nor ever shall have, and hath little hope left of mercy and Salvation, and the more he examineth and thinks of it, the more he believeth this sad conclusion.

For an ungodly Man to know that he is ungodly is the most hopeful preparation to his recovery, and not to be stifled or made light of, but if it be a sincere person,

1. Before I tell you how far *Patience* is useful in this Case, I must tell you that on pretence of patience, the *Cure* must not be neglected, nor contempt or senselessness indulged. Sin is it that bringeth Men
into

into this dark uncomfortable state; and it is present sin in which it doth consist: Search therefore what guilt of former sin was the cause, and see that it be truly repented of: And then search how much present sin doth cherish it. Usually there is much ignorance in it of the Covenant of Grace; and a great defectiveness in our sense of the infinite Goodness of God, and of the wonders of his Love in Christ, and of the Ocean of mercy continued in the work of Mans Redemption: And there is much unbelief or distrust of God and our Redeemer, and of the promises of Grace and Salvation; and too little trust to the strengthening and comforting help of the Holy Ghost: And there is too little care to Cure Mens sinful fears and passions; and sometimes too little care, to forbear renewing the wounds of Conscience by yielding to temptations, and renewing guilt. And where these are the Causes, they must first be resisted and partly overcome.

2. And while the Soul sincerely repenteth and striveth against that sin, (especially distrust of God and Christ) it must be considered that God giveth not all his Grace at once: Infants are not strong:

strong: Faith, Hope, Love and Comfort are weak before they are strong; and usually are long in getting strength.

And weak faith hath alwaies unbelief joyned with it; and every weak grace is clog'd and clouded by its contrary sin. And while Grace is weak and sin thus cloudeth it, it cannot be expected that the Soul should have certainty of sincerity and Salvation; or be free from grief, and fears, and doubting. But Patient waiting upon Christ in the use of his appointed means, may in time bring faith and every grace to greater strength, and so the Soul to more assurance.

3. A Man that hath not attained to a certainty of Salvation may yet have more cause of hope and joy, than of fear and sorrow, upon the meer improbability of his Damnation. I have oft instanced thus: It would torment a good Christian, if he believed he should ever commit but such sins as *David*, and *Peter* did (to pass by *Solomon*) and no Christian ordinarily is sure that he shall not commit as great sin: And yet no wise Man that by Gods Grace is resolved against it, should torment himself with such a fear;

No Wife is certain but she may hate or forsake her Husband, or he may hate and Murder her; nor any Child but that the Father or Mother may Murder it: And yet it is so unlikely, that its folly to be sad with such a fear.

The Old Fathers, who thought that no ordinary Christian (but a few Confirmed ones) can be certain of perseverance or Salvation, and those *Lutherans* and *Arminians* that are of the same mind, did not yet live in terrour for fear of Apostacy and Damnation, but rejoiced in the comfort of probable hope.

4. If your fears be whether you are true Christians, presently become such, and so end those fears: It may be its too hard for you to know whether you have been such till now: But you may presently resolve it for the time to come: Do but understand the Baptismal Covenant, and consent to it, and that work is done: Present consent that is unfeigned is true Christianity. If you can say that now you are truly willing that Christ with his Grace and Glory be yours, and you his on his Gospel terms, that is, your Priest, Prophet and King, you are true Christians.

Your

Your concluding that the day of grace is past, and God will never give you grace, nor pardon you, while he his daily intreating you to be reconciled to him, and accept his Grace, is an abusive suspicion that God is not sincere, and a contradiction to the Tenor of his word and instituted Ministry: When he bids us go to the high wayes and hedges, and compel (even the basest) to come in, for a willing Soul to suspect that God is unwilling is abusively to give him the lie: But if you are unwilling your selves why complain you? Its an odd sight to see a Begger in the cold intreated to come in to the fire, or a Man in the Sea intreated to come into the Ship, and he will not come, and yet cry and complain that he shall never be taken in; that is, because he will not.

5. It is a great mercy of God that you have hearts so far awakened as to be troubled with care and fear of your everlasting state, which you see the stupid dreaming World so little regard: And here are two comfortable Evidences appear in most Christians in these troubles. First, Your fear of punishment hereafter sheweth that you have some belief of the word
of

of God, for you believe his Threatenings: Else why do you fear them? And if you believe that his Threatings are true, it is scarce possible that you should believe that his promises are false: Therefore your defect is in the Application of these promises to your self; and to doubt of our own faith or sincerity is not to doubt of the truth or word of God, and is not damning unbelief (tho some mistakenly have written so): Secondly, And you have so much of the applying act, as consisteth in consent and desire: You would fain have Christ, and Grace, and Glory: And you *consent* to be *his* as he consenteth to be yours: Else why do your complaints and troubles signify so much. And *desire* signifieth Love and *willingness* as really as Joy doth, tho not so *pleasingly*. So that here is *Faith, or Consent or Willingness*, and Love to that which you mourn for want of: And those are Evidences of Grace.

Object. *But may not a wickid Man be terrified with the fear of Damnation?*

Answer. Yes: But if this fear were joyned with a *willingness* to be a true Christian, and to be Justified, Sanctified, and Ruled by Christ, he should be saved?

Object. *But may he not be willing of Christ, and Holyness as a means to his Salvation, tho else he had rather be ungodly and live in sin.*

Ans^w. 1. He cannot truly desire *Salvation* it self, as indeed it is *Salvation*: Not to be tormented in Hell he may desire: But *Salvation* is to be saved from sin and separation from God, and to live in perfect Holyness, Love and Joy in the Heavenly society, praising God among the blessed for ever: The heart of the ungodly is against this holy life. 2. And every Man hath some end: If this be not the *End* intended by any Man, it must be some sinful pleasure that he must intend or desire: And to mak *Perfect Holyness* (which mortifieth all such desires and pleasures) to be desired as a *Means* to attain those pleasures (which it destroyeth) is a contradiction: So that a wicked Man cannot truly desire perfect Holyness more than sinful pleasure, neither as his *End*, nor as the *Means thereto*. Yet I will not deny but that while he hateth it, he may consent that God should make him holy as a *minus malum*, a lesser evil than the pains of Hell, which he hateth more. But God hath not promised

mis'd to give Men Christ and holyness, ✓
 because they hate Hell more than it; and
 desire it not for it self.

Object. I fear that this is my Case: For
 I have a great unwillingness to Prayer, Medi-
 tation, an every holy duty.

Ans. 1. Is your unwillingness to be-
 lieve and trust God, and Love him perfectly,
 and to live in his thankful joyful praises,
 and to Love his word, and waies and
 Servants, and that for ever, greater than
 your willingness and desire? It is these in-
 ward acts that are the holyness of the
 Soul, and to be willing of these is to be ✓
 willing to be holy. 2. As to outward ex-
 ercises, by *Praying*, and such like, there
 may be some such disturbance of the Spi-
 rits raised by them, through temptations
 and false thoughts and fears, as put the
 mind into renewed trouble: And it is
 that disturbance and trouble in the duty,
 that many are against, rather than the
 duty it self. And such may find, that
 at the same time, they would fain have
 that Calmeness, confidence and delight in ✓
 God, which they would be glad to ex-
 press by holy Prayer. 3. And we must
 distinguish between a *degree* of unwill-
 ingness or backwardness which is *Predomi-*

nant and effectual, and a degree which doth but strive against Holyness but not overcome: Every Christian hath flesh, which lusteth against the Spirit, and would draw back; and therefore hath some degree of backwardness to his duty: But if this did prevail, he would give it over, which he doth not. 4. And yet for a time in temptation and Melancholly he may be deterred from some outward duty, and give it over, and yet not lose a holy state of Soul. Many a true Christian is many years affrighted from the Lords Supper: And some such persons in deep Melancholly and Temptations have given over outward Prayer, and hearing Sermons, and Reading: And yet have not given over a desire of Holyness which is heart-Prayer, nor a desire to Love and obey Gods word. Sick Men cease outward duty in their beds, when they cease not inward piety.

6. It may be God seeth that you were grown dull and sluggish, and he useth this trouble to awake you to a greater care of your duty and Salvation: Or he saw you in danger of over-loving some worldly vanity, and he useth this to embitter and divert you, that you may know

know better what to mind and desire: 7. The effects of a Melancholly disease, or of a natural timorousness of the weak and passionate, are much different from rational well grounded doubts of sincerity and Salvation: A Melancholly person can think of nothing with confidence and comfort: There is nothing but trouble, confusion, fears, and despair in his apprehension: He still seems to himself undone and hopeless. A person naturally timorous, cannot choose but fear, if you shew them the clearest reasons of assurance. These are like pain in sickness, which faith and reason will not cure; but should help us to strive against and bear. God will not impute our diseased misery to us as our damning sin.

8. Its one thing to have grace, and another thing to know that we have it: Many have it, who doubt whether it be sincere. And its an unspeakable mercy to have it, tho you doubt of it. God knoweth his grace in us, and will own it, when we doubt of it or deny it. As long as this foundation of God is sure, that *God knoweth who are his*, and while we *Name Christ we depart from* iniquity,

iniquity, we are safe, tho' through fear we are uncomfortable. —

9. Tho' the true faith do of its own nature tend to the peace and quietness of the believer, yea and to fill his Soul with joy; yet it doth not alwayes quiet it: But it alwayes (*Consenteth to the Baptis-
mal Covenant, which maketh us Christians,* and so far trusteth Christ for pardon, grace and glory, as to cast our Souls and hopes upon him, and to forsake all other trust and hopes rather than to forsake him: As I have oft said, *If a Prince say to a Beggar, go out of thy own Country with me in this Ship, and trust me to convey thee to Mexico or China, and I will make thee a Lord or Prince, if he venture and go with him, tho' he trembles with fear at every wave or Pirate in the Voyage, he truly trusteth him, and shall speed accordingly: If a Phyfician say, trust me and take my Medicine, and I undertake to cure you; if the Patient Take his Medicine, he shall be cured, tho' he tremble with fear and doubt of the success: He Trusteth him Practically, if he cast his hope upon him, tho' with fear. Tho' Faith and Obedience be formally two things, Faith which will cause us to consent, venture, and follow or obey Christ; & preferring*

preferring Heaven whatever we lose by it, is saving faith, whatever doubts, fears or disquietment remain. If this were better understood, timorous and dark or Melancholly Christians, (who know there is none but Christ to trust to, and therefore reso've to be Ruled by him) would not so ordinarily think they have no true faith, because it doth not cast out all their doubts and fears, and quiet and comfort them; which indeed a strong faith would do, which is not hindered by error or diseases.

10. We greatly wrong God and ourselves in contenting our selves with poor diminutive thoughts of the essential Love and Goodness of God. When we think of the Sun (a thousand times bigger than all the Earth) and of all the Stars, and the incomprehensible Orbs of the Heavens, and the unconceivable swiftness of their motions, and the power and extent of their Rayes of Light and emanations, we are overwhelmed with the thoughts of the greatness, power and wisdom of God: But when we think of his *Goodness* and *Love*, we scarce think much more highly of it, than of the goodness and love of a Father, a friend,

or some excellent Man. And should we match his *Power* but with a Mans, what madnes and ugly Blasphemy were it?

Yet I would not have the presumptuous here mistake, and hence conclude that a God so good will not condemn the rejecters of his grace; and say, *Essential infinite Love will make all Men as happy as he can*: For 1. Experience assureth us of the contrary; that he maketh great variety of Creatures, and permitteth pain and misery in the world. 2. And the Execution of Justice on the impenitent wicked Subjects, is good, as a means to the right Government of free Agents. 3. And the *infiniteness* of Gods *goodness* and Love, doth not appear in his Loving any Creature which is finite, but in loving that which is *infinite*, and that is *himself*.

But yet we must conceive of his essential attributes as equal in themselves: And if Gods goodnes and love were conceived of by Man, in any proportion to his greatness and power, we could never so easily suspect his kindness, nor fear that he will damn those who unfeignedly desire to please him; nor should we fly from him as from a hurtful Enemy, but long

long to be nearer him in holy Communion, as we desire the Company of our wisest dearest friends; nor should we be so distrustful of him, as if he were no security to us from our dangers; but the name of the Lord would be our strong Tower, to which when we fly we should believe that we are safe, and our trust in God would be the quieting of our tormenting fears and cares.

II. And we have these poor thoughts of the Love of God to Man, because we do not sufficiently study the Miraculous demonstrations of it in our Redeemer; diversions cause us to neglect this study: And perverseness and unbelief do cause us to give it too narrow a Room, and too slight and short entertainment in our thoughts: Nothing in this world doth better deserve our most diligent and delightful study, than the Gospel of Christ, and the wonderful work of Divine Love in Mans Redemption and Salvation; study this till you firmly believe it, and taste it, and it will be as Angels food, a heavenly feast here sent down to Earth, to draw Mens hearts to God in Heaven: The Love of God will turn your very hearts into

returning holy Love: It was drops of
 ♀ Love that Christ sweat in the shape of
 / blood in his Agony, and it was a stream
 of Love, which flowed from his pierced
 side, in the shape of blood and water:
 It is love which the three witnesses on
 Earth, and the three from Heaven attest-
 ed. God knew how much sin had ob-
 scured his Love and goodness to Man,
 more than his power and greatness, by
 making Man an unmeet receiver and
 discerner of it, by reason of guilt, fear,
 and naughtiness of heart; and therefore
 how very backward Man is to believe
 and relish Gods Love. Therefore while
 Satan more industriously enticeth the
 Soul of Man to the Idolatry of Creature-
 carnal Love, than ever he did entice the bo-
 dies of Men to worship *Baal* or such like,
 God hath set up his own Image, sent
 down to Man from Heaven, in opposi-
 tion to Satans Idols, that sense it self may
 have suitable means for the Moral con-
 quest of the tempter, and the replenish-
 ing of the Soul with a truly excellent
 felicitating Love, and in a congress of
 the Love of God and Man, in and by him
 that is God and Man, Heaven may be
 here begun, and may have a fuller Com-
 munion

munion with Souls on Earth, than it had before Christs Incarnation. Study the Gospel aright, as the book of Divine Love, and it will turn you from many unprofitable Studies, and cure sinful Melancholly fears, better than all other Medicines in the world: And even those that said with *Thomas*, [*unless I may see and feel I will not believe* (or as a holy Divine in deep Melancholly rashly said to me, [*If an Angel from Heaven should tell me that I have true grace I would not believe him*)] would repent as both these did; and when by faith you have as it were put your finger into his wounded side the sense of Divine Love will make you cry out, *My Lord, and my God.*

12 And it greatly hurteth Christians that they are not duly sensible, how much it is Satans design and work in all his temptations to misrepresent God to Man, and hide his Love and Goodness from us: As he doth it in the wicked by drawing them to fleshly deluding Love, and making them ignorant, unbelieving or forgetful of the Love of God; so he doth much against better Men by raising many objections against it, and filling them with false imaginations, and diminutive

- or suspicious thoughts of God, as if he were far more terrible to us than amiable.

13. And it wrongs some that they misunderstand the office of Conscience, as if it alwayes spake as an Oracle from God, whereas it is but the act of a dark understanding, which very usually erreth, and misjudgeth of our state : And a mistaking Conscience accusing falsely, as graceless, &c. Shall no more condemn us at Gods Bar, than a slandering Enemy. I Judge *not my own self*, saith Paul, *I know nothing by my self* (inconsistent with sincerity) *yet am I not thereby justified : There is one that judgeth me, even the Lord :* That is, *It will not really go with me as I judge, but as God judgeth.*

14. And alas when fear beareth down both faith and reason, as to the act, no silencing reason prevaileth with the Soul. I prove to them from the Gospel this great truth, that [*Christ damneth none (that hear the Gospel) but those that wilfully reject him and refuse his offered grace, out of greater Love to something else, and this to the last.*] I oft convince dejected Christians that this is true, and that this is not their Case ; they do not continue to refuse

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use Christ and his grace, by preferring P
something else. And yet this quieteth
them not; nor receive they the conclu-
sion: For fear, and feeling, and weakness,
and Melancholly overpower their reason,
as bitter Physick, would not let Children
believe that it is good for them, and given
them in love.

15. Tho no pretence of patience must
abate our desires after full assurance and A
perfection, yet while we find by experi-
ence that God will have Man on Earth,
to differ much from those in Heaven,
and to have but low and little things in
comparison of their joy and glory, it is
our great duty to be thankful for our
present measure, and to wait in hope for
more. He that hath no comfortable ap-
prehension of his condition can have no
thankfulness for it: And we are all ob-
liged to great thankfulness for the least
degree of grace and hope: And thank-
fulness is somewhat more than patience,
and therefore doth include it.

The acts of the understanding and of
the Will go together: And if we had as
full an understanding of the Heavenly
state, as those have that possess it, our
Wills by answerable Love and Joy, would
own

now enjoy it; and so we should have the peculiar priviledges of the glorified here on Earth: But this is no more suited to our present state in flesh, than it is to an infant in the Womb, to know what Cities, Courts and Churches are, or what Trades, and Merchandize, and Husbandry is, or what Books, and Arts; and Sciences are; or what Meat, and Drink, and Recreation are. We must be content on Earth with the measure which God designeth unto Earth. We see by constant experience that he hath precluded the Heavenly state from all our senses: He will not let us see whats done above: The first Martyr had such a sight by Miracle, but we must not expect it: He will not let our departed friends appear to us here to give us notice of what they see: He will not send Angels to satisfie our desire of such knowledge: Nay infernal Devils shall appear but rarely: The rareness of all these leaveth sadness in doubt whether there be any such things or not. And Pauls sight of Paradise was such as must not be uttered to us.

And full subjective certainty of Salvation, which excludeth all doubts and fears,

fears, is so high a degree as few in flesh I think obtain. Objective certainty every true Christian hath: That is, his Salvation (if he so die, at least) is absolutely certain it self, so that his belief and hope of it, shall never deceive him: But to be certainly known to Men, that is, with an apprehension which as much excludeth doubts and fears as sight and possession would do, or as the Light and the visible objects exclude all doubts, whether we behold them, or as we know that two and two are four, or that every effect hath a cause, and every relate a correlate, and that full contradictions are inconsistent, I think this degree of certainty none have upon Earth, without some Miraculous Inspiration or Revelation. But we may attain to so firm an apprehension of that truth and blessedness, which is certain in it self, as may make our hope, and joy, and desire far greater than our doubts and fears, and averfation. And this joyful life of well grounded hope may be called a certainty or full assurance; tho yet it be far short of Perfect, and the certainty of Beatifical vision and fruition. And alas, it is but very few true Christians who attain this quieting joyful degree.

All

All this being considered you see that while we are on Earth we must not look for Heaven; nor in the Wilderness to find the Land of promise: *Joshua*, and *Caleb's* encouraging words, and the bunch of Grapes, and Gods promise and presence, and his conducting light, provision and protection, must quiet us in our Journey; and some few have *Moses Pisgah* sight. Murmuring at Wilderness wants, dangers and difficulties was the *Israelites* sin and fall. We must not look for the Harvest at seed time, nor for more knowledge, and assurance, and joyful apprehensions of Heaven, on Earth, than is suitable to the state of Travellers in flesh: We are yet alas too sinful: And sin will breed doubts and fears: We are here very ignorant, and conscious that we are very liable to Err; and that every Man hath many errors; and therefore we are apt to doubt even of that which we see and feel, yea and to fear where we see convincing Evidence of certainty; and we can scarce tell when and how to trust our own understandings: We are in a dark World; and in a dark body, and chained to it in our actions: All our grace and goodness is imperfect:

And

And till every grace be perfect in us, assurance of Salvation will not be perfect: ✓
For the Perfection of every grace is necessary to it: And is it any wonder that such a wight as Man, in flesh, and sin, ✓ and under Temptations, and in a dark Malignant world, which God hath very ✓ much forsaken, should not have the Joy as of full assurance of invisible glory? The Christians of all those ages, who held that none (or only a few rare persons) could be certain of their Salvation, ✓ could not have that certainty which they thought none had? Yet they did, ✓ and we must rejoyce in hope, and be thankful here for a Travelling degree. ✓

CASE XII.

The loss of Teachers, and suitable means of Grace and Salvation.

XII. **A** Nother great affliction which requireth Patience is, *The loss of the sound and serious Preaching of the Gospel, by the death, or Banishment, or silencing of our Teachers, while our own great wants and weakness call for the best assistance.* The Soul being more precious than the Body, the welfare of it is more valuable,

valuable, and its loss and famine more lamentable : And we see that God ordinarily worketh according to the aptitude of means : And when he taketh away such needful means, it is a sad degree of his own forsaking us, and denying to us further grace : Alas, how bad are we under the best helps, and how dark and doubting under the most clear, convincing teaching, and how cold, and dull under the most warm and lively Ministry : And what shall we then be, if God remove our Teachers from us ? May we not turn cold, and dull, and worldly, and deceived, under cold, dull, *deceiving Worldly*, Pastors ? And grow careless of our own Souls under those that are careless of their own and ours ? If in the Communion of wise and holy Christians, we found it hard to grow in grace, may we not fear declining when we are separated from such, and dwell as *Lot in Sodom*, and must converse with worldly or Malignant Men ?

As to the sad case, 1. You may have the greater comfort, because you make not light of the affliction ; and may be the more patient believingly, because you are not patient as contemptuous unbelievers.

lievers. The patience of carnal Men under such a loss, is a greater evil than the loss it self: And the patience of faith is a greater good, than the helps which you lose. Had you been so blind, and dead and bad, as to let go the Gospel, and be easily quiet and content as long as you enjoy your honour, wealth and ease, this had been a far greater misery than a want of Teachers: As a mortal sickness which causeth loathing and indigestion, is worse than the hardest fare with appetite and health. Thank God that you are sensible of your loss.

2. If you are true Christians you have the Law and Gospel written upon your hearts, whence none can by violence take it from you, you may lose the provision of your House, and the food on your Tables; yea and cast up that which you have eaten: But if it be digested and turned into your flesh and blood, it is not so easily taken from you. O blest God, that before he took away the means, he did convert you by them, and taught you effectually before he took away your Teachers. When the word is digested and turned into knowledge, faith, repentance, desire, obedience, patience, hope and love, nei-
ther

ther Men nor Devils can take it from you; your heart where it is sown and rooted is not within their reach; unless you will give them the Key, and foolishly betray your selves. When God hath made you his *Habitation by his Spirit*, and Christ dwelleth in your hearts by faith, and the Kingdom of God, and life Eternal is begun within you, the loss of outward helps will not undo you. I am not imitating them that tell you, that all Men have sufficient light within them, or that call you to undervalue the word written and Preacht, on pretence of that sufficiency, as if you need no other notice of God, and Christ, but to be told that he is in you. But yet rejoyce that God is within you, tho all these outward means were gone: That is, that your *Faith* and *Love* have within you such an object to live upon as your *Father*, *Saviour* and *Sanctifier*, and such an Agent as the Spirit to actuate all. When they silence your Teachers, burn your Books, shut up your Church doors, they cannot shut out the Spirit of Christ, nor deprive you of its *Life*, and *Light*, and *Love*.

3. If Men take away the means foremen-

mentioned, they do not therefore take away all. 1. You have all Gods works to view and study: Sun and Stars, Heaven and Earth, Sea and Land, Cities and Country, Feilds and Meadows, Beasts and Men, good and bad: And you are taught already by the Gospel to see not only the great Creator in all these, but also the *Gracious Redeemer*, purchasing, upholding, and using all as delivered to him for the good of his Elect.

2. You have the daily use of Meditation, as on all these works God, so also on Christ and the Gospel which you have learnt; yea and of the Joys of Heaven.

3. You have daily and hourly leave to open your Case to God; you have access to him by Christ in Prayer, Thanksgiving and Joyful Praise. If you have but an appetite, you have here a continual feast, which you may enjoy in every place; in your Closet, in the Feilds, in your Shop, or in a Prison.

4. Its very likely that you may save your Bibles, and other good Books, and so have Gods word still at hand: It was written in Hebrew and Greek, but God hath used Man to Translate and unseal it to you; And you may choose your time,
and

and choose the Subject which you would read : And the writings of your Teachers are usually more accurate than their speaking ; and at a cheap rate you may have choice, and excellent helps. And you may read these in your Families to your Children and Servants, and set up many Teachers for one. Undervalue not these remaining helps.

5. And if God continue to you in the publick Assemblies, but sound Doctrine and lawful Communion, do not say *all means are gone*. If it be but the Reading of the Holy Scriptures, and Singing Psalms, and Praying no worse than is expressed in the Liturgy of this Nation, it is a mercy not to be despised : It was but a little part of the New-Testament, which was contained in *Peters* Speech which Converted three thousand, *Act. 2*. And but a little part which was in the words of *Paul*, which the *Gentiles* desired might be again spoken to them the next day : And but a little part which *Paul* wrote to any one Church, when he required them to Read it publickly, and to Read that to one Church, which was written to another : *Christ's* own Sermon *Luk. 4*. And that to his Disciples
Math.

Math. 5. Were but a little of what bare Reading now can tell us. *Ezra* was put to spend much of the day in a Pulpit to Read the Law, and make them understand the Reading: That is, when by their Captivity they had lost the Language in which the Law was written, he was fain as he Read it in Hebrew, to Translate it by word of mouth, and turn the Hebrew into the Chaldean Tongue which they understood. This was far less than the bare Reading of both Law and Gospel already Translated doth for you. The quantity of one or two of our Chapters, were received in the daies of the Apostles, with great joy, to the conversion of many Souls. And in *Queen Maries* daies some poor Women would hire a Boy secretly in a Corner to Read to them a little of the English Bible, yea of the Primer. But the full Soul loaths the Hony Comb, when to the hungry every bitter thing is sweet.

There are some ignorant Christians that think it enough to charge any thing in Worship or Religion to be unlawful because it is humane, the work of Man. Its like these will not be grieved that their Teachers are silenced: For they
were

were Men. And as Men have written some forms of Prayer, so they are Men that have written the many hundred holy Books that are now among us : And Preaching and Praying, are the words and works of Men : The Singing Psalms were turned into Metre by Men : Yea all your English Bibles were made English by Men, and you Read and hear no English words but the words of Men, tho they signifie the word of God : The dividing of the Scripture into Chapters and Verses, is the invention and work of Men : And I think they were but Men that taught you to speak and Read : God worketh by Man on Man, as sociable fit Instruments : And if you despise all in Religion, that is the work of Man, you will despise the word and work of God, and shew that you are less than Men.

4. When God taketh Teachers from one People (before death) he usually sends them to another : And it proveth oft to the advantage of the Church. When the Disciples were all driven away from *Jerusalem*, they went Preaching the Gospel into all Countries about. Persecution drove the Apostles all over the

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the world: It sent *Paul* to *Rome* to Preach it at the doors of *Nero*: When he and *Barnabas* were driven from one City, they carryed the Gospel to another: Persecution had a great hand in sending the Gospel to most Nations in the World that had it. Yea the very Banishment of such as *Nestorius*, *Dioscorus*, and others such as Hereticks, for some formes of Speech, had a great hand in the sending of Christianity into *Persia*, *India*, and many remote parts of the East, South and North, and of late to *New-England*, and other Plantations in *America*, it was sent by the Prelates, and other Rulers from this Land. A Captive Maid its said, began the Conversion of the *Iberians*; as *Fruementius* and *Edifius* did of the *Indians* (or rather planted a Ministry in *Habasssea*, miscalled *India*, which before had none but Lzy Christians since the Eunuchs daies.)

And every good Christian is of a publick Spirit, and loveth Christs greatest interest with the greatest Love, and therefore loveth the Church and the world better than himself, or his native soil: Why than should we not the more patiently bear the loss of those Labourers, whom

whom God sends to do greater work abroad : Is it like that Mr. *John Eliot*, would ever have done half the good in *England* that he hath done in *America*? We pray that Gods name may be hallowed, and his Kingdom come, and his Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven, and *England* is a very little part of the Earth.

5. We must have our time of Rest with Christ when we have had our time of Labour : If God call home his Servants to himself, rejoyce with them that there rejoyce, and have fought a good fight, and have finished their Course, and do receive the Crown of Righteousness : Grudge them not their Rest and Happiness. God sent them hither to work, run, and fight, and not to Reign or long abide : It may seem hard to us that so holy a Man as *Stephen* should do Christ, no longer service in his Church; and that *James* who hoped to have sit next Christ in his Kingdom on Earth, should so quickly be taken from the work of his Apostleship : But he had his Petition to be near to Christ in a better manner than he desired : And *Stephen* and he did more in a day by dying than most others do by living long : The Foundation of the Church

Church was to be laid in Blood ; and none is too precious for so great work, for which Christs blood was not too precious.

6. Ministers be not idle or useless when they are silenced : They are Praying for the Church, and they are Lights in the Houses and Company where they come, and Christ disdained not oft to Preach to one Woman or Man, (as *Joh. 4. and 9. &c.*) And some of them publish Gods truth by writing, and that to a far greater extent and number, than ever they could have done by voice : The word of God is not bound when we are bound.

7. Yea the silence and sufferings of Christs faithful Ministers, do powerfully Preach : It maketh Men see the evil of that proud and Malignant Spirit, which hateth such Men, and cannot endure them : The vulgar are hardly brought to wisdom by meer words, or to know the difference between good and evil, till by sense and experience they feel and tast the several fruits : The Cured blind Man, *Joh. 9.* could quickly discern that God heareth not sinners, but if any Man be a (true) Worshipper of God, him he heareth : And that he must needs be of God that could open his eyes :

therto its turns of prosperity and adversity: And prosperity hath increased the number of Christians, and adversity hath tried them, and increased the grace of those that persevere.

10. It is more our diligence and faithful use of means, by which we grow in grace, than by the enjoyment of the best; if we be slothful under it: And sometime God seeth that fullness breedeth wantonness and loathing; and like foolish Children we play with our meat, or quarrel about it; And then its time to take it away, and let fasting help us to a better appetite. I have known those that when they lived among the ignorant, and could hardly hear a good Sermon without going divers Miles for it, and hardly borrow a good book, and rarely speak with a serious Christian, were so hungry, affectionate and diligent, that they evidently profited very much: But when they came where they had variety, choice and fulness of Teachers, Books and Religious converse, some grew more notional, wordy, and cold, and some turned self-conceited, proud and quarrellsome, and some down-right Heretical or Schismatical: And do we need any more to justify

Justifie the afflicting Providence of God, ✓
 in taking away and silencing Ministers,
 than the sad review of our common
 miscarriages? Have not pious Ministers
 been disgracefully guilty of over-valuing
 their own Judgments and Opinions, and
 laying Life and Death on Words which
 they understood not, and raising Hatred,
 censures and contempt, against their
 Brethren that differed from them,
 though wiser and better than them-
 selves? What shameful and doleful work
 did the Nestorian, and Eutychnian, and
 Monathelite Controversies make? The
 doleful Wars about Predestination,
 Grace, and Free-will, which have torn
 the Church and destroyed Love, these
 twelve hundred years; I have fully pro-
 ved to be shameful and sinful, most a-
 bout ambiguous words, or unrevealed
 things (in a Book called *Catholick Theo-
 logy*). We have heard with grief what
 unchristian contentions there have long
 been beyond Sea, among Protestants ✓
 called *Lutherans* and *Calvinists*; and
 how oft the former have persecuted the
 latter: We have heard of late, how
 some represent Calvinists, as if they
 were as bad as Heathens; and some in

the Pulpits say, *the Religion of the Arminians is the Religion of the Devil*: If none of these speak the words of Truth or Charity, nor know either what they say, or what manner of Spirit they are of; is it not just with God to silence them all? What dreadful work hath the Interest and Controversies of Dioceses, Liturgy and Ceremonies here made? And when we cannot bear with one another, it is just with God to bear with none of us. How long have Episcopal, Presbyterians, Independants and Anabaptists, been censuring, condemning, and some of them persecuting one another; and been teaching the People to believe, that those that they accuse deserve it? And if we thus shew that we all deserve it, how can we open our Mouths against Gods Justice if he reject us all?

11. As when God taketh away strength, health and liom the Aged, they must be thankful that they enjoyed all these so long, and consider how they used them while they had them; so when he taketh away Ministers and publick Helps, we must be thankful that we had so long peaceable enjoyment of them; and

and consider whether it be not for our abuse that we are deprived of them.

12. God is not tyed to outward helps, though he tye us to them while we may have them: If he take them from us, he can give us that grace in our secret Closets, which we had in the publick Assemblies; and we may expect his assistance and blessing in any means which he appointeth us to use.

CASE XIII.

When God seemeth not to bless Means to us; Preaching, Praying, &c.

XIII. **A** Nother great tryal of Patience is, when *Praying and Preaching seem to us to be all lost, and God denieth his Answer and his Blessing.* When we hear from day to day, and understand and remember little that we hear, and find not that we are any stronger in Faith, Love, and Patience than we were: When we pray daily for more Grace, and yet find no more than we had before: And we pray for our Country, and our Rulers, and Teachers, and for many Friends, and God seemeth to deny us almost all. . . .

And this is not only grievous in it self, but in the Temptations which it occasioneth. 1. Satan hence would tempt us to doubt whether God regard man and mans concerns, as the Scripture tells us that he doth. 2. And he would tempt us, to doubt whether the Promises of God are to be trusted. 3. And consequently to question all Religion, and to give over praying and other means, as if all were vain; or at least to use them heartlesly, with little Faith, and Hope, and Comfort: And how should *Patience* here be exercised, and these Temptations overcome.

1. Our first work must be to understand *Gods instituted means*, and the *Promises of God* concerning their success, that we may neither be too *high* nor too *low* in our Expectations; nor charge God falsely through our mistake.

What is it that God denieth you? Is it outward things, as health, wealth, deliverance from dangers, the life of your Friends, the conversion of your Relations, &c. and why think you that Prayer in such Cases is in vain?

1. Did you think that it was ever the mind and promise of God, that on

pretence of hearing Prayers, he should give up to us the Government of the World? And that we should never be poor, nor sick, nor die till we are willing? I doubt then few would ever consent, but live longer than *Metbusalem* in earthly prosperity and pleasure? And must our Friends never suffer nor die as long as we will pray against it? Where then would there be room for those that are born (unless God made our Friends a burden to us; and would not that be as much against our Prayers as their Death)? Did you think that God must reverse his first Sentence, if you will but pray for it? *Dust thou art, and to Dust thou shalt return. In the sweat of thy Face shalt thou eat Bread till thou return unto the Ground, Gen. 3. 17, 18, 19.* Must there be no Thorns or Bryers, no Cold or Winter, no Night or Darknes, if you will but pray that there be none? You will say, it is more moderate and reasonable Prayers that you make.

But 2. Who must be Judge what requests are reasonable, God or you? If you must be Judge, how can we tell what bounds your desires will have? You will

will not ask to live in Prosperity a thousand years; but when Death is coming at an hundred years end, you would live yet longer, and so on for ever, still longer and longer; and a thousand years would not make you willing, if either Faith or Affliction do it not.

3. And would you have all others have the same Grant, that Affliction and Death should be kept off if they do but pray for it; and that God should give them what they ask? this would infer a thousand contradictions: A thousand men would ask to be Kings of *England*; when there can be but one: Many would ask for the same Lordship, Lands or Offices: Some of them would take you for Enemies, and ask for your death or ruin, and it may be you would ask for theirs: They would have your House, your Wife, your Trade; and you would have theirs: So many would live long, as that you would want Food and Room: What a mad wish were this, for all men to have their Wills? The World is full of Folly and Wickedness, and Wrath, and Malice; should all such Persons have their Wills? What's this Conceit but a Dream of
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millions of mischiefs, confusions, and impossibilities? One may see by such desires how the World would be Governed, if God gave it up to the Will of Man? Could there be any Unity, where every Man, would Rule, and every Man hath an interest cross to others? Can there be any order or goodness, when all Men are partly bad, and every bad Man would have his Will?

But you will say, that it is not bad Men, nor bad desires that you would have God to grant, but only what is just and good. *Answ.* But who shall be Judge, what is just and good? If every Man must be Judge, unjust and wicked Prayers must be granted: And the Judgment and wishes of many will be against yours: If it be you that must be Judge, tho its like that is it that you would have, you cannot for shame sure speak it out: This were for God to resign his place to you, and make you the God or Governour of the World, and only those Prayers must be granted which you think just and good? Whence are all the bloody Wars in the World, but that one King would have that which another hath, or have his Will against another? You may see
then

then that its worse than Madnes to desire, that any but God should be the highest disposer of the affairs of Men, and determine what shall befall us in this World.

4. And do you think that God is unfit to do it? Doth he want *Wisdom to know* what is best? Doth he want *Goodness to choose* what is best? Or doth he want *Power to do* what is best? Who hath it if God want it? And how come they to it if not by him? And doth he give more than he hath himself. If he have any imperfection he is not God.

5. It is most certain that all things are done well by God, and as they should be: And therefore the cause of your dissatisfaction is in your selves. And indeed in these several evils you may find it. 1. By your sin you provoke God in Justice to correct you and deny your Prayers. 2. And by your present badness you make your selves unfit for that which you desire that is good. 3. And by your blindness and fleshly mind, you desire that which is not to be desired: 4. And after all this by your Idolatrous usurping self-will, you are discontented with God for not giving you your desires. These four

four things contain your Case: And is not every one of them a shameful evil?

II. But suppose that it be not outward things, but more grace, and assurance, and comfort, and deliverance from temptation and sin, that you pray against, and God doth not give it you: Is not this cause of questioning the success of Prayer, or of doubting at least of my own success, and whether my Prayers are not all in vain.

Answer. That I may give you full satisfaction, I will tell you. 1. What kind of means Prayer is. 2. What Prayer it is that is such a means. 3. What may be expected by means of Prayer, and what not. 4. I will prove to you that Prayer is not in vain, nor Gods promises to it broken. 5. I will shew you why you should be patient under Gods denyals.

I. Prayer is not a Purchasing means, nor a meriting by giving God any thing which may benefit him; nor doth it work any change on God; but it procureth blessings by fitting the Petitioner to receive them. And that in several respects: 1. Even Naturally considered, it is a contradiction for a Man to be unwillingly

willingly happy, and to attain the happiness which he desireth without so much as asking him that alone can give it.

2. Morally considered, a Man is very unfit for, and unworthy of the benefit which he thinks not worth his asking; especially if it be the greatest blessing that Man is capable of, which he so despiseth.

3. And Legally considered, the gift cannot be his, that performeth not the condition imposed by the Doner, especially when it is but so reasonable a one as ask and have.

So that you see though Prayer purchase not, and change not God, it is a naturally, Morally, and Oeconomically necessary qualification and condition of our reception, and thus only it hath the Nature of a means.

II. There are three sorts of Prayer, which are not in vain, and yet much differ as to their success.

1. There is Prayer that is not dissembled, but cometh only from natural principles or Common grace; such as *Abahs* Humiliation, and the Mariners Prayers in *Jonah*, and its like the *Ninivites*; and *Simon Magus* desires to escape punishment: This is not in vain, I cannot say that God is under any

ny promise to grant it, but he oft doth grant it, and pity such as cry to him in their misery. Which it seems was the Case described, *Psal.* 78. and 107. And whether *Manassehs* was any better I know not.

2. There is the Prayer of sincere, weak Christians, who are guilty of much weakness of faith, and coldness of desire: These yet through Christ have certain promises of necessary things. 3. There are the fervent and faithful Prayers of Men of eminent faith and holyness; and these oft prevail for extraordinary blessings, which are not promised to the Prayers of every true Christian. *Elias*, and *Elisha*, and *Peter*, did Miracles by Prayer; There are Devils and sins and sufferings that go not out but by fasting and Prayer: The effectual fervent Prayer of an excellent Righteous Man, availeth more than ordinary Christians. If Church history may be Credited, such were the Prayers of *Gregory of Neocæsarea*, *Martin. of Tours*, and some other holy Men that prevailed for wonders or Miracles with God. All attain not their success.

III. And I will tell you what grant of Prayers

Prayers you may or may not expect from God. 1. The attaining of Salvation, or our ultimate end, every true Christian doth pray for and shall obtain. 2. The obtaining of all those means which are of absolute necessity to Salvation, every true Christian prayeth for and shall obtain; such as are our part in the merits and intercession of Christ, the pardon of sin as to the damning punishment, the necessary grace of the Spirit, deliverance from the dominion of sin: These we may be sure of.

3. There be some subordinate means so ordinarily needful, tho not absolutely necessary, that we must pray for them with great earnestness, and may pray for them with great hope, though not with certainty of obtaining them; such are the use of Bibles, the benefit of a faithful Ministry, Sacraments, Christian Society, time of Preparation for a comfortable death, &c.

4. There are some things which seem better to selfish persons, and to flesh and blood, than indeed they are, and are of very mutable various use; sometime they are good for us, and at other times hurtful; to one Man they are good, and to another

another bad: Such are outward prosperity, wealth, honour, ease, health, friends, and Life: God best knoweth both to whom these things are good, and when, and how far, and how long: And because we know not, we cannot tell when, and how far, and to whom, God will give them, when we Pray for them; but we must ask in hope, according to our best understanding, and willingly leave all to the Wisdom and Will of God.

5. There are some things which would be certainly good for us, if we had them which sin maketh us unfit to receive, or as the Scripture speaketh, *unworthy of*, not only in the sense of the Law of works, as all are, but even of the Law of Grace, or Gods ordinary Gospel dispensation: Such are greater measures of grace, and of victory over sin, assistance in duty, and the enjoyment of the best means, and freedom from some Temptations, and afflictions. Guilty culpable Christians of the worst sort, that have less faith, and desire and obedience than better Men, cannot expect that in that condition their Prayers should prevail as much as better; and God should not punish them by any

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Correction or deny them greater Grace and Glory.

6. A strong Christian who hath before lived by faith, in a holy fruitful life, and overcome the strong Temptations of flattering prosperity, and fetcht most of his daily comforts from the hopes of Heaven, may well expect as with high probability, tho not with absolute certainty, that God should give him in answer to his Prayers, an answerable victory over all the Temptations of adversity, and deliver him from such sufferings as else would be to his greater heart than good.

7. Those that God called to propagate the Gospel by the attestation and Seal of Miracles, had answerable faith and grant of their Prayers.

IV. By thus much you may see, that while Prayer and hope are guided by Gods word of precept and promise, they are far from being in vain: And tho he give us not all that we desire, he giveth us all that we ought to desire absolutely, and all that we should conditionally desire, if we have the condition.

For, 1. Prayer goeth to him that can easily give us whatever we need, without loss, or cost or difficulty: To him who

who is fuller of goodness than the Sea of water, or the Sun of light: And if the Sun be an intellectual free Agent, it should in reason be no hard matter to believe, that it is willing to give us light.

2. We come not to God before he calleth us: He hath commanded us to ask: It is in his own appointed way and means that we wait for mercy.

3. Sincere Prayer cometh from God, and therefore is acceptable to him: It is his Spirit that giveth us holy desires, and teacheth us what and how to ask; and causeth us to believe and hope for mercy: And God despiseth not his Spirits work: If it cause us but to groan out sincere desires, he knoweth the meaning of them.

4. In Prayer we retire from our selves to God: We exercise Repentance in humble Confession; we acknowledge our insufficiency, emptiness and unworthiness, and so are the fitter, as Beggars to receive the gifts of his free Grace.

5. True Prayer disposeth us to the right use of all that God shall give, and thats the way to obtain our desire. Prayer confesseth sin, and implyeth that

we will take heed of sinning for the time to come: It confesseth unworthiness, and therefore implyeth a promise to be thankful: It trusteth to God and seeketh all of him, and therefore implyeth our purpose to live to him and please him.

6. We go to God in the Name of Christ, and have a Mediator whom he heareth always: We plead his worthiness, and that by his own Command.

7. And Prayer hath many promises from God, who is faithful and never brake his promise. *Ask, and ye shall have.*

8. Lastly, though we have not all that we would have, yet experience greatly encourageth us to pray, and tells us that Prayer hath prevailed with God:

I know that the Devils and Unbelief have many dissuading Objections.

As 1. That God is not moved by our words, much less by long Prayers.

Ans. But our hearts are moved while just desire is excited and exercised, and thereby made fitter to receive Gods gifts: We pull the Boat to the Shore, and not the Shore to the Boat, when

we lay hold on the Shore and pull at it. If this reason were good, all means in the World were vain as well as Prayer: If we do good, and obey God, and forsake Sin, if it were to perfection, all this maketh no change in God: Shall we therefore conclude, that it is in vain, and no means of his acceptance and blessing: Your eating, and drinking, an trading, and plowing, and sowing, and study, and travels, make no change on God: Are they therefore all in vain? and will he give you all that you want without them? Changes are made on the Receiver, not on God.

Obj. 2. God knoweth what we want without our Prayer, and he knoweth our desires.

Ans. What though you know what a Beggar wants, or what your Child wants; will you think him a fit Receiver, who thinks himself too good to ask, or thinks you must give him all without asking? Is it not God himself that hath bid you pray, and are his terms too hard? Have you less need than Christ himself had, who spent whole Nights in Prayer.

Obj. 3. Many live in Prosperity that never

never pray, and many in Adversity that pray.

Ans. Dives, Luke 16. lived in Prosperity, and so did Herod, Pilate, and so do many Turks and Heathens: Is Christianity therefore in vain? And will you be contented with the Portion of such men? Go into the Sanctuary and see their end: Are those now in Prosperity who are in Hell with Devils, past help and hope. Prayer is not to make us richer and greater in the World than other Men, but to make us better and obtain Salvation. Do you judge of men by their Case in *this World* or the *next*? And are those men prosperous, who are the Slaves of the Flesh, and the World, and the Devil? And are they not better, who are secured of the Love of God?

V. But I will next tell you, what Cause you have of Patience, even when God seemeth to deny your Prayers.

1. It is an unspeakable mercy that he will not deny us any thing that is necessary to our Salvation. Is that man miserable, and should he murmur; who is a Child of God, a Member of Christ, and an Heir of Heaven; and is pardoned,

doned, sanctified, and shall be saved? Is there not enough in Christ and Heaven to satisfie you?

2. God gave you Mercy, yea, unvaluable Mercy, before you askt it: He gave you your Being and Reason unaskt: He gave the World a Saviour unaskt: He gave you Christian Parents, Teachers and Books unaskt: And he gave you his first Grace unaskt, and many a Deliverance since: Therefore if he deny you what you ask, it is not because he is backward to give.

3. If it be any outward thing that he denyeth you, bethink you whether God or you be fitter to dispose of such? Have you more Authority and Right? He owed you nothing; if he have given it you long, be thankful for that though it be past; it was freely given. And who is wiser and better knoweth how to use you and all men; Is it God or you? And who is better, or unlikelier to chuse amiss?

And again, remember how great a Sin it is, to grudge at God for his Government of the World, and to desire to depose him, and to dispose of any thing our selves? Is this your subjection and

submission to his Will? Did not Christ
 by his Examples teach you better?
 When he said, *Not as I will, but as thou wilt.* And if *this Cup may not pass from me unless I drink it, thy Will be done.*
 Mat. 26. 39, 42. Mans Duty, Holiness, Interest and Rest lieth in bringing over his own Will entirely to the Will of God, and his sin and misery in relisting it,

4. Either you are sure that what you ask is best for you, or not: If it be Wealth or Health, you are not sure; more perish by Prosperity than by Adversity: I before told you, that men are condemned for loving somewhat more than God, and Holiness, and Heaven; and preferring it in their choice. And do you think men are liker to over-love Sickness, and Poverty, and Crosses, more than Health, and Wealth, and Pleasure? And would you have God give you that which is worst for you, only because you pray for it, or would have it? You will not do so by your Child, no nor by your Swine, lest he burst his Belly.

But if it be *Grace*, and that which you are sure is best for you; your first duty

duty is to examin whether there be not some great impediment in your selves, which is the Cause of Gods denial? Do you go to the root of your old sins in your penitent Confession? Do you hide no secret guilt or sin, and deale too gently with it? Do you humble your self to those that you have wronged by word or deed? And do you make just Restitution so far as you are able to all that you have defrauded? Do you not dally with temptation, and willfully renew your guilt? Do you not overmuch hanker after worldly prosperity, or some sinful pleasure? Do you not wilfully omit some certain duty to God or Man, in your relation or converse, and look after none but your self, and live unfruitfully to others, your Children, Servants and Neighbours? If Conscience find such guilt as this, presently endeavour faithfully to amend it, and then beg Gods further Grace, and you shall find him not unwilling to give it you.

But if none of this be the Case, but you have the *testimony of your Consciences*, that excepting your unwilling imperfections and infirmities, in *simplicity and*

godly sincerity you have your conversation in the World, and endeavour true obedience to Christ; then you may be sure that God hath denied you no Grace essential to Christianity, and necessary to Salvation,

5. And as to increase of Grace and higher measures, remember that even the desire of it is an unspeakable mercy; For the desire of perfection is the mark of sincerity, and so of Salvation: Be thankful to God for those desires. But this is the affliction next to be spoken to more distinctly.

CASE. XIV.

Weakness of Grace, Knowledge, Faith, Love, Comfort, Great Corruptions.

XIV. **I**T is one of the greatest burdens to an upright Soul, to be kept under spiritual languishing and weakness, and to have but a low degree of grace: When knowledge is so small that it will not free us from daily uncertainties about Truth, and Duty, and Sin; and all that plead for their several opinions, perplex us; and Scripture seemeth unintelligible to us, and we do but

but grope after God as in the dark, and are overwhelmed with strange unsatisfied thoughts, of God, and of Christ, and of the World which we are going to.

When Faith is so weak, that we trust Christ for Heaven and Earth, with fear, and inquietness, and much distrust; and can scarce tell whether our Faith overcome the World, and our trusting Christ for Heaven would make us forsake Earth and Life, rather than chuse to hazard it by wilful sin; when doubts and fears do tell us that we have little Faith.

What a Calamity is it, when our hopes of Heaven do so little rejoyce us, that every worldly suffering seems strong enough to quell and quench our joy: Yea, we have more dread than desire, more trouble than joy when we think of dying, and of the next Life?

What a Calamity is it, when our Love to God, and Christ, and Glory is so small, that we are in fear that we love more this Body, and worldly Prosperity, and Pleasure? When all the thoughts of Gods essential Goodness,

his Love and mercy to us and others, and all the wonderful Love and Mercy of our Redeemer, and all the Mercies on Earth, and Promises of Heaven, will scarce warm our hearts with Love and thankful joy in God? And yet we can easily Love and overlove our flesh, our House, our Lands, our friends, and fanciful amourneſs is a Common diſeaſe.

What a Calamity is it that we have no more Government of our thoughts; to keep out Coveteouſneſs, Pride and Luſt, and to caſt out Satans abominable Temptations.

And that when we know that God tryeth us to exercise our patience, we can no better overcome fear, anger, grief and diſcontent? Should we be *Patient* Under all this want of Grace.

Anſw. This is to me the greateſt burden in this World, and I ſuppoſe it is ſo to all ſound Chriſtians, as to conſiderate trouble of mind, tho loſs of friends or bodily pains may ſtir up more paſſion. That which was before ſaid about uncertainty of Salvation, muſt be taken in about this Caſe.

And, 1. Let us make ſure of our ſincerity before we talk of our imperfections

if we can know that we have the truth of special grace, we may know what to say to the Case of our infirmities. And for that still remember what I said before about the sincerity of faith: *If you have so well thought of this World and the next, and of the Gospel of Christ, that you are soundly resolved to trust Christ for grace and glory, to the forsaking of all that stands against it, you have saving faith and title to Salvation.* I opened it before to you by two similitudes, of a patient that practically trusteth his Physician, and a poor Prisoner that practically trusteth one that promiseth him a Lordship in a Forreign Land: Tho you venture with fear and trembling, if you will venture all on Christ, and leave all for him, so far as he requireth you, it is saving faith. Practically trust him, and he will save you.

2. When you are got thus far, remember that as you were born in sin, so you too long lived in it: Sin had a long time to darken your understandings, and harden your hearts, and corrupt your wills, and set you at a greater distance from God: And do think that all this must be undone and cured easily and in a moment,

or as soon as you desire it? It is an unspeakable mercy that it is so far cured, as that you are translated from death to life, and made new Creatures, and the Heirs of Heaven; And moreover that *Christ* hath undertaken the perfect cure in his time and way. Grace somewhat imitateth nature: You were not born as soon as Conceived, nor were you at ripe age as soon as born. Your growth and strength came by degrees in time, you had not your *Learning* all at once, but by long Study. You get not your Riches by Trading or labour in a few daies: Your Land brings not fruit to perfection as soon as it is sowed; nor your Trees so soon as they are graft or planted: And must not so great a work as the Cure and Sanctifying of a Soul be done by such degrees?

3. And consider that you must not be meer patients, but also Agents in the increase of your grace and strength: It must be had by exercise; the frequent acts must increase the Habits; and God will not do it all without you: He hath appointed you means to use, and will try and exercise your obedience therein. As he giveth not life and strength to those
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that will not take their food, nor the fruit of the Earth without our labour, so neither hath he promised to give more grace, save in the patient use of the means which he hath appointed. *Time, Means and diligence* are needful.

4. And alas most Christians are too slothful, and use means negligently, and then look, that God should give them as much grace, at their meer wish and Prayer, as if they were laborious and diligent. And too many do venture on sin, and so keep under grace, by careles living.

5. And some unskilfully use means for one sort of grace, when it is another that they most need, and should use the means accordingly. When they should excite and feed their faith and hope and holy Love, by the consideration of Gods truth and goodness, and his Love in Christ, and by Heavny Doctrine and thoughts endeavour to get a Heavny mind, some study small controversies, and some perplex themselves with scruples about duties and sins of their own making, and some plunge themselves into confounded and bewildring thoughts, and think over again all Satans Temptations; and some only strive to get a more passionate

weeping sorrow; And much neglect all serious endeavours for a believing, Loving, joyful Soul.

5. 6. You must remember that many Christians grow in grace and do not know it, but think that they go backward, or have none: Because they do not sufficiently observe wherein the nature of Sanctification doth principally consist: Some lay it on passion, and some on Memory, and some on the belief of their own sincerity, Justification and Salvation, and some on words and free expression, whereas it chiefly consisteth in the Estimation of the Judgments, the Resolution of the Will, and the Obedience of our Lives: If you esteem Gods Grace and Glory better, and sin worse, and the World to be good or bad, as it serveth grace or sin, then you grow in understanding: If you are more firmly resolved to place your hopes, and make your choice according to this estimation, and to please God, and secure Grace and Glory, whatever it cost you, and to avoid wilfull sin, which is your danger, and to use the World for holy ends, especially if you Love Wisdom, and Holiness, and Justice better, and hate sin more than you did heretofore, then your Will doth.

doth grow in grace. And if you shew this Will and choice in more *Obedience of Life*, avoiding known sin more, and endeavouring to do good, and devoting your selves more entirely to God, then you grow in holyness of Life: Tho your memories grow weaker, and tho your holy passions and feelings should grow less, and are less able for long Meditation, or to keep an order or steadiness in your thoughts, and tho you want words in Prayer and discourse, and tho fears and peevish angryness and troubling thoughts should by weakness or Temptation get more advantage of you, yet all this stands with rootedness and growth in grace.

7. Forget not what you were heretofore: Had you not formerly a higher esteem of worldly things, and less fear of sinning than you have now. Growth in Grace may be like the growth of your Trees, or Corn, or Flowers, or the shadow on your Dial: You do not see these grow or move: But if you come after a sufficient time, you may see that they are grown: We are Bigger at Age than in Child-hood, and yet we never saw our selves grow? It is by insensible degrees: Strong Christians have more
knowe-

knowledge then they had , and a more fixed resolution for God and Heaven, and a greater contempt of Worldly vanity, and Victory over fleshly desires and wilfull sin, tho they perceive not how these grow.

8. Be thankful that you desire to be better : Those desires (as is aforesaid) prove sincerity, and are the Earnells of what you do desire, and are a greater blessing than all the Riches of the World : God that gave them you will not see them lost : The grace which we have on Earth is desiring seeking grace ; desires are our best Evidence here ; *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness* ; for they shall be satisfied hereafter. We must know the difference between Earth and Heaven : Its there that we shall have all that we desire. Here *desiring and seeking* is our work : Perfection is the prize and Crown : Which is not to be had till we have done our Race and Warfare : The Womb is but the place of preparation for what is to be enjoyed in the open World ; and no great matters are there to be expected : We must not look for more on Earth, than its part.

9. And when all is done God is a free Agent,

Agent, and giveth his grace in such variety as he please, and doth not give to all alike: As he freely diversifieth *Nature* and Common gifts, so doth he several degrees of grace. It is an unspeakable mercy to have so much as shall save us from the Hell which we deserve, and give us right to life Eternal; tho we yet are faint through weakness, and have not the strength and comfort which we desire.

o. And tho we have yet much Corruption left uncured, we have helps appointed us to overcome them: And the exercise of Grace against all such Enemies, is much of its glory, and sheweth its amiable worth, as darkness sets out the worth of light, and sickness of health, and death of life: Diseases occasion the Honour of our Physician: Where sin hath abounded, grace hath superabounded: The whole need not the Physician; We must have daily use for Christ, both to pardon us, and to cure us: God could have prevented *Adams* fall; but he hath permitted it, and permiteth all the sin in the World, tho he cause it not: And he knoweth how to use it to his glory. All Souls in Heaven were
once

once sinful, saving Christs: We must daily be washed in his blood; we shall never perform a duty so innocently as to need no Saviour and pardoning grace: where there is no Enemy there is no War: And where there is no War there is no victory; and where there is no Victory there is no Tryumph.

11. And that God who freely pardon- ed all our Reigning sins before Conver- sion, will surely pardon all our meer in- firmities, when we renew our faith and our Repentance: He that through Christ can forgive such as were Enemies, will forgive a Son: And being reconciled by Christs death, we shall be saved by his life.

Not that any of these Considerations should reconcile us to sin, or abate our hatred of it: It must be our grief that any thing should cleave to us which is hateful to God, and which killed Christ, and which is so contrary to holyness and Heaven: But use no such impatience as hindereth the sense of the Love of God; or the grace of Christ, or the thankful ac- knowledgment of his mercy: Fight against sin as well as you can, and serve your Lord as well as you are able: But do not sit down and cry, because sin is too

strong for you, and because you can serve God no better ; complain to Christ in order to beg his help and grace : But use not complaint instead of endeavour, nor any trouble which hindereth duty.

Thank God that you are weary of sin, and say with *Paul*, *O wretched Man, who shall deliver me*, so you will but say next, [*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord* ;] And now you are weary and heavy laden, come to Christ for ease and rest. And Remember that (if you were ungodly) you could once have endured sin without weariness ? Who heard you then impatiently cry out against it : Yea you were loath to think of leaving it. And look about you on the multitude of the ungodly, and you shall see how far they are from being impatient with their sin, tho it be mortal ; when they can scarce be patient towards him that would but save them from it. They grudge, at God because he will not give them leave to sin, and not because he doth not Cure them : O how contrary is the impatience of Saints and wicked sinners.

12. While you remember what grace you want, remember also both what you have received, and what is promised you :
That

that *Thankfulness* and *Hope* may keep you from discouragement. You are not cured, but you are alive; and Christ hath promised you a Cure. In many things we all offend, *Jam. 2. 2. He that saith he hath no sin is a Lyar.* 1 John 1. 8. Paul tells us that he had not obtained perfection, but he rejoiced that he was pressing towards the mark. *Phil. 3. 12, 13. We may rejoyce that our Captain hath overcome the World,* John 16. 33. And he will shortly bruise Satan under our feet. *Rom. 16. 20. and 7. last.* Christ that cured all bodily diseases on Earth, will cure spiritual blindness, lameness, and deadness too, if we have but grace enough to go to him for more.

13. Lastly, the more weary you are of sin and weakness, and the more desirous you are to know God better, and love him more, and praise him with greater chearfulness and joy, the more you should long to be with Christ: Heaven will deliver you from all imperfection; from all darkness, unbelief and dulness; from all sad uncomfortable thoughts, and from all both alluring and molesting temptations: O that we could believe that more strongly, and then our honest

impatience with sin and imperfection, would but quicken us to the means of our deliverance, and help our joy in the foresight of that blessed change, which will leave no matter of discontent, and will give us more than we could here desire.

But to those who are overmuch dejected at their imperfections and remaining faults, I add these Cautions.

1. See that it be not the disgrace, or the outward troublesome fruits of your sin, which grieve you more than the sin it self.

2. Take heed, lest while you complain of your badness, there be no secret pride and hypocrisie, to make you angry with those that think you but as bad as you call your self: Its an odd kind of contradiction, at once to be impatient because we are so bad, and also impatient with them that take us to be so; and not to endure another to say that of us which we say our selves.

3. The worse you take your selves and your sins to be, the more you should esteem, and desire a Saviour and his Grace to heal you, and rejoyce that a full remedy is at hand, and freely offered you; and be

- ~ the more thankful for that mercy which
- ~ is given, and which is promised to so un-
- ~ worthy Sinners. —

4. Shew your impatience with sin and wants by hating sin, and diligent using the means of cure, and not by idle discouraged despairing complaints.

9. 5. Remember that our Head is perfect for us; His Merits and Righteousness are perfect; He is fully perfected in Glory; and is it nothing that he is related to us, as our Surety, Saviour, and Head? He hath his glory for our good.

6. Remember that no sin or imperfection shall condemn us, but that which we had rather keep than leave, and love more than we hate it: And that all things are tollerable which will end in Heaven. We groan, being burdened both with ~ sin and sorrow in the Flesh: But we wait for full deliverance from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious ~ liberty of the Sons of God.

CASE XV.

When God doth not bless the labours of our Callings, Ministers, Parents endeavours for Children, for near Relations, Tradesmen, endeavours for the Church.

A Nother Case which greatly needeth Patience, is, when God doth not bless and prosper our endeavours; when Ministers study, and preach and pray, and yet see but small fruit of their labours; few converted, reformed, or strengthened, but all their labour seemeth lost: When Parents take pains with their Children, and they remain still obstinate and wicked: When Magistrates endeavours are frustrated by a contentious rebellious people: When men labour in their lawful Callings, and all goeth backward, and God seemeth not to bless their labours: In sickness our Physick doth not prosper: When we are falsely accused, our just defence is not believed: When we endeavour the publick good, we prosper not; This maketh men fear that God forsaketh them.

These several Cases should be severally con-

considered: And the Case of unprosperous Ministers, *I* confess, is very sad: When a man from his youth is devoted to that holy work, and by many years hard study prepared for it, and is drawn to it by a longing desire to do good, and studyeth for it all his life, and spends time and strength in constant labour, and after all can see small fruit; this lyeth heavy, and tempteth them to doubt whether they were called of God, and whether they are not unfit for the work, or unfaithful in it. Through Gods great mercy it is not my own tryal; I know not that ever I laboured any where in vain; but I have lived near far better men, who have lived to above fourscore years of Age, and have said, that they know not of two Souls converted by them in the Parishes where they lived; some speed better upon such as came from other Parishes, and some on very few at all: And alas to see no better fruit of such employment, than barely to have a Benefice to live on, and some reverence from the people, or a few good words, is a poor encouragement,

But 1. The first thing to be done in this
this

this sad Case, is, to search whether the fault be not in our selves? Whether we choose such subjects to preach on as are most needful and suitable to the Hearers state, and fittest to convince and win them? Whether we study plainness, and familiar words, and a close convincing way of speech? Whether by familiar conversation with them we get their love, and also find out their ignorance, error and sin, their objections and doubts, that we may know what they need; and whether we deal with them privately and personally as well as publickly, for their instruction? Whether our Lives ✓ preach to them as well as our Tongues, and shew them that we believe what we speak? and whether we do all in the expression of unfeigned love, and do them all the good we can for their Bodies, and quarrel not with them for worldly things, but lose our right rather than scandalize ✓ them, and harden them against the Truth. If any of this be amiss, it must be amended; if not, then consider,

2. That to labour is our parts, and to prosper it is Gods: *Paul* and *Apollos* can but plant and water, but it is God that must give the increase: Christ himself

self both preached and wrought miracles in some places, when yet few believed on him; yea, though the people cryed him up, it was no great number that were throughly converted by all his preaching and works; that being reserved for the coming down of the Holy Ghost, after his Death and Resurrection. And in some places few were converted by the Apostles, even among the learned Philosophers at *Athens*, how little was their success?

3. God knoweth his Chosen, and all shall come to Christ that the Father hath given him, and none of them shall be lost: And God loveth Souls and Holiness better than we do: All Souls are His; and Christ knoweth the price of them: And we know that all that God doth is good, and we shall see the reason of it at last.

The Prophets and Apostles had more unthankful requitals, than the meer loss of their labour with the greater part; They were also persecuted, scorned, and killed, by them whose Salvation they desired: Which of the Prophets have not your Fathers killed and persecuted, saith Christ, *Mat. 23*, see *Isa. 53. 1.*
 &c.

&c. *John* 12. 37, 38. *Acts* 17. and 19. 9. and 28. 24. Yea, to some the Word is the savour of Death to Death, and Christ is as a Stone of stumbling, and Ministers as the scorn of the World and the off scouring of all things; and alas, they must be Witnesses against their Hearers to their Condemnation, and must shake off the Dust of their Feet against them.

4. If our success were according to our own desires, it would be beyond what God intendeth for men in the World: We would have every man in this world converted and saved: It is our duty to desire and endeavour it as far as we are able; for it is not Gods Decrees but his Commands which are our Rule. *Luke* 4. 25. Many Widdows, saith Christ, were in the days of *Elisha*, but it was not to many that he was sent. We may have comfort in our just desires and endeavours.

6. God will accept and reward us, according to our faithful work, and not according to our success: A bad man may be used to save other mens Souls, when his own is lost. *Isa* 49. 5. *Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the Eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be*

be my strength. It is spoken both of the Prophet and of Christ: It was to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, that Christ saith he was sent; and he is called, a Minister of the Circumcision. And yet Israel was not gathered, when he would have gathered them as a Hen doth her Chickens, Mat. 23. But they were to be utterly ruined for rejecting him. 2 Cor. 2. 14, 15. Now thanks be to God who causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his Knowledge by us in every place: For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved and in them that perish: To the one the savour of Death to Death, and to the other the savour of Life unto Life; and who is sufficient for these things. Faithful labour is never wholly lost.

7. And one Soul is so precious, as is worth more than all the labour of our lives: He is an Hypocrite himself and no faithful Minister of Christ, that had not rather save one Soul though he live in poverty, than have the richest Bishoprick and save none. His Mony shall perish with him, who loveth Mony better than the Soul of the poorest Beggar.

8. There may perhaps be many more Souls

Souls converted than the Preacher ever heareth of. The work hath often obscure beginnings: You know not what workings may be in the secret hearts of Sinners; and some are bashful, and some have not opportunity to shew themselves. I have visited some aged Women before Death, who were not noted for any zealous profession of Religion, but what they shewed in the Church Assemblies, and I found them of solid understanding and experience; and perceived by their talk that they had been constant in all secret duties, and conscionable in all their course: And when I enquired further, I found that they had Husbands that restrained them from the society of godly people, and from all open manifestation of what was in their hearts, save what their Church-worship, and upright living shewed. And this is the Case of some Children and Servants, who are under the restraint of bad Parents and Masters: We must not then conclude, that all the Seed is lost, which seemeth buried and appeareth not to us.

9. It is not lost labour which doth but restrain men from being worse:

The suppression of Vice, and the keeping up a profession of the Truth, is worth all our labour; as also the keeping out Heresies and Errors; and it is worth our labour to feed Christs Sheep, and help to confirm such as are true Christians already, and to increase the grace they have; and to comfort the sad, and resolve the doubting, and edifie the Body of Christ: Surely the work which is to be done in guiding and edifying the Converted, requireth as great skill at least, as that which is required to the converting of Infidels and wicked men; (though the change made on the Learners be not so great in regard of the *terminus a quo*; for the higher includeth the lower and more) and more Learning is necessary to teach the higher Form, than to teach the Alphabet: Some are for planting, and some for watering; some went forth to make Disciples of the Nations, and baptize them, and some were to guide them when baptized, and teach them to observe all Christs Commands.

10. If your Study and Doctrine edifie and save your selves, it is an unspeakable mercy; you have had the comfort of sweet
and

and holy studies, and the pleasant work of opening and pleading saving truth: And if all this study and preaching have but prevailed with your selves, and conquered your own sins, and subdued your Souls to the obedience of Christ, how happy are you: Yet all this is not said to make you indifferent as to your success: I further therefore advise you:

1. Long for the wining and edifying of Souls; for I have observed, that few prosper this way, but those that earnestly desire it.

2. Pray hard for them to God, and see that you neglect not your own Duty. Study for eminent abilities: Preach plainly, earnestly, reverently; exhort them personally; do them good charitably; hurt none; avoid scandal; live as you teach; shun all unnecessary crossness and singularity; *keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace with all true Believers*; and patiently leave the issue to God.

3. If you are distasted through prejudice, and have long laboured without any notable success, advise with your Brethren whether you should not remove, and another be not fitter for that people,

and you for another, and do accordingly.

II. As to the second Cause of the frustration of all endeavours for the Souls of Children and Servants, I toucht it before: I confesse it is a grievous Case to bring up Children who will be Slaves of Satan, Plagues to the Church, and Fire-brands in Hell; and to speak to them in vain as to Blocks or Mad-men: But good men have lived comfortably that had bad Children: *Adam* had a *Cain*, *Noah* had a *Cham*, *Abraham* had an *Ismael*, *Isaack* had an *Esau*, *Jacob's* Sons greatly sinned; *Eli* had an *Hophni* and *Phinehas*, *Samuel's* Sons forsook their Fathers way; *David* had an *Amnon* and an *Absalom*, *Solomon* had a *Rehoboam*, *Hezekiah* had a *Manasseh*, *Job* justly feared his Sons forgetting God in their fulness, and lost them in it: Christ saith the Son shall be against the Father, *Mat. 13. 12.*

And if you have but one good Child, you owe great thanks to God for that. If a Minister must not deny God his thanks, nor himself his comforts, though most of his Flock prove obstinate and perish; neither must Parents be unthank-

thankful or uncomfortable, if most of their Children should be obstinate and perish, if God permit it, who hath more interest in them than you have; you must submit, and take comfort in your good desires and faithful duty: But O see carefully that you neglect not Love, and prudent diligence, and good Example, and that you keep out of Tempting Company, and keep under suitable means.

III. And it is as near a tryal, when a Husband cannot convert a wicked Wife, nor a Wife a wicked Husband, but one must lie in the bosom of a slave of Satan, and an Enemy of Christ, and no persuasion will do such good. The nearness maketh the affliction very great, such as few that have not had sad experience of it can know. It is a very hard thing to love such with a true Conjugal Love, who have no true Loveliness of Soul, but hate the holy wayes of Christ: And it is not easie to keep up innocency and Godlyness and peace, under the constant opposition of one so near.

But yet this must be patiently born, when it cannot be remedied. For

1. Usually it is a just Correction for a

- sinful choice, which must be repented of :
 - And its a mercy that your Repentance
 - hath some help.

2. It may be such a constant exercise of
 - your grace, especially patience and pru-
 - dence, as may render you better and
 - stronger Christians, than those that have
 - less exercise by tryals.

3. The greatness of the Temptations
 must cause you to double your watchful-
 - ness and resolutions, against the sins
 which you will be tempted to, and to per-
 - form all the duties of our place. As

1. See that no pretence of Love, or plea-
 - sing, or obedience, draw you to imitate
 - a Husband or a Wife in sin, and to be-
 - come as bad as they, or to receive any er-
 - rour from them, or grow cold to holy
 - duties. Some Women that have Papists
 - or other Erroneous Husbands, cannot
 - tell how to Love and please them, with-
 - out being flattered or drawn into their
 - Errours, strong constant tryals need
 - strong and constant watch and resoluti-
 - on : For if you are overcome to be as
 they, its a thousand times worse than all
 the grief that you have by them.

2. See that their badness destroy not
 Conjugal affections towards them : Those
 may

may be loved as Husbands or Wives who cannot be loved as sincere Christians.

3. See that you exceed meer carnal persons in all the duties of your Relations. If your difference and grief do cast you into sowerness, and an unpleasing discontented conversation, or if you be as peevish and froward as common persons, you will be a scandal to those that you should win, and drive them further from Religion and Salvation.

You must shew if you are Wives more Love, and Meekness, and Patience, and Obedience than Carnal persons do, as well as more forwardness in Religion.

Froward Impatient Wives do harden many ill Husbands in their sin. It hath

much pleased me to hear a Husband's saying of a good Wife, [*I differ from my Wife in Religion and Church Orders: I go to one Church, and she to another: I think she is too precise and strict; but I think there is not a better Wife, a better Mother, and a better Mistress in the Land.*] A good

Christian must be good in all Relations.

4. Continue Prayers and winning endeavours while there is hope.

5. And let the sense of anothers sin

and misery, provoke you to be thankful to God for his grace, and that he hath not left you to the like.

IV. And as to the next Case (when God blasteth our Labours and Estates, and prospereth not our Callings) its an usual tryal: Some are ruined by deceivers, and breaking Tradsinen, some by losses at Sea; some by Suretiship; some by fire; some by false Servants; some by Prodigal Sons; some by Soldiers; some by unjust Suits at Law; some over reacht in bargains about Land; and divers other wayes there are by which the Rich have been brought to poverty (to say nothing of Gaming, Luxury and such vice, which belongs not to this present Case) and by which lawful means of living want success.

And here 1. It is your duty to see that there be no guilt of any other unpardoned sin which God punisheth this way. Sometime an Estate is blasted by God, because it was unlawfully got by Ancestors: Sometimes the owner is guilty of former defrauding others, and hath made no restitution; Sometimes God thus punisheth some other secret sin, as Fornication, Lying, Flesh-pleasing and such

such like. Search deep, and see that no such guilt be unrepented of, and be as a moth or fire to consume your wealth.

2. Especially search lest your hearts grow secretly into a Worldly disposition, and too great hopes of Riches and prosperity, and too great a desire after plenty, and too much pleasure in the possession or the hopes of it : If this be your case, its Gods great mercy to blast all to you, and to break your Idol, and to fire you out of the Garrison that you trust. They that *trust* in riches, Christ tells you, are as hardly saved as for a *Camel* (or Gable) to go through the eye of a needle : And its Mens *hope*, which is called their *trust*. When you *hope* for more from Riches than they can give, you are said to *trust* in them. If ever God save you, he will save you from this Worldly mind and love : And sure prosperity is not the likeliest way to that ; but rather withering the object of your hopes.

3. However make this use of your crosses, to be more weaned from the World, and more carefully to lay up a Treasure in Heaven, where fire, rust or moth corrupts not, and Thieves, Pirate.

or Soldiers cannot steal, and then your loss, be it never so great, is made your gain.

4. And let your crosses and frustrations call you to exercise the graces suitable to your condition; to renew Repentance, submission to Gods Will, Prayer and dependance for your daily bread, abatement of Pride, not disdain- ing the lowest employment, nor to be beholden to others: And if you can follow Christ and his Apostles in a holy poverty, you shall quickly be above contempt and want. And let it make you ply that Calling and work which will never disappoint you: Believe and hope strongly, pray earnestly, obey diligently, be stedfast, unmoveable always abound- ing in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as your labour shall not be in vain, tho all your Worldly wealth be blasted.

V. The last Case is the saddest tryal of all, when just endeavours for Church and State; for Societies and Posterity seem all in vain: When hopes of peace and piety and publick good have been high raised, and all soon blasted and turned into shame. But of this I must speak

speak anon. I conclude all this Case
 of *Labour frustrate, and hopes cast down,*
 with this necessary warning; Judge of
 Gods love to you by the great and sure
 tokens of his Love, and not by uncer-
 tain transitory things: If God loved
 those best that prosper most in honour
 and wealth, *Turks* and Tyrants, and
 the most Luxurious wicked Men, would
 have the best proof of his Love. If
 your Souls prosper in increase of faith,
 and in sweeter or desiring thoughts of
Heaven, and in delight in God and ho-
 liness, and in victory over all your car-
nal affections, and discontents, and in
 a more willing obedience to all Gods
Laws, and in a word, in a fuller com-
pliance of your Wills to the Will of God,
 then you are truly prosperous persons,
 and have the certain tokens of the Love
 of God; when the prosperity of fools
 will destroy them, and turn to the in-
 crease of their sin, and will but be as
 fuel to Hell fire, and prepare for end-
 less misery.

CASE XVI.

*The Common sin and misery of the World,
and fewness of wise and Godly Men.*

XVI. **A** Heavier tryal of our faith and patience yet is, *The misery of this World by the universal corruption of Mankind, the prevalency of most odious wickedness, and paucity of wise and godly Men: That at five thousand, six hundred and eighty two years, after the Creation, most of the Earth seemeth forsaken of God: Five parts of six being Heathens, Mahometans and Infidels; and of the sixth part the far greatest parts are Papists, and lamentable ignorant Greeks, Armenians, Abassines, Jacobites, Nestorians, &c. And of the Protestants, so few that so much as seem to be serious practicers of the Christian faith and hope, but most live in worldlyness, sensuality, if not also in enmity to serious piety, and Persecution of all that practice what themselves profess.*

This is a manifold and grievous tryal.
1. To our faith; While Satan taketh advantage by it to make us doubt whether Man was made for another life,
when

when his nature seemeth to have no inclination to it, but rather to abhor it: And to doubt how Christ is the Saviour of the World, and dyed for all, and would have all to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, when so few do so much as hear his Gospel. 2. Its a great tryal to our Charity, to think that so few of the World shall be saved, and so many Kingdoms and Ages damned; when we can our selves scarce bear the pain of the Stone or Chollick patiently, or the miscarriage or misery of a Child or friend. And it maketh it the harder to us to perceive the Goodness, Love and Amiability of God, who can convert and save the World, and will not.

I have answered all this so fully in a little Book called, *The Vindication of Gods Love*, that to avoid Repetition, I will say but this little following.

1. We are fully certain of Gods perfect goodness, by all his works; it being equal to his greatness: And therefore no Argument can be of force against a certain truth: Nothing can be true that is inconsistent with so sure and great a truth.

2. Gods goodness is infinite in act, in his

his blessed *self-love*: No finite Creature is an object fit to demonstrate infinite Love in perfect act, nor capable of it.

3. It is certain *de facto* that God doth make Toads, Serpents, dung, and puts sensitive nature in Men and Bruits to great pains and death: Therefore it is certain that all this is consistent with Gods perfect goodness.

4. Gods Love to his Creature is his *Beneficence* or *Complacence*. He was no way bound to make all Creatures equal, nor to give as much to a fly or flea as to a Man, nor to a Man as to an Angel, or to the Sun: Nor is it meet that he complacentially esteem any Creature better than it is.

5. It was no way unmeet that God should make a middle rank of active natures between necessitated bruits and Immutable confirmed Spirits, even a rank of intellectual free Agents to be Governed Morally by Laws, in a life of tryal, with a power of self-determining as to their *Wills*, and to leave them to their undetermined choice, decreeing accordingly to Judge them; yet resolving to secure the Salvation of some. If it be not against Gods goodness to make Bruits

Bruits that have no intellects nor capacity of glory, its not contrary to it to make *Intellectuals* meerly capable, and leave them to their free wills.

6. While we are thankful for Gods mercies to his peculiar people, the Church, we must not, as some peevishly and rashly do, deny what he doth for the rest of the World. He useth them not according to the terms of the first Law, *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die: He leaveth not himself without witness while he winketh at their ignorance,* Act. 14. In that he giveth them abundance of *Temporal* mercies, fruitful Lands and seasons, health and time, and punisheth them not as they deserve: So that, *that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shewed it to them: For the invisible things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his Eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because when they knew God they glorified him not as God.* Rom. 1. 19, 20, 21. *Who hath made of one blood all Nations of Men, to dwell on all the face of the Earth, and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their Habitation,*

vitation, that they should seek the Lord, if
 happily they might feel after him and find
 him, tho he be not far from every one of us.
 Act 17. 25, 26, 27. And in every Nation
 he that feareth God and worketh righteous-
 ness is accepted of him; for he is no respecter
 of Persons, Act. 10. He that cometh to God
 must believe that he is, and that he is a Re-
 warder of them that diligently seek him: And
 Noab that believed the warning of God,
 and prepared the Ark, being moved by fear,
 became an heir of the Righteousness of Faith,
 Heb. 11. 6, 7. God will render to every Man
 according to his deeds: To them who by
 patient continuance in well doing do seek for
 glory, and honour, and immortality, Eternal
 life: But unto them that are contentious, and
 do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness,
 indignation and wrath; tribulation and an-
 guish to every Soul of Man that doth evil,
 of the Jew first and also of the Gentile: But
 Glory, honour and peace to every Man that
 worketh good, to the Jew first and also to
 the Gentiles: For there is no respect of persons
 with God: For as many as have sinned with-
 out Law, shall also perish without Law, and
 as many as have sinned in the Law, shall be
 judged by the Law: For not the hearers of
 the Law are just before God, but the doers
 of

of the Law shall be justified: For when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by Nature the things contained in the Law; these having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves, which shew the work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience also bearing witness; and their thoughts the mean while, either accusing or else excusing one another; in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my Gospel. Rom. 2.

The World is not left in despair as Devils, under the sentence of the broken Law of Innocence, but is under the edition of the Law of Grace which was made to *Adam* and *Noah*, and is used on terms of Mercy and Forgiveness, or else they should not receive all the Mercies as they do: They are all obliged to repent in hope, and to use some means for recovery and Salvation: And God under the Law proclameth himself to be *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering and abundant in Goodness and Truth, keeping Mercy for thousands, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression and Sin, and that will by no means clear, &c. Exod. 34. 5, 6, 7.* God would be no otherwise known to any men on Earth.

And

And how far men keep or breake this Law of Grace, their Judge best knoweth: But we know that they shall be judged according to the Law that they are under, and the measure of Talents delivered to them: To whom much is given, of them much is required: *Melchizedeck* was King of *Jerusalem*, even of *Righteousness and Peace*: And *Job* and his Friends seem to have been great men of several Countries: In *Ninevé* they believed God, proclaimed a fast; and God saw their works, that they turned from their evil ways, and God repented of the evil, &c. *Jon. 3. Mal. 1. 11.* From the rising of the Sun to the going down of the same, my Name (shall be, or is) great among the Gentiles, and in every place Incense (shall be or is) offered to my Name, and a pure Offering: For my Name (shall be or is) great among the Heathens, saith the Lord of Hosts.

John and *Christ* preached Repentance and Remission of Sin, before they preached that *Jesus* was the *Christ*: And the very *Apostles* that dwelt with *Christ* and followed him, did not believe till after his Resurrection, that must be crucified and dye for our sins, and rise again, and ascend and intercede in Heaven,

ven, &c. They were Fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets had spoken, how that Christ ought to suffer such things, and so to enter into his Glory. *Luke 24.*

We are too like the Jews, who were so proud of their Peculiarity, that they deceitfully took their outward Privileges to signifie much more for them than they did: As if all the rest of the World had been quite forsaken and were no people of God, because they had not their Covenant of Peculiarity: When as indeed their Peculiarity was mostly typical, in that they were a Type of the Peculiar Catholick Church under the Gospel, and that Christ was to be a Jew according to the Flesh: Even as their Law and the righteousness of it was excellent as typical, and as a Schoolmaster to lead us to Christ, though it was called *faulty*, and was to be *done away*, that a better Covenant might take place. God promised *Abraham* temporal greatness, *viz.* that his Seed should be as the Stars of Heaven, and he should have a Land that flowed with Milk and Hony: And all this was made good: But in such good as this, how small

small was the Portion of the Israelites? How small and poor their Land and Kings, in comparison of the Romans, Turks, Chineses, Indians, &c. The whole Land of the twelve Tribes, not so big as *England*; and they lived most in vexation or Captivity by the Philistines or others, till *David* conquered, and *Solomon* reigned in Peace and Luxury; and no longer did *David's* Line reign over any more than two of the twelve Tribes, and those ere long went into Captivity: So that the glory of the Jews Kingdom was the Divinity of their typical Law, and that the *Messiah* and the Original of the Gospel Church was to spring from them.

And as to their goodness, all the History and Prophets tell us how bad they were; and if the lives of most of their Kings be compared with *Alexander Severus*, *M. Aurelius Antonine Philos.* and *Anton. Pius*, and *Trajan*, and *Titus*, &c. there will no great cause appear to think that none but Jews could be saved: the pride of their Peculiar Covenant set them at a greater distance from all others than their real greatness, wisdom or goodness did.

Rom. 3. 1, 2. *What advantage then hath the Jew, and what profit is there of Circumcision? Much every way; Chiefly because to them were committed the Oracles of God: And the Christian Church hath now the said Oracles and the Covenant of Peculiarity in a more excellent kind than ever the Jews had: But let us not follow them in our Pride, lest we follow them in Destruction; for if we be worse than others, we shall suffer more than others, as our light was greater. Though we only are the Church and the peculiar People, the rest of Mankind are part of the Kingdom of the Redeemer, who dyed, rose and revived, to this end, that he might be Lord of the Dead and the Living, Rom. 14. 9, 10. For all Power is given him in Heaven and Earth, and he is Head over all to the Church. Mat. 28. 19. Eph. 1. 22, 23. And our Covenant of Peculiarity, is no repeal of the old Law of Grace made to Mankind in Adam and Noah by God the Redeemer, who ruleth all upon terms of Mercy or Grace; and was known accordingly as a merciful pardoning God, before he was Incarnate or known as such: And so is still known, when as Incarnate he is not known;*

known: And it is past doubt, that as much of his Grace and Mercy of Redemption went before his Incarnation, so much of it still extendeth further than the knowledge of his Incarnation; as the Light of the Sun is not utterly gone, when Clouds keep it unseen, and before it riseth, and after it is set.

And as to the Question, *How many among the uncalled World do fear God and work Righteousness, and are accepted of him? Who art thou that judgest anothers Servant; to his own Master he stands or falls?* Only I repeat, that *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, who saw *Christs day*, thought that there had been *fifty righteous persons in Sodom*; a City so bad, that fire from Heaven must consume it. And all History tells us, that in all Countries there are pious virtuous persons, who are hated and derided by the sensual Herd, yea, and persecuted in most places.

This much I think needful to be considered, that we wrong not God, and our selves, and others, by clouding his Mercy and Goodness, and making difficulties to our Faith and Love.

7. And again, and again, I repeat, that no man is fit to judge diminutively of

of Gods Mercy and Love, who knoweth not what he saith; (and yet speaketh against a certain truth) But they that say, more are damned than are glorified, know not what they say: For it is visible, that all the Earth is to the rest of the World, no bigger than an Inch to all *England*, that I say not, to all the Earth: And we see that each Region hath Inhabitants connatural here below (Water, Earth, Air) And we see that the superior Regions are most glorious as well as vast: And I think, that few men of sense do think, that Sun, Moon and Starrs, and all the Orbs, are made for no higher use than to shine upon, or serve this dirty World of Earth: So that again I say, that Hell is like the Gallows, and Earth like the Goal, to a whole Kingdom or vast Empire: And its no sign of a bad Prince, to have one Gallows and one Goal in his Dominions.

8. And we must remember that though *Hell* be but one word, it signifieth divers degrees of Punishment; and Christ who best knew, tells us, that they who *knew not their Lords Will, shall be beaten with few stripes*: And even to *Sodom* in the Day of Judgment it shall be easier

easier than to those that refused the Gospel: And it is an airy active life of misery that the Devils themselves have now.

9. And we see by the pain and death of Bruits, that God doth lay such pain and death on them without desert by any sin: And is it any diminution of his Goodness to lay more on sinful man? All confess that he might have killed and annihilated us without our sin: He that gave a man Life freely for thirty, fifty, sixty years, was not bound to continue it for ever. And he that made Toads and Snakes might have made us such; and yet it is certain, that most men had rather endure any tolerable degree of pain, than either to be annihilated or made Toads or Snakes: And we cannot certainly tell how far those pains may be called *tollerable*, which Christ calleth by the name of *easier, and few stripes*.

10. It is most certain that when we come to Heaven, we shall be fully reconciled to all Gods dealings, and rejoyce in the glory of his Holiness and Justice, and see no cause to think diminutively of his Goodness and his Grace.

11. And

11. And in the meantime, let us rejoyce that he hath made us Vessels of Mercy, and that he hath endued so many thousands on Earth with his Grace, and that the heavenly Church is so great and glorious: There will be no want of number there.

12. And as to the Temptations hence to unbelief consider, that the heavenly hopes, and desires, and lives of all the Godly, do prove that God intendeth them for Heaven: All the work of his sanctifying Spirit is not delusion: and the fear and hope that human-nature hath of another life, doth shew that we have another to expect: And that the wicked have no such heavenly desire, doth but shew, that they are incapable of heavenly felicity, but not that all others are so too.

CASE XVII.

The sad distempers and divisions of Christians, and the hurt they do to the World, and to one another, and the dishonourable state of the Church.

XVII. **A** Nother exercise of our Patience is, *The great Imperfection,*
 M Scan-

Scandals and Divisions of Christians, and the hurt they do to one another, and to the World, and the dishonourable, broken state that they are in.

It is a doleful Case to think, how narrow, and low, and corrupt a state the Church was in for four thousand years before Christs Incarnation: How small it was for the the two first Centuries: How quickly shameful Heresies did corrupt it: How lamentably they multiplied even under Persecution: How quickly the advanced enriched Clergy were corrupted: What odious Schisms they made in the Church: How they grieved the hearts of peaceable Princes, who with all their Power, were unable to keep even common Love and Peace among the Prelates, and to get them to live but as quietly with each other as the Heathen did. What a shame is it to think, how the Majority carried it in their most famous Councils? And into how many Sects the Church was broken, and most of them by Bishops continued to this day? Greeks, Moscovites, Armenians, Nestorians, Jacobites, Melchites, Papists, &c. And that so many hundred years experience doth not end or heal their

the rents. To read the doleful Divisions and Cruelties by the Arrians, the bloody Feuds about Nestorians, Euty-chians, Monothelites, the *Tria Capitula*, Images, Excommunications, particular mens striving for pre-eminence, to read how the Papacy sprang up, and to read the Schisms and Lives of the Popes, the general Councils dismal Accusations of some of them, their Ignorance, Simony and Wickedness: To read of the Wars between the Pope and Emperors, *Fredericks, Henry the 4th. Henry the 5th. Otho, &c.* And how commonly the Clergy swore, and unswore, and forswore; sometime for the Pope, and sometime for the Emperors: To read how a Council of Bishops made it the *Henrician Heresie* to hold that Emperors have a Power to invest Bishops *baculo & annulo*, and that the Pope may not excommunicate and depose them; and that they decreed to dig up the Carcasses of the dead Bishops and burn them as *Henrician Hereticks*, who had been for the Emperors against the Popes: To read of all the horrid cruelties of Bishops and Clergy-men, in Inquisitions, the Murder of many hundred thousand Waldenses and Albigenes, and the

many Massacrees and Burnings for Religion since : To see at this day, that the Clergy will not by reason or request, be intrated to give one another, or the Kingdoms of *Europe* any peace : What clamors ! What Preachings ! What Writings ! What Railings ! What diabolical Slanders, and malicious Persecutions of one another ? To see Prisons filled, Houses rifled, multitudes of true Christians undone and hunted by one another : To see how ignorant the most zealous Christians are in many Places, and alas, even the Teachers of them ; and how contentious and prone to Sects and bitter Censures, and to justify unjustifiable things, and to make odious one another, and to speak evil of the things they understand not, and to be most confident unto rage, where they are most mistaken : To hear how confidently contrary sides appeal to God, and father all their Cause on him : How confidently and religiously they seem to die, who are executed for contrary Causes ? The pious words *E. G.* and Prayers of those in 1660. on one side, and the pious words and Prayers of the Jesuits and other Papists lately : To hear some swear

Swear others guilty unto death, and the Jesuits Appeal to God that it was all false, and renounce all Equivocations and Absolutions at their death. Yea, to hear lately in this *Parish* at the Communion publickly while they received the Sacrament on it, one Man Swear or Vow before God those visible Actions of another, which that other, there and then, as solemnly vowed to be all false. To Read every week News books, whose studied work is with the greatest wit, and vehemency, and gross lies to draw Christians to hate and destroy each other: And while all cry up Love and Peace, for the same Men so to fight against it, worse than all their publick Enemies; so that there appeareth no hope of saving the Land; yea, the most upright Christians, from the lies, rage and malice of professed Christians. So that Men seem incarnate Devils.

And alas the few sincere Souls live below the holy joy which their Christian faith and hope bespeaketh; in too much fear and grief, or tenderness of the body. How can Patience endure to see all this.

The Case is doleful but. 1. Remember

member that all this doth but tell us what sin is, and what it hath done to Mankind, and yet Men will hardly believe that it is so bad.

2. All this may help you to believe that there is a Hell and Devils, that God is not to be accused of it, when sin-it self is so much of misery and Hell.

3. All this doth most notably set forth the Excellency of Wisdom, Godliness and Justice, when the contraries are so odious: It is not Godliness, truth, or Justice, but the want of them in whole or part, which is the cause of all this evil. Do but think if all *England* or all the World, were but such as those few Humble, Holy, Charitable, Peaceable, Patient Christians, which you and I know, O what a quiet and blessed Land and World it would then be? I know the places where they live in so great Holyness, Love and Peace, that it is a great delight to live among them. Were all such as some of my beloved Friends, and daily Companions are, and have been, it would be such a resemblance of Heaven, as would leave no room for the sad complaint of this Objection. And by this we see what an Excellent thing true Faith

Faith and Godliness is in it self. And tho in the same persons there be the Remnants of Ignorance, Errour and sin which are a trouble to others and themselves, this is because that grace is yet imperfect, but its excellence appeareth in being contrary to sin, and so far subduing it, and keeping it as fire in the Chimney, from doing that mischief which reigning sin doth: And making Men so good and usefull, notwithstanding their remaining faults.

4. And in a life of tryal which prepareth us for the reward, it is no wonder if there be somewhat left for all grace to oppose, and exercise it self against? What War, what Victory is there, where there is no Enemy? And what Crown?

5. The Church is Christs Hospital, and is it a wonder that all are sore and sick? We are here under his cure: He hath done much already; more than all the World could do, in the work of true Regeneration and Sanctification: He hath broken the head of the Serpent, and the heart of sin: And it is dying daily more and more, and its not the imperfection that must cause us

to under-value so great a work.

6. Christ knoweth his own grace in all Believers, even the weakest, notwithstanding all their faults and follies; And he loveth his own, while he hateth their sin much more, than any Man can do: And he pardoneth their remaining infirmities, and loveth their persons, and calleth them his Brethren, and so must we: If Christ can pardon sin, and love the uprightness of the imperfect, we must imitate him.

7. As we must live in constant need of our Creator for our daily bread, or life and preservation, so must we live in daily need of the pardoning and healing grace of our Redeemer; as once Creating puts us not into a state of self-sufficiency and independance, so neither doth once Redeeming us. And the daily benefit of a Saviours pardon, and healing grace, is our daily comfort.

8. As I told you before about the imperfection of each ones grace, God will have a difference between Earth and Heaven, and what we want here, we shall there have in Perfection: Even greater Perfection than we can here believe.

9. The faults of all Christians teach

us all to think humbly of our selves, and also not to overvalue imperfect Man, nor to trust the best too far; nor to take all for true or good, which they do or teach; But to walk cautelously with all Men, and to put our whole trust in God alone.

10. And the worse we all are, the more we discern the freeness of Gods Love and Grace, and the great cause of thankfulness that we have for all our mercies.

11. And when we see that the best on Earth are so imperfect, it should help us all to long for Heaven; where there is no ignorance or Errour, no sin, no malice, no proud censoriousness, no divisions, but God is joyfully praised by all, as with one Soul, one Mind, one Love, one Mouth.

12. In all ages and Countries where the Church hath been most degenerate, God hath had many that have maintained their integrity, and have not Consented to the Corruptions and contentions of the times, nor run into the guilt of the ambitious Clergy, or of unruly Hereticks; and a few such as are his jewels, are worth many of the Earthly drossy world.

13. And what wonder is it if nominal Christians that are real Hypocrites and wicked Men, be haters and Persecuters of the just, and the Plagues of the World, and the chiefest instruments of the Devil on Earth. Certainly the false profession of Christianity is so far from making Men good, and saving them, that it sublimateth their wickedness, and maketh them the worst and most miserable of Men.

14. It somewhat tendeth to allay the fears of weak Christians, who think that their faults are inconsistent with sincerity, when they see that so many of all sorts are so faulty: They see what Gods mercy beareth with in all.

15. And it is no real cause of dishonour to Christianity: For no Enemy can find any fault in that: There is no sin against God or Man, which Christ hath not forbidden, and is not more against than the most righteous Man alive is, it is therefore utter impudence, to charge those faults of Men on Christ, which he forbideth and abhorreth: What would they have him do more to signifie his hatred of sin, than to Condemn it, and prepare Hell for all that live and die impeni-

penitent? and himself to die rather than it shall go unpunished, even in those that are forgiven; and to do so much as he hath done to destroy it.

16. And if the wicked will perish by the scandal which they take at Christians faults, their impudence maketh their damnation just. It were else easy for them to see a difference between the imperfections of a Saint, and the wickedness of a beastly or Malignant sinner? And they should rather Gather, that if the faults of serious Believers are odious, their own reigning sin is much more so; And therefore this should hasten their repentance.

17. And O how desirable should the Common sin and ignorance and divisions in this World, make Christs appearing and glorious Kingdom to us, when the whole Church shall be presented spotless, and beautiful in holiness and love, and Christ will be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all Believers: The holy City of God, the *Jerusalem* above, hath nothing but perfect amiableness, concord love and Joy, where all are, tho many, yet *but one.*

CASE XVIII.

*Heavy Judgments on the Land, by Plagues,
Poverty, Fire and Wars.*

XVIII. **A** Nother tryal of our Patience is, *publick and common and heavy Chastisements of God, upon whole Cities, Countries, and Kingdoms; especially by Plagues, Famine, Fire and War?* 1. In 1665. How doleful was the Case of London? When an hundred thousand dyed in a short time; when Men were cast by heapes into pits for Burial, and when good and bad were swept away, and the living were hard put to it to bury the dead, and Husbands and Wives, and Parents and Children who were burying their friends, expected to be presently dead themselves; and when the Houses that were not used to Prayer, had Praying doors, [*God be merciful to us*] being written on them to notific their Case: And when we were glad to fly into remote and solitary places, and were afraid to meet a Man lest he should infect us.

2. And how doleful was the very next years Case, where the Rich and Famous City

City of *London* was burnt? O what a
 sight were those dreadful raging moun-
 ting Flames? How many thousand Houses
 were consumed in three daies, which pride
 had adorned with costly furniture, and
 where luxury had wasted the Creatures
 of God? What Treasures that had been
 long in heaping up were there consumed?
 To see the Streets crowded with Men
 astonished, that lookt on all their wealth
 consumed, and could do nothing to save
 it from the flames, and others carrying
 out their goods, and some laying them
 in Vaults for safety, and some in Churches,
 and altogether there consumed: The
 Booksellers hoped that the Famous
 Structure and Vaults of *St. Pauls* Church
 might have saved their great Treasure of
 excellent Books, which yet did but increase
 the Churches ruin? Yea the Houses of
 the most just and Godly Men no more
 escaped than the rest, even where God
 was daily called on, and worshipped:
 No nor the Churches, where many Holy
 excellent Men had been famous fruitful
 Preachers, and where the bodies of thou-
 sands of true Saints had been Buried:
 About seventy Churches burnt down;
 when it was but about four years before
 that

that most or many of their faithful Pastors had been cast out and forbidden to preach the Gospel; and now those that were set up in their steads are driven out by the Flames, as they lately fled away from the Plague; and most of them to this day, or very many, lye unbuilt, and Gods worship is performed in such poor wooden Tabernacles, as before would have been made a scorn. And how many thousand Families had no Habitation, and were reduced to Poverty, and to this day live in the distress which those Flames did bring upon them? And since then, how many dreadful Fires have consumed many Corporations in this Land? Near us, how Calamitous was that in *Southwark*, and but a Fortnight past, that more dreadful Fire at *Wapping*, where about a thousand houses that had above three thousand Families were burnt.

3. And though God hath not yet tryed us with any common destructive Famine, Poverty causeth thousands to dye of Sickneses taken by want; even by drinking Water, and wanting Fire and Cloaths, and eating unwholsome Food: And we have oft had notice of the
 Case.

Case of *Germany*, after the Wars, about 1627. when they were fain to watch the Graves, lest the dead Bodies should be digged up and eaten; and of the more miserable Case of *Rochel*, and others likewise.

4. But alas, bloody Wars have been more common, and Men to Men more terrible, than mad Dogs, or Wolves, or Tygers: We had sad experience of it in *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*; but other Countries have felt much more: They that have not tryed it, know not what it is to live under the Power of savage Souldiers, who domineer over all, and make all Slaves to them in their own houses, and keep them under daily fear of Death, and take away all they have, and make no more to kill men, than to kill Dogs or Flies; and if they can but call them Enemies, think him the most honourable who killeth most. O what dismal sights were our fields, covered with the Dead, and Garrisons stormed, and all Countries filled with Men-hunters, who took their Neighbours Estates and Lives for their lawful prey: Besides, that one Party of them grew to that Inhumanity and Blasphemy,

as to make a Scorn of Death and Hell, and so to defie God; as that to this day the word [*God damn me*] continueth with them a Word of Course: And others that professed Piety, fell into pride and presumption, and contentious Sects, for which they usually raged and were confident. Is it not hard to think of such things with Patience? Much more to see and feel much of them.

But God hath not left us without Remedy: I. As to Plagues. 1. The great numbers that dye together, make us think otherwise of it than is meet: It is but Death, and all must dye: Not one more dyeth of the Plague, than would dye ere long if there were no Plague; and it is usually a shorter pain than other Feavers bring; and the pain is small in comparison of the Stone in the Bladder, and many other Diseases.

2. And the terror of mens danger and dying Multitudes, usually doth more to awaken men to Repentance and serious preparation, than other diseases use to do. Though Fear alone make not a sound Repentance, Fear is a great and necessary Preparatory. I have reason to hope, that the great Plague in *London*

was a help to the Conversion of many hundred Souls: Not only as it called men to review their Lives, and be-think them of their State; but as it made them far more impartial Hearers of publick Preaching and private Counsel: There was then in *London* no scorning at holy seriousness and diligence for Salvation, in comparison of what is now: The Houses that now roar out drunken songs and scorns at Godliness, and revile, threaten and curse the religious sort, had other Language then, when [*Lord have mercy on us*] was written on the Doors: When the publick Ministers fled, God stirred up the Charity of many silenced Ministers, who till then had forbore publick Preaching, and they ventured among them, and begged Mony out of the Country for the Poor; Visited them, and preached to them in the deserted Pulpits: And the sense of approaching Death so awakened both Preachers and Hearers, that multitudes of young men and others were converted to true Repentance.

And this was the chief occasion of the publick preaching of the silenced Ministers

sters ever since : They had so great experience of Gods blessing, and their young Converts were so sensible of the benefit, that both Preachers and Hearers than resolved to hold on as long as they could.

And was not *London* now a Gainer by this Plague? Did it not make men better? Compare it and other places then : At *Oxford* the Parliament of Lords, Bishops and Commons, who fled thither from the Plague, even then in the heat of it were making that swearing Act, which ruineth and imprisoneth Non-conformists, that come within five Miles of any City, or Burges Corporation, and take not their Oath and Declaration ; (yea, and some Lawyers say, Conformists too, that have but once preached in that which they call a Conventicle and take not the Oath) But in *London* there is no such work ; they were not then sending the Preachers to Goal, or hunting them as Rogues or Rebels, but gladly hearing them, and begging for their Prayers.

II. And as to Famine or common Poverty, I have spoken of it before : The great distress that the Fires and other means have brought on many thousand Families, hath but drawn out the Cha-

rity of others, and exercised the repentance, humility and mortification of the poor and so hath prepared both sorts, rich and poor, for a greater reward ; It hath done much to try mens Charity, and to shew the difference between man and man : I that have had opportunity to try both sorts, have found by long experience, that whereas malignant worldly men were wont to say, that these Religious persons were but Hypocrites ; though they read the Scripture and prayed much, they were as covetous and uncharitable as others ; it is so much contrary, that they excel others in Charity as much as in Piety ; and I can sooner get ten Pound or twenty for the Poor from religious Persons, than ten Shillings from those that speak against them, that are of greater wealth than they.

III. And though the foresaid Flames of *London, Southwark, Wapping, Northampton, &c.* were great Corrections, let us not make them greater than they are : As to the loss of Estate by them, it is but what the richest Merchant is liable to by Piracy or Shipwreck ; and not so much as Death will shortly bring on all, when

when all the world must be forsaken.

2. And it was a great mercy of God, that mens lives were preserved when their wealth was gone; so that they had time to improve the Correction. 3. And a great help it was to men of any sense and consideration, to see the vanity of all worldly wealth and treasure, and to prepare for the time when it must be finally left: And the Flames of *London* and its after Ruins, were a notable fore-signification of the great Flames and Ruins of the final Judgment Day; and it loudly called on men to examin what the Corporation Common Sin of *England* is, which laid so many Coporations in Ashes; and to repent in time: And we need not make it an Aggravation that it was done by malice; for its easie to our Consciences, that it be done by others than our selves; and it helpeth those men to see the evil of those destructive Principles which engage men to do such mischief on pretence of the service of the Church. 4. Yea, and it is a presignification of the new Heaven and Earth, when all things shall be restored, to see such a City so soon rebuilt, in far greater splendor than before.

IV. But cruel Wars, and Souldiers, are a more sharp Calamity: But yet leave us alleviating considerations, and matter enough to exercise and help our patience. For 1. It doth lively tell us what man is in his corrupted state, and what Sin is, and what we had been if Grace had forsaken us. 2. It tells us what our state on Earth is; a militant life; and calls us to remember our spiritual Enemies and Warfare, and to live as arm'd in constant Watchfulness. 3. It helps our Faith to believe that there are Devils, and a Hell, when we see the Works and Instruments of Devils upon Earth, and see Earth made so like to Hell. 4. It teacheth us to set light by earthly Treasure, which Thieves and Plunderers can so quickly take away: And to live in constant preparation for Death, when men are so ready to take away our lives. 5. And it tells us how much we are beholden to God for our preservation, and for our peace, that all men be not thus continually as incarnate Devils to one another. 6. And it calls us to long for the World of perfect Love and Peace, where there are no such men, and no such doings. How sweet

Sweet will everlasting Peace and Joy be
 when we come newly out of such a
 World of savage Cruelty? 7. And God
 often by Wars, prepareth people for a
 better Peace than they had before; the
 sweetness of which doth make the mi-
 series of War forgotten. 8. And usual-
 ly it is the most wicked men that are
 cut off by War, while the pious and
 peaceable look on and escape, Wicked
 men are mad with sin, and will not give
 peace to themselves or others: While
 they run with rage to murder others they
 are killed themselves, and *God is known
 by the Judgments which he executeth, while
 the Wicked are ensnared in the work of
 their own hands, and dashed in pieces by their
 own rage; for the Wicked are like the raging
 Sea, which casts out dirt; there is no peace
 to the Wicked saith the Lord. Isa. 49.*
 And while men bite and devour one ano-
 ther, they are devoured one of another; and
 they that lead into Captivity, shall be led
 into Captivity, and they that kill with the
 Sword, shall be killed by the Sword.

So that it should seem no strange thing
 to a Souldier of Christs, that the World
 which he is passing through is militant.

CASE, XIX.

The Prosperity and Triumphs of wicked Enemies of the Church.

ANother great Tryal of our Patience is, the *Triumphs of the wicked Enemies of the Church*, and that the Saints are usually under their feet in sufferings and scorn: I spake before of *Persecution*, and as to the *Prosperity*, and *Triumphs* of Malignants; *David* who was under the like Temptation, hath long ago given us Considerations sufficient for our Patience. *Psal. 37.* and *73.* And the triumph of the Wicked is but for a Moment, and their motion as the *Grashoppers*, that fall as they rise: Their Victories, and Glory, and Rage, are like a Squib of Gunpowder, which makes a noise and is presently extinct: They are moved Dust, which the Wind of Gods displeasure blows into our Eyes: They are dying while they are raging, and their own Death is at hand and lingereth not, while they are killing others: Go into the Sanctuary and see their End, and it may silence all Impatience; for see their Corps in Rottenness and their Souls in Hell,
and

and pity will overcome envy , and their
 case will appear to you a thousand times
 sader than theirs that suffer by them for
 righteousness sake. Their contrivances
 do but Plot themselves into misery. All
 the blood which they shed , must be
 reckon'd for: And precious in the sight
 of the Lord is the death of his Saints,
 even when they seem deserted. Where
 now is *Alexander, Casar, Tamberlain*, and
 such other Famous Murderers called Con-
 querours? Are they now Triumphant?
 Is it an ease to their tormented Souls,
 or life to their dust, that living fools do
 magnifie their names , and their dear
 bought Victories and Murders. If it be
 no glory to a Serpent , Crocodile, or a
 Wolf or a Mad Dog, to kill Men, no nor
 to the Devil who is a Murderer from the
 beginning, why should it be a Glory to
 these instruments of the Devil? O what
 a dreadful search will it be to *Babylon* ,
 when in her shall be found the blood of
 the Saints and Martyrs of Jesus, and up-
 on her shall come at once all the righ-
 teous blood that hath been shed! The
 blood of the many hundred thousand
Waldenses , Albigenes , Bohemians , &c.
 Did but render the Papacy more odious:
 Their

Their Inquisition and *Alva's* cruelties
 lost them the Low-Countries: They got
 nothing in *France* by the sudden Murder
 of thirty thousand or forty thousand Pro-
 testants; nor will they get at last by their
 present cruelties: The two hundred thou-²
 sand Murdered by the *Irish*, prepared for
 the Murderers greater ruin, but did not
 satisfie their desires. *Queen Maries* fires
 did but make Popery the more easily and
 commonly hated and extirpated in the
 daeys of her Successour: Persecutors are
 not immortal, but must die as well as o-
 thers? And they have not alwayes the
 choice of their Successours: And as their
 names rot with their Carcasses, and to
 pious, sober and wise posterity, no names
 are more odious, so their designs and
 works also often perish with them. We
 have seen in our daies and Land, the
 same Men, that were the terrour of the
 Nation in War, laid in a grave and left
 to the Common Earth, where no one is
 afraid of them: And the same Men that
 were lift up by many Victories, and thought
 Kings Parliament, Ministers and People,
 must submit to their Will, as being in
 their power, within one or two years,
 were hanged drawn and quartered, and
 their Quarters hanged up over the Gates

of the City: Their Victorious Army being dissolved without one drop of blood-shed.

If we saw a drunken Man or a mad Man raging in the Streets, so that people were afraid to come near him, who would think such a Man therefore ever the more happy? Or who would desire to be in his case? If we Judge of them by that part they are now acting on the Stage, under great Names and Garbs, we shall be deluded as they are? Look on them undrest, and off the Stage, see what they are under the pangs of death, or when the Soul is drag'd away to punishment, and hath left their ghastly faces and Carcasses for the grave, See what God saith of them in his word, and believe his Prognostick, what shall befall them. Is *Abab* ever the better for being Recorded in Scripture, as an Enemy to faithful Prophets? Or *Cain* ever the better for being the first Murderer in the World? Or *Herod* ever the better for being mentioned in the Gospel; or *Pilate*, for having his name in the Creed: Or are the flames ever the easier to *Dives*, because he once fared sumptuously and was cloathed richly every day, while *Lazarus* lay at his Gate in Sores. The time is short: The Conqueror and the Con-

Conquered will be equal in the dust, where they will cease to trouble, and lie in peace; But the Persecuter and the Persecuted (for righteousness sake) will be as distantly separated as Hell from Heaven. The Men of this world, who have their Portion in this life, are Gods Sword and Rod to correct his Children; but as they now glory in their shame, so they shall shortly be ashamed of their glorying; and wish in vain, that all their proud oppressions and cruel Victories, had been not done, or could be undone.

CASE XX.

No probability in any visible means that ever the World should be much better. Twelve General Directions to get and use Patience in every Case.

XX. **A**ND it adds much to the tryal of our Faith and Patience, that *There is no apparent means of deliverance; nor probability, in the eye of reason, that ever the world should become better; but it groweth worse and worse: Could we see any hope of better daies, we might the easier wait in Patience.* 1. The Heathen World is out of our reach: We know not how to send any probable means a-

among them : The Roman Jesuits and Fryers, who have greater stocks of mony, have been encouraged by Kings, especially of *Portugal*, to go among some Heathens with their Embassadors, or by their help : And to their due praise be it spoken, in *Congo*, *Japan*, *China*, and some other Countries, they took great pains and did much : But most that they did was quickly undone, partly by the pravity of sensual Heathens, and partly by their depravation of the Christian Doctrine which they should have Preacht. They consulting with carnal Wisdom, durst not tell Men long of Christs Crucifixion ; and they did but change their Heathenish Images, for *Agnus Dei's*, and Pictures of the *Virgin Mary*, and other Trinkets like their own ; which was easily received, but made not sound Christians, while the People thought that Christianity lay in such little things : And two things broke down all their paper building. In *Congo* they liked the Profession of Christianity, when it toucht not the flesh, and lay but in opinions, Names and Relicks ; but when they were told that they must leave Drunkenness, Whoredom and Royotous Sports, they cast off
all

all and would go no further. In *Japan* (and most places,) when they perceive that the design is Secular, to subject all Kingdoms to the Pope, the Princes abhor them, and cruelly persecuted the new-made Christians, till they had utterly extirpated Christianity there.

The Protestant Princes and States are little regardful for the Conversion of Heathens, but contend about their own Dominions, interests and Wills, when they should confederate for the promoting of the Gospel of Salvation; Save that old Mr. *John Eliots*, and his helpers have by long unwearied labour done much intensively, but not much extensively in *New-England*. And how to carry it further they know not: Merchants that should contrive to make their factories serviceable hereto, take little care of it but prosecute the way of their own gain.

The most capable persons were Princes by their Embassadors; but who much regards it? Or rather, the Neighbour Nations of Christians, who live near the Heathens and *Mahometans*, and trafik with them. But alas, these are mostly an ignorant sort of Christians, unfit to manage so great a work, such as the *Armenians*, *Georgians*, *Circassians*, *Mengrelians*,

Abassines, and most of the *Jacobites* and *Nestorians*; or ignorant and vicious also, such as mostly are the *Greeks*, and *Moscovites*; or contemned by those that Master them, such as are the *Transilvanians*, and *Hungarians*. So that they are a scandal to the *Türks* and Heathens, and bring Christianity with them into contempt.

And among Christians how small is the number of those that are sincerely godly, and keep sound Doctrine and live accordingly: And there appeareth no probability of Reforming them. The great and famous Eastern Churches are mostly gone already to *Mahometanism*. And the servitude of the *Greeks* keeps them in ignorance, and ignorance cherisheth all vice. The *Moscovites* have neither Bishops or Priests that can Preach or desire it, nor Emperours that will suffer it, but are ignorant slaves under the name of Christians. The Roman party are Armed with Wealth, Learning, Policy and Power to keep up the Papal claim and corruptions, and keep out that Reformation, which would restore Christianity to its Primitive purity. The Reformed in *France* are under heavy sufferings and near extirpation. The *Lutherans* too bitter Enemies to Concord, and most
Ger.

Germans too sensual in their lives: The Protestant Churches seem every where declining, if not hastening to ruin: Some Rulers that have professed Reformation are serving the Papists, with resolved violence to root it out, and bring themselves and subjects under a Forreign Jurisdiction. And *George Herberts* Prophecy seemeth to go on, that Religion is forsaking *Europe* and flying to *America*. *Sculdetus* in *Curriculo vite suae*, tells us that one time all seemed to go so strongly for Reformation in *Germany, Bohemia, France, England, &c.* That many said the Golden age was coming: And in one year all was changed and brought as low as formerly. And if we might judge by probabilities, all of Christianity saving a lifeless name, and shell and Ceremonies, is like to be rooted out of the Earth: And the Devil reigneth as powerfully by wicked Rulers, and Prelates, and Priests, called Christians, as by *Mahometans*: And Godlyness is as effectually destroyed in such a Kingdom as *Moscovy*, as it is in some Infidel Lands. And when Christ cometh, will he find faith on the Earth?

This Case is indeed a great tryal of our faith and patience, but let us consider,

1. That this World was never intended to be the place of our felicity or long abode, but only as is aforesaid, as the Womb where we are conceived and formed for a better World: Or as the Wilderness to the *Isralites* where they were to be tryed by difficulties in their way to the Land of promise; or as a Winter Journey through dirty or craggy waies homeward. And what if this Womb, this Wilderness, these ways never amend? What Man is so weak as to be discouraged, because posterity is like to find the waies as fowl or rough as he hath done? Or because the deserts of *Lybia*, or *Arabia*, or the dangerous passages over the *Alps*, will be no better to the next Generation than they are to this? It is indeed the desire of every true Christian that the World were better; and these desires are not vain: They shew the honesty of them that wish it: But God will not do all that he hath made it our duty to desire: We must desire the Conversion and Salvation of many that never will be Converted and saved.

2. God will give us all that we desire, but it is not on Earth: If we did still see by faith the greater, perfect glorious World, which we are near, it would
quiet

quiet us against all our perplexing doubts and troubles in this World: All is well in Heaven, even better than we can desire; there is no Ignorance, no Infidelity, Atheism, Mahometanism, no Wars, no Sects, no Cruelties, no Contentions; Reformation is there perfect, and the Church all holy.

3. In all reason, our Affections should be but proportioned to their Objects: It is our duty to mourn for the miserable World, and the corrupt state of the Church on Earth: But seeing the Heavenly Glory incomparably, exceedeth the Worlds Misery; our joy should be far greater to think of Heaven, than our trouble when we think of Earth. Again I say, All the Earth is no bigger compared to Heaven, than our Goal is compared to all this Kingdom, yea, to all the Kingdoms on Earth; and it is our duty to be sorry, if those in Prison do not amend; and that those must dye that are condemned: But should we not more rejoyce, if it went as well as we could wish it with all the rest of the Kingdom, or of the World: Heaven which is many thousand times bigger than Earth; hath nothing but perfect

felicity and glory, perfect knowledge, love and joy.

4. And this Earth shall serve to all Gods Ends: He will gather all his Chosen; and he will be glorified in his Providence towards the rest: Out of this *Bedlam*, Christ bringeth many to saving Wisdom; and out of this Goal Gods Mercy taketh many Sonsto Glory; He repreveth all, and pardoneth all, that are penitent Belivers; and Traytors and Enemies are reconciled to him by Christ, and being justified by Faith, have peace with God: God placed man in an earthly Paradise, as the passage to the heavenly; and mans own wilful sin and folly, turned his Paradise into a Prison, and it is now a House of Correction, where God joyneth Instruction, and by the Book and Rod doth teach his Chosen saving Wisdom: And as the Israelites in the Wilderness had their suitable mercies for their forty years; and as *Jeremy* led the captive Jews to build, and plant, and marry in *Babylon*, and pray for its Peace, as the Place in which their own Peace must be had, till seventy years were past, (which is the age of man) so God here giveth us great mercies suitable.

able to our Wilderness and Captive State; and when a little time is over, we shall have better than we could here believe. And though I would not cherish that sinful desire, which would have that on Earth which is proper to Heaven, nor have I skill enough in the exposition of hard Prophecies, to make a particular determination, about the thousand years Reign of Christ on Earth before the final Judgment; yet I may say, that I cannot confute what such Learned Men as *Mr. Mead*, *Dr. Twisse* and others (after the old Fathers) have hereof asserted: And I am certain, that Christ teacheth us all to pray that Gods Name may be hallowed, his Kingdom come and his Will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven; and that he appointeth us to use no Prayer or means in vain: And many are ready to believe the old saying, that as the World was made in six days, and the seventh was made a day of holy rest, and a day with the Lord is as a thousand years; so after six thousand years of sin and sorrow, a thousand years holy rest shall follow: Of this I am uncertain; but I believe there will be a new Heaven and Earth, in which will dwell

dwell Righteousness. We must not
 look for too great matters in a sinful
 cursed Earth. We would fain have all
 the blessedness of Heaven, but we are
 loth to dye, and therefore would have it
 here on Earth; and the rather because
 as hear-say without sight doth not give a
 man a satisfactory conception of any
 house or place that he would know; so
 such a sensible conception we would have
 of Heaven: But death is the wages of sin,
 and dye we must, but the gift of God is
 eternal life, through Christ who hath
 overcome him that had the power of
 death, by the fear of which we are kept
 in bondage: And we may rejoyce by an
 implicate trust to Christ, in the hope of
 that Glory which we can in the flesh have
 no explicite *idea* or conception of; where
 will be no sin, no death, no fear, no im-
 perfection, no unbelief or censorious
 distaste at any of Gods words or works;
 but beatifying vision, and fulness of
 everlasting joy in glory.

And against this and other Objections,
 you must still remember that a suffering
 condition is not so bad for the Church on
 Earth, as unbelief and flesh would make
 you think. For

1. A fleshly prosperity is too brutish and short to be true felicity : Its the portion of the wicked, and the occasion of their deceit and ruine. *Psal.* 17. 14. *Luke* 12. 15, 20, 21. And is the Church less happy, because it is saved from so dangerous temptations?

2. Forget not the unvaluable riches of the Church, in its lowest state : Their God, their Christ, their Comforter, the promises, and all suitable providences fitted to their good, are a thousand fold greater riches and honour, than all the Kingdoms and power of the ungodly world.

3. The Church in its most depressed state, hath impregnable strength and safety : Their God is invincible : Their Saviour is the Rock which the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against. *Mat.* 16. 18.

4. When they are most scorned and contemned, and used as Fools and Rogues, and as the basest and most odious of mankind ; they are the Members of Christ ; the Children of God, and bear his Image, and are the charge of Angels, and passing to a Crown of Glory. And what is any dishonour from man, as set against such honours with God, and all the Blessed?

Blessed

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Mat. 5. The reproach of Christ is greater riches than Worldlings treasure. Heb. 11. 26. Eph. 2. 7. and 5. 25, 27. and 1. 22. 23. and 3. 10.

5. Remember that the far greatest part of the Church, even all since the Creation, are in possession of Heaven already, and it is but a small remnant as the gleanings, that are here yet behind. Heb. 12. 22, 23. read the description of them there: Christ is not ashamed to call them Brethren. Heb. 2. 11. And useth them as such: In his Fathers House he hath many Mansions for them, John 14. 1, 2, 3. And if you saw all those Millions in Heaven with Christ, could you for shame grudge that the few behind are passing thither through temptation and tribulation? Or that it must be as by swimming, or on broaken pieces of the Ship, that they must come all safe to Land, as Acts 27. If all be well in Heaven, grudge not at the way; These things are never the worse, or more uncertain in themselves, for being unseen.

6. And how great security hath God given the Church of all this heavenly glory promised? Can we fear that Christ will

will be defeated of the great design of mans Redemption, and reigning in the new *Jerusalem*, where he is to be its Light instead of the Sun? And doth not God love his Church much better than we do; and better know how to deal with it, and all the World? Shall we blind Sinners, who do nothing thoroughly well, be afraid lest God will miscarry, or do anything amiss.

8. The Church must have its Purgatory on Earth; and Prosperity filleth it with Hypocrites who corrupt it; and Adversity must refine it from such dross.

9. Particular Christians are better by affliction; and what else is the Church but particular Christians: God will not leave our temptations to the damning Love of the World too strong.

10. The Church must be conformed to its Head, who suffred and then entered into glory.

11. While all Individuals are sinful and imperfect, what wonder if all the Church do suffer by it?

12. Most graces must shine and increase by exercise; like some Jewels that must be rub'd; as Fire in a Flint or Steel, that must be called into light by violence. We
are

are but like common men in appearance, till somewhat more than common work, or suffering call us out, and shew our difference from Hypocrites.

These and many such Considerations before intimated, may convince us that the worst state of the Church or World, is no just cause of censuring Gods Providence, nor of discouragement or impatience to any true Believer: But still in Patience we may possess our Souls.

I will draw out this Treatise no longer, but to remember all Christians, that the common great defect of Patience is a great dishonour to our profession of Faith and heavenly hope, and leadeth us to that within as the Cause which we should be greatly humbled for; and that it is a disease so painful to our selves, as should make us loth to cherish or excuse it: A tender state of Body is not desirable, which can endure no Cold or Air, no Dyet but curiously drest, neither Winter nor Summer, &c. Much worse is a tender impatient mind, that is hardly pleased by Man or God; that is impatient at every loss or cross, at every real or supposed wrong; at every danger, threatening, or ill news; that must be strok'd,

and

and rock'd, and used as a Child. Alas, many people that truly fear God, have so great a want of patience, as that one can hardly live quietly with them; but he must have extraordinary skill, and care and tenderneſs, if not flattery, who will not be a trouble to them.

And yet becauſe ſome cauſeſſy judge theſe to be worſe than they are, I will ſay again, that *Paſſion*, and the *Wills defection*, are very different ſorts of Impatience.

I conclude with theſe few brief Directions, for eſta bliſhing the heart with patience in all Tryals whatſoever.

I. Underſtand well the true nature of Patience and Impatience, that you miſtake not natural Temper for either ſaving Grace, or damning Sin. The Paſſions muſt be diſtinguiſhed from the Judgement and Will. A man of a choleric temper, and aged, ſick or weak perſons may be peeviſh, and impatient with the little provocations which daily befall them; ſo far as to be angry, and trouble themſelves and others: Children will cry; and moſt Women are eaſilier caſt into paſſion than Men; they are apt to fear beyond all reaſon, and to be troubled and troubleſome to others
with

with unquiet grief, displeas'dness or anger: This must neither be made light of as no fault, nor yet made a greater fault than it is. Many men have stronger natures, and free from passion, (and some almost to stupidity) which joyned with Grace and a due sense of weighty things, is a great advantage and ornament: But its found oft in the most graceless wicked men, who deceive themselves by it, and think they are better than passionate honest men: Yea, it usually proveth a great hinderance to their Repentance and Reformation; no Sermon, no Reason, no thought of Death or Eternity will move and change their senseless hearts.

But the saving Grace of Patience is principally in this, when a man hath so resolutely given up himself to God by Christ for Life eternal, and is so much under Divine Authority, that he can endure the loss of all, even Reputation, Estate, Friends, Liberty or Life, rather than forsake Christ, or hazard his Salvation by wilful sin; and therefore also striveth against all sinful passions, and repenteth of that which doth surprize him.

And damning Impatience is, when a man cannot deliberately bear the loss of

cor-

corporal prosperity, for the sake of Christ and Righteousness, nor hold on in a holy, righteous, sober life; but will rather fall off, and wilfully sin, and venture his Soul, than deny his flesh, and be undone in the world; such take Godliness for a grievous Yoke, or else they would not be impatient to bear it, and they take not God and Heaven for their best. —

II. Nothing therefore will make one patient in a holy saving sense, but the well grounded resolved choice of Gods Love in Christ, and the blessedness of another world, as that portion which must make us happy, what ever we lose or suffer on Earth: Therefore Faith and Hope must be above, and fetch from Heaven the matter of our constant resolution, or else there can be no true patience: If we live more on earthly hopes and comforts than heavenly, and more to the Flesh than to the Spirit; there can be no true patience, much less durable: For in the World we shall have troubles; and if we have not yet a content in the love of it, is more damnable than trouble,

III. Therefore the true contempt of fleshly prosperity and worldly things, by mortification, is absolutely necessary to pati-

patience. While the body and its appetite, ease or life, is over dear to us, we shall never patiently lose or spare them; and while we love the flesh, and world, reputation, wealth and pleasure too much, we shall be overmuch troubled to lose them. Account all loss and dung for Christ, as *Paul* did, and you'll easily bear the loss of it.

IV. Think what you have as well as what you want; reckon up truly all the riches of Grace in Christ; to be a Child of God, beloved by him, an Heir of Heaven, a Member of Christ, pardoned, justified, sanctified, under Gods true promise of everlasting Joy; and compare this with your suffering, and think whether it becomes an Heir of Heaven to be impatient in the way.

V. Therefore be diligent to make your Calling and Election sure; neither neglect necessary obedience, nor cherish causeless doubts; lest you lose that comfort of hope which must make you patient in all tryals; else when Heaven and Gods Love should support you under all, you will be still questioning your title to it, and so have nothing to set against all your sufferings and fears. If this Anchor of Hope

be

be not well grounded, what shall uphold: *3*
 men in sufferings and death.

VI. Live in the constant belief and apprehension of Gods absolute dispose of all the world; and see all things and persons as in his hand, and remember that there is nothing comes to pass without him, and that he useth even the permitted sins of men, to his good and holy ends. Think on no man, or action, or event as independent upon God; but remember still with whom you have to do, and who it is that over-ruleth all, and whose Rod your Enemies and Afflictions are: And this will tell you that nothing is done amiss by him, and that nothing shall be finally hurtful to the Faithful; and that we must not dare to accuse our Maker: And it will make you say, *It is the Lord; Let him do as seemeth him good, The Will of the Lord be done.*

VII. Here see still the certain end of all: How the sufferings of the Faithful will end; and how the power, wealth, prosperity, and triumph of the wicked will end: Go into the Sanctuary: Believe what God hath foretold you, and faith may fully satisfy you.

VIII. Keep a due humbling sense of your own and others sin, and of Gods common mercies to you and all men, that

you may still perceive how much better
 God dealeth with you than you deserve:
 Its no small mercy to be alive, out of Hell,
 and to have the free offers of a Saviour,
 of Pardon and Salvation, and to have God
 intreating you to be reconciled to him,
 and promise you Christ and Life, if you
 do but willingly accept his gift.

IX. Be acquainted with your chief
 temptations, both to impatience, and to
 other sin, that you may live in Arms
 and watchful resistance. 1. Renew not your
 own wounds and sufferings, by gross neg-
 ligence or wilful sin, and yielding to the
 Tempter: For if you put God to use a
 sharper Rod, your patience will have a
 harder work: And do not by rashness
 make your own suffering, and run into it,
 (as by rash words, by surety-ship, and
 imprudent actions many do) you may
 more confidently look for Gods support
 under the cross which he layeth on you
 for tryal, than that which you make for
 your selves; though there also Repen-
 tance may give us a comfortable Remedy.

2. And understand what are your
 temptations to impatience; Is it crosses,
 poverty, threatnings of men, a froward
 Companion, a wicked Child, or rather a
 weak and peevish passionate temper?

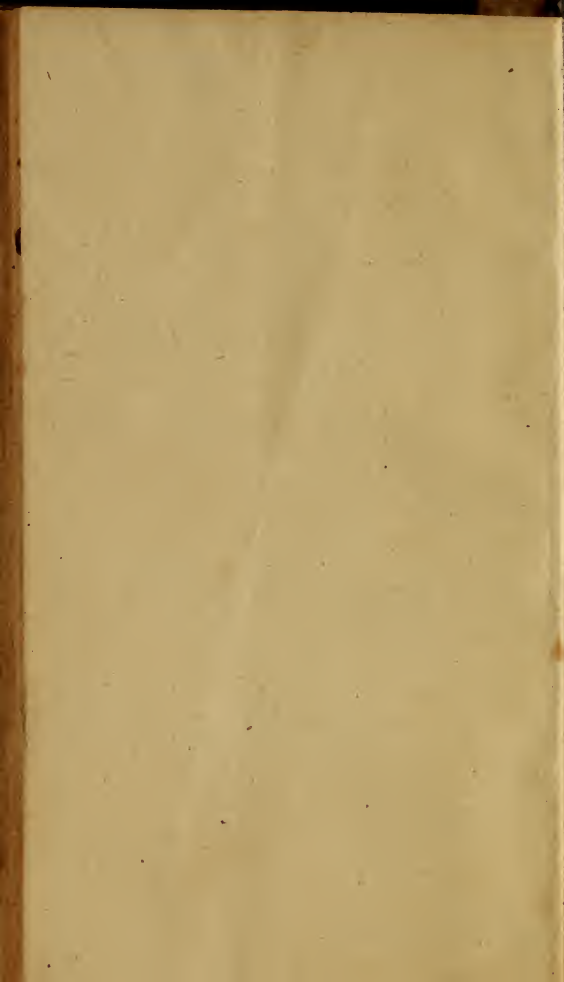
Whatever it is, get those particular considerations against it, which must be your Armour, and live in the daily use of them.

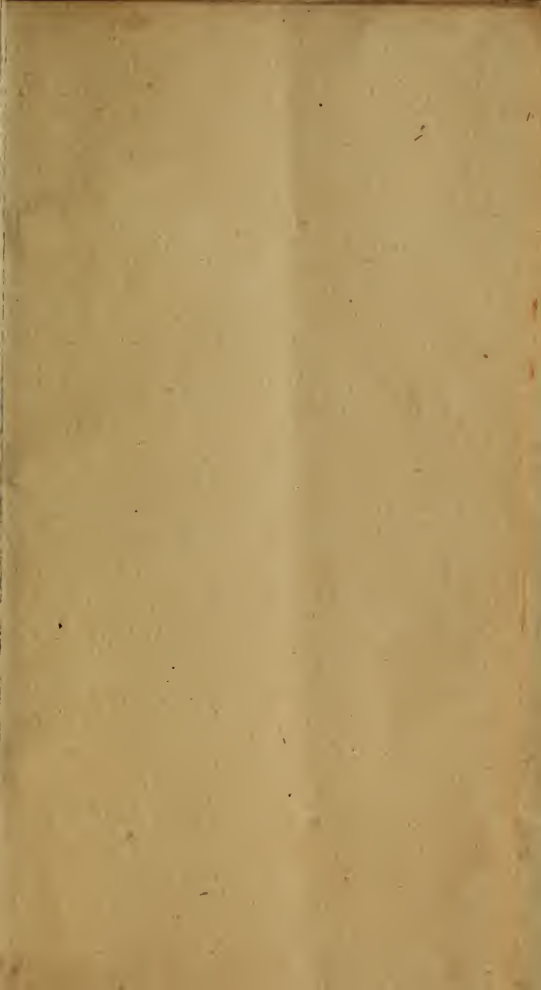
X Resist the beginnings of unbelieving; troubling thoughts, and role them not in your mind: Abhor the first degrees of distrusting God, or discontent with his providence, or any secret accusation of his disposals; and turn your thoughts presently to his love, and mercies, and promises, and Christs abundant grace; pote not upon troubling and discontented things any further than is necessary to avoid the evil; but study the satisfactory promises and terms of further grace and endless glory: Be careful (with distrust and trouble) for nothing, but in all wants and straits go to God, and open all to him, and ask him for your daily bread, remembering that *he cloathed the Lillies of the field, and that a Sparrow moveth not without his providence, and that all the hairs of your head are numbred, and that he knoweth what you need, and what is best for you, and that sufficient to the day is the evil thereof*; Think what a mercy it is that he commands you, to *cast all your care on God who careth for you*: And whether if the King bid a Begar or Prisoner, *trust him, and cast all his care on him*, it would not comfort him.

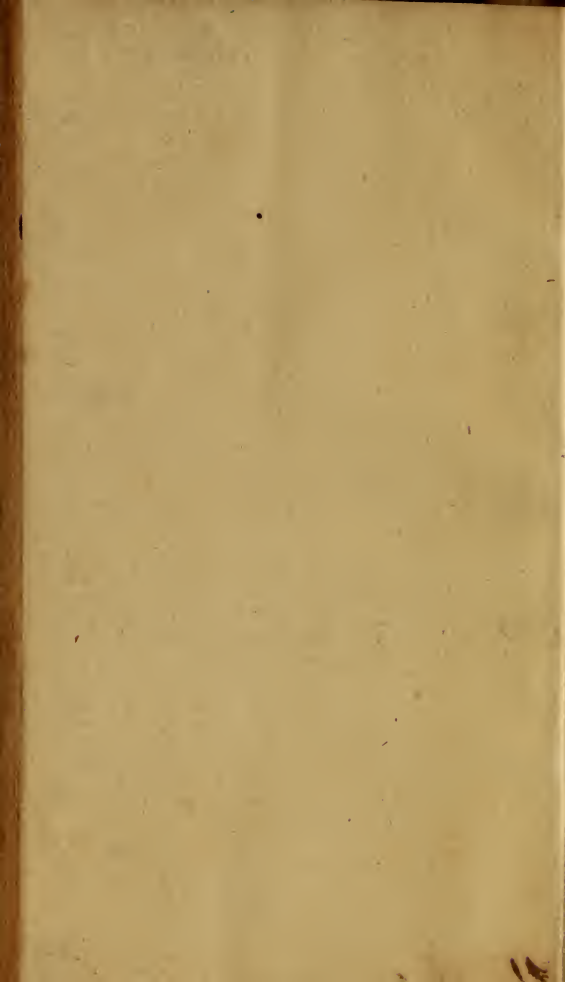
XI. Forget not all the wonderful deliverances that you and the Church of God have had, and how oft his mercies have confuted and reprov'd your distrust.

XII. Lastly, throughly study a crucified Christ, and the reasons and use of the Cross, and why he will have us imitate him and follow him in sufferings to Glory! And never think God disappointeth you, if he will but bring you safe to Heaven. And read oft the sufferings of Christ, and his Sermons, *Mat. 5. John 12. 14, 15, 16. and Mat. 6. Rom. 8. 1 Pet. 3, and 4. Jam. 4. and 5. Rev. 2, and 3. Rom. 5. 3, 4. Col. 1. 11. Heb. 6. 12. and 12. 1, &c. Ro. 12. 12. &c. 15. 4, 5. 1 Tim. 6. 11.* For you have need of patience, that after you have done the Will of God you may inherit the promise, *Heb. 10. 36.* Count it all joy when you fall into divers (trying) temptations, knowing that the trying of your faith (which is more precious than Gold which perisheth) worketh patience: But let patience have its perfect work. And shew that you are patient toward God by your patience toward men. *Now the God of Patience and Consolation grant you to be like minded one towards another according to Christ Jesus, Rom. 15. 5.* So prayeth, your Brother and Companion in Tribulation, and in the Kingdom and Patience of Jesus Christ. R. B.









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