# A Divine Cordial

*Or, the Transcendent Privilege of Those That Love God and Are Savingly Called*

◆

Thomas Watson




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*But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good.*

— Genesis 50:20

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# To the Reader

CHRISTIAN READER:

THERE are two things, which I have always looked upon as difficult: The one is, to make the *Wicked sad;* they want not cause of sadness, they are *taken captive by Satan*[1]: This is all that is gotten by fighting on the Devil's side; he doth not make his Soldiers *Captains,* but *Captives,* he leads them Prisoners before him, and at last will give them damnable pay: Yet so are sinners *blinded by the God of this world*[2], that they cannot see the chains they are held in, but kiss their fetters, and go laughing to Hell. The other puzzling difficulty, is, to make the *Godly joyful:* Though they have enough to rock their troubled hearts quiet, & may *encourage themselves in the Lord their God;* yet like the froward child, they put away the breast, and refuse to be comforted. *Amnon,* though a King's Son, was lean[3]. This dejection in the Godly, ariseth from a double Spring; either because their inward comforts are darkened, or their outward comforts are disturbed: To cure both which troubles, I have put forth this ensuing Piece, hoping by the blessing of God, it will buoy up their desponding hearts, and make them look with a more pleasant aspect; I would prescribe them to take now & then a little of this *Cordial.* When the Prophet *Elijah*'s spirits were ready to faint under the *Juniper Tree,* the Angel set before him a *Cake,* and a *Cruse of Water,* & when he had eaten he was cheered, and

[1] *2 Tim 2:25.*
[2] *2 Cor 4:4.*
[3] *2 Sam 13:4.*

went in the strength of that meat, till he came unto *Horeb the Mount of God*[4]. Me-thinks this Text, like that sweet repast, may very much corroborate and strengthen the Saints in their journey to Heaven, and may be as a sacred feather, to drop the golden Oil of consolation into their hearts: *All things shall work together for good, to them that love God.* To know that nothing shall hurt the godly, is matter of comfort[5]; but to be assured that all things which fall out, shall co-operate for their good, that their crosses shall be turned into blessings, the bloody showers of affliction shall water the withering root of their Grace, and make it flourish more; here is that may fill their hearts with joy till they run over. It will be no small revivement to me, if these Labours of mine prove advantageous to any. When S. *Paul's* Prison would not admit him the liberty of a Pulpit, he wrote some Epistles, the benefit whereof the Church of God hath reaped in after-ages. When I am at present taken off from my public employment of preaching, I shall be glad if I may be useful by writing; and while I my self am in *a civil sense* dead I may make others in *a spiritual sense* alive: This is the Prayer of him, who is

Thy Friend, in all true Affection & Devotion. THOMAS WATSON.

[4] *1 Kgs 19:8.*
[5] *Ps 91:10.*

# Chapter I

**The Proaemium, or Introduction.**

Rom 8:28. *We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

If the whole Scripture be the feast of the soul (as St *Ambrose* saith) then this Chapter may be a dish at this feast, which with its sweet variety may very much refresh and animate the hearts of God's People. In the preceding verses the Apostle had been wading through the great Doctrines of Justification and Adoption; Mysteries so arduous and profound, that without the help and conduct of the Spirit, he might soon have waded beyond his depth. In this verse the Apostle toucheth upon that pleasant string of Consolation; *We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God.* Not a word but is weighty: therefore I shall gather up every filing of this Gold, that nothing be lost.

In the Text there are three general Branches. 1. A glorious Privilege, *All things work for good.* 2. The Persons interested in this Privilege; and they are doubly specified. 1. They are *Lovers of God.* 2. They are *Called.* 3. The Original and Spring of this effectual calling, set down in these works, κατὰ πρόθεσιν, *according to his purpose.* Of all these in order; and I begin with the first.

1. The glorious Privilege; wherein there are two things considerable: 1. The certainty of the Privilege, ὅιδαμὲν, *We*

*know.* 2. The excellency of the Privilege, παντα συνεργει εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν, *All things work together for good.*

1. The *certainty* of the Privilege: *We know.* It is not a matter pendulous or doubtful; the Apostle doth not say, We hope, or conjecture, but it is like an Article in our Creed, *We know all things work for good:*

Whence observe, *That the Truths of the Gospel,*[6] *are evident and infallible.*

A Christian may come not only to a loose opinion, but to a certainty of what he holds. As the Axioms in Logic, and Aphorisms in Physic, are demonstrated to Reason; so the Truths in Religion are demonstrated to Faith; *We know,* saith the Apostle. Though a Christian hath not a perfect knowledge of the Mysteries of the Gospel, yet he hath a certain knowledge. *We see through a glass darkly*[7], 1 Cor 13:12. Therefore we have not perfection of knowledge; but *we behold with open face*[8], 2 Cor 3:18. Therefore we have a certainty. The Spirit of God doth imprint Heavenly Truths upon the heart, as with the point of a Diamond. A Christian may know infallibly there is an evil in sin, a beauty in holiness: He may know that he is in the state of Grace, 1 John 3:14. *We know that we have passed from death to life.* He may know that he shall go to Heaven, 2 Cor 5:1. *We know that if our earthly Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house made without hands, eternal in the Heavens.* The Lord doth not leave his People at uncertainties in matters of Salvation. The Apostle comes with his *Probatum est,* in the Text, *We know*; we have arrived at a πεποίθησις, or

[6] *Doct.*
[7] ἐν αἰνίγματι.
[8] προσώπῳ.

holy confidence; we have both the Spirit of God and our own experience setting seal to it.

Let us not rest in Scepticism,[9] but labour to come to a certainty in the things of Religion. As that Martyr woman said, *I cannot dispute for Christ, but I can burn for Christ.* God knows whether we may not be called forth to be witnesses to his Truth; therefore it concerns us to be well-grounded, and confirmed in it. If we are doubtful Christians, we shall be wavering Christian; whence is apostasy, but from incredulity? Men first question the truth, and then fall from the Truth. O beg the spirit of God, not only to *anoint* you, but to *seal* you, 2 Cor 1:22.

[9] *Use.*

# Chapter II

**Containing the grand Proposition.**

2. I Pass to the second, the *excellency* of the Privilege: *All things work together for good.* This is a *Jacob's* staff in the hand of faith, with which we may walk cheerfully to the Mount of God: what will satisfy or give content, if this will not? *All things work together for good.* This word συνεργεῖ *work together,* is a Physical expression. Several poisonful ingredients put together, being tempered by the skill of the Apothecary, make a Sovereign Medicine, and work together for the good of the Patient[10]. So all God's Providences being divinely tempered and sanctified, do work together for the best to the Saints. He who *loves God,* and is *called according to his purpose,* may say to his soul, *Soul take thy ease,* for, *there is much good laid up for thee,* every thing in the world shall be for thy good. This is a Christians *Cordial,* which may cause the colour to come in his face, and make him like *Jonathan,* who when he had tasted the *honey* at the end of the rod *his eyes were enlightened,* 1 Sam 14:27. Why should a Christian exenterate himself? Why should he kill himself with care, when all things shall sweetly concur, yea conspire for his good? The result of the Text is this,

*Doct.* That all the various dealings of God with his Children,[11] do by a special Providence turn to their good[12].

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[10] *Venena ex corporibus per venenata pharmaca educunt medici.* Pet. Mart.

[11] Doct.

[12] Nemo qui sit Christianus de rerum catastrophe debet ambigere. *P. Mart.*

Ps 25:10. *All the paths of the Lord are mercy unto such as keep his Covenant.* If every path hath mercy in it, then it works for good.

1. What things work for good to the Godly.
2. Why all things work for good to the Godly.

1. What things are they which work for good to the Elect?

1. The best things.
2. The worst things.[13]

[13] *Answ.*

# Chapter III

**Showing that the best things work for good to the Godly.**

1. The *best things* work for good to the Godly: There are eight of these.

## The Attributes of God

1. God's Attributes work for good; these three in particular.
    1. God's *Power* works for good. It is a *glorious* power, Col 1:11. And it is engaged for the good of the Elect. Out of this *strong* comes forth *sweetness*[14]. The *Power* of God works for good four ways.
        1. In supporting us in misery.
        2. In supplying our wants.
        3. In subduing our corruptions.
        4. In conquering our enemies.

    God's Power works for good,

    1. In supporting us in misery, Deut 33:27. *Underneath are the everlasting Arms.* What upheld *Daniel* in the Lyons Den? *Jonah* in the Whales Belly? The three Children in the Furnace? Only the power of God. Is it not strange to see a bruised Reed grow and flourish? How is a weak Christian able, not only to endure Affliction, but rejoice in it? He is

[14] Judge 14:14.

upheld by the Arms of the Almighty, 2 Cor 12:9. *My strength is made perfect in weakness.*

2. In supplying our wants. God creates comforts when means fail: He that brought food to the Prophet *Elijah* by the unnatural Ravens, will bring sustenance to his people. God can preserve the *Oil in the Cruse,* 1 Kgs 17:14. The Lord made the Sun on *Ahaz's* Dial go ten degrees backward: So when our outward comforts are declining, and it is almost Sun-setting, God often causeth a revival, and brings the Sun many degrees backward.

3. In subduing our corruptions: Mic 7:19. *He will subdue our iniquities.* The Hebrew word is יכבוש *He will put them under the yoke.* Is thy sin strong? God is powerful, he will break the head of this *Leviathan.* Is thy heart hard? God will dissolve that stone in Christ's blood, Job 23:16. *The Almighty maketh my heart soft.* When we say as *Jehoshaphat, We have no might against this great Army,* the Lord goes up with us, and helps us to fight our battles; he strikes off the heads of those *Goliath*-lusts which are too strong for us.

4. In conquering our enemies. He stains the pride, and breaks the confidence of adversaries[15]. Ps 2:9. *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron.* There is rage in the Enemy, malice in the Devil, but power in God. How easily can he rout all the Forces of the wicked! 2 Chr 14:11. *It is nothing for thee Lord to help.* God's power is on his Churches side, Deut 33:29. *Happy art thou O Israel, O people saved by the*

[15]οὐδὲν ἰσχυρότερον τοῦ τῆς ἄνωθεν συμμαχίας ἀπολαύοντος. *Chrys.*

*Lord, who is the shield of thy help, and the sword of thy excellency.*

2. The *Wisdom* of God works for good. God's wisdom is our Oracle to instruct us. As he is the *Mighty God,* so the *Counsellor,* Isa 9:6. We are often times in the dark, and in matters intricate and doubtful, know not which way to take; here God comes in with light, Ps 32:8. *I will guide thee* עיני *with mine eye. EYE,* there is put for God's wisdom. Whence is it the Saints can see further than the most quick-sighted Politicians? They *foresee an evil,* and hide themselves, they see Satan's Sophisms; this is οὐρανόθεν; God's wisdom is the *Pillar of fire* to go before, and guide them.

3. The *Goodness* of God works for good two ways. 1. God's goodness is a means to make us good, Rom 2:4. *The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.* The goodness of God is a spiritual Sun-beam to melt the heart into tears. Oh saith the soul, Hath God been so good to me? Hath he reprieved me so long from Hell, and shall I grieve his Spirit any more? Shall I sin against *Goodness?* 2. The goodness of God works for good, as it ushers in all our blessings. The daily favours we receive, are the silver streams which flow from the Fountains of God's goodness. This Divine Attribute of *Goodness,* brings in two sorts of blessings. 1. *Common Blessings.* All partake of these; the bad as well as the good: This sweet dew falls upon the Thistle, as well as the Rose, Ps 33:5. 2. *Crowning Blessings.* These only the godly partake of, Ps 103:4. *Who crowneth us with loving kindness.* Thus the blessed Attributes of God work for good to the Saints.

## The Promises of God

2. The Promises of God work for good. The Promises are *Dei Chirographum* (as *Austin* calls them) a *Bill of God's hand*; is it not good to have *security?* The Promises are the Breasts of the Gospel; and is not the Breast for the good of the Infant? They are called *Precious Promises,* 2 Pet 1:4. They are as *Aquavitae* to a soul that is ready to faint. *Cardan* saith, Every precious stone hath some virtue latent in it: The Promises are full of virtue, and that especially in four Cases.

1. Are we under the *guilt* of sin? There is a Promise, Exod 34:6. *The Lord, the Lord merciful, gracious,* etc. Where God doth as it were put on his glorious Embroidery, and hold out the Golden Scepter, to encourage poor trembling sinners to come to him. *The Lord Merciful.* God is more willing to pardon, than to punish: Mercy doth more multiply in him, than sin in us: Mercy is his Nature. The Be naturally gives honey; it stings only when it is provoked. But saith the guilty sinner, I cannot deserve mercy: but he is *Gracious*; he shows mercy, not because we deserve mercy, but because *he delights in mercy.* But what is that to me? Perhaps my name is not in the pardon: *He keeps mercy for thousands*; the Exchequer of mercy is not exhausted: God hath Treasures lying by, and why mayest not thou come in for a Child's part? This Promise is as *Bezoar*-stone.

2. Are we under the defilement of sin? There is a Promise working for good, Hos 14:4. *I will heal their back-slidings.* God will not only bestow *mercy,* but *grace.* And he hath made a Promise of sending his Spirit, Isa 44:3. Which for its sanctifying nature, is in Scripture compared sometimes to *Water,* which cleanseth the Ves-

sel; sometimes to the *Wind,* which is the Fan to winnow and purify the Air; sometimes to *Fire,* which doth refine Metals: Thus the Spirit of God shall cleanse and consecrate the soul, making it *partake of the Divine Nature.*

3. Are we in great dangers? There's a Promise works for our good, Ps 91:15. *I will be with him in trouble.* God doth not use to bring his people into troubles, and leave them there, but will stand by them, he will hold their head and heart when they are fainting. And there is another Promise, Ps 37:39 *He is their strength in the time of trouble.* Oh saith the soul, I shall faint in the day of trial; but God will be *the strength of our heart,* he will join his forces with us; either he will make his hand lighter, or our faith stronger.

4. Do we fear outward wants? There is a Promise, Ps 34:10. *They that fear the Lord, shall not want any good thing.* If it be good for us, we shall have it; if it be not good for us, then, the not having of it, is good. Exod 23:25. *I will bless thy bread, and thy water.* This blessing falls as the honey-dew upon the leaf, it sweetens that little we possess. Let me want the *Venison,* so I may have the *Blessing. Quest.* But I fear I shall not get a livelihood? *Answ.* Peruse that Scripture, Ps 37:25. *I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his Seed begging bread.* How must we understand this? 1. *David* speaks it as his own observation; he never beheld such an Eclipse, he never saw a godly man brought so low, that he had not a bit of bread to put in his mouth. 2. *David* never saw the righteous and *their Seed* lacking. Though the Lord might try godly Parents a while by want, yet not *their Seed* too: The Seed of the godly shall be provided for. 3. *David* never saw the

righteous begging of bread, and *forsaken:* Though he might be reduced to great straits, yet not forsaken; still he is an heir of Heaven, and God loves him. Thus, in all these Cases, the Promises work for good.

How do the Promises work for good?[16]

1. They are food for Faith; and that which strengthens Faith works for good. The Promises are the Breast-milk of Faith; Faith sucks nourishment from them, as the child by drawing the Breast. Gen 32:7. *Jacob feared exceedingly:* His spirits were ready to faint; now he goes to the Promise, *vers.* 12. *Lord, thou hast said, thou wilt do me good.* This Promise was his food; he got so much strength by sucking this Promise, that he was able to wrestle with the Lord all night in prayer, and would not let him go till he had blessed him.

2. The Promises are springs of joy. There is more in the Promise to comfort, than in the world to perplex. *Ursin* was comforted by that Promise, John 10:29. *No man shall pluck them out of my Father's hands.* The Promises are Cordials in a fainting fit, Ps 119:92. *Unless thy Word had been my delight, I had perished in my affliction.* The Promises are as Cork to the Net, to bear up the heart from sinking in the deep waters of distress.

## The Mercies of God

3. The Mercies of God work for good to the godly.

1. *Temporal Mercies,* as Health, Prosperity. Mercy works most kindly upon an ingenious spirit.

[16] *Quest. Ans.* 1.

1. The mercies of God humble: 2 Sam 7:18. *Then went King David in, and sat before the Lord, and said, Who am I, O Lord God? And what is my fathers house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* Lord, whence is such honour conferred upon me, that I should be King? That I who did follow the Sheep, should go in and out before thy people? So saith a gracious heart, Lord, what am I, that it should be better with me than others? That I should drink of the fruit of the Vine, when others drink, not only a Cup of *Wormwood,* but a Cup of *Blood?* what am I, that I should have those mercies, which others want, who are better than I? Lord, whence is it, that notwithstanding all my unworthiness, a fresh Tide of mercy comes in every day? The mercies of God make a sinner proud, but a Saint humble.

2. The mercies of God have a melting influence upon the soul, they dissolve it in love to God[17]. God's Judgments make us fear him, his mercies make us love him. How was *Saul* wrought upon by kindness! *David* had him at the advantage, and might have cut off, not only the skirt of his Robe, but his head; yet he spares his life: This kindness melted *Saul's* heart, 1 Sam 24:16. *Is this thy voice, my son* David? *and* Saul *lift up his voice, and wept.* Such a melting influence hath God's mercy, it makes the eyes drop with tears of love.

3. The mercies of God make the heart fruitful. When you lay out more cost upon a field, it bears a better crop. A gracious soul *honours the Lord with*

[17] Διὰ τοῦτο πολλὰς ἐις ἡμᾶς ἐυεργεσίας κατατίθεται ὁ θεὸς ἵνα ἡμᾶς ἐφελκύσηται. *Chrysost.*

*his Substance*; he doth not do with his mercies, as *Israel* with their Jewels and Ear-Rings, *make a Golden Calf*; but as *Solomon* did with the money thrown into the Treasury, *build a Temple* for the Lord. The Golden showers of mercy cause fertility.

4. The mercies of God make the heart thankful: Ps 116:12, 13. *Quid retribuam Domino? What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the Cup of salvation. David* alludes to the people of *Israel,* who at their Peace-Offerings did use to take a Cup in their hands, and give thanks to God for Deliverances. Every mercy is an Alms of Free Grace; and this enlargeth the soul in gratitude. A good Christian is not a Grave to bury God's mercies, but a Temple to sing his praise. If every Bird in its Kind (as *Ambrose* speaks) doth chirp forth thankfulness to its Maker; much more will an ingenious Christian, whose life is enriched and perfumed with mercy.

5. The mercies of God quicken: As they are Loadstones to love, so Whet-stones to obedience: Ps 119:9. *I will walk before the Lord in the Land of the living.* He that takes a review of his blessings, looks upon himself as a person engaged for God; he argues from the sweetness of mercy, to the swiftness of duty; *he spends and is spent* for Christ; he dedicates his τὸ ζῆν to God. Among the *Romans,* when one had redeemed another, he was ever afterwards to serve him. A soul encompassed with mercy is zealously active in God's service.

6. The mercies of God work compassion to others. A Christian is a *temporal Saviour*; he feeds the

hungry, clothes the naked, visits the Widow and Orphan in their distress; the backs and bellies of the poor, are the furrows where he sows the golden Seeds of his Charity: Ps 112:5. *A good man showeth favour, and lendeth:* Charity drops from him freely, as Mirth from the Tree. Thus to the godly, the mercies of God work for good, they are wings to lift them up to Heaven.

2. *Spiritual mercies* work for good: The blessed Ordinances.

1. The Word Preached works for good; it is *a savour of life,* it is *verbum cum unction,* it is a soul-transforming Word, it assimilates the heart into Christ's likeness, it is the breeder of Assurance, 1 Thess 1:5. *Our Gospel came to you, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance:* It is *vehiculum salutis,* the Chariot of Salvation.

2. Prayer works for good[18]. Prayer is the Bellows of the affections, it blows up holy desires and ardours of soul: Prayer hath power with God, Isa 45:11. *Command ye me.* It is a Key that unlocks the Treasury of God's Bowels. Prayer keeps the heart open to God, and shut to sin; it assuageth the intemperate heats and swellings of lust. It was *Luther*'s counsel to a friend, when he perceived a tentation begin to arise, to betake himself to Prayer. Prayer is *Bombarda Christianorum*[19], the Christians Gun, which they discharge against their enemies. Prayer is the *Pancreston,* the Sovereign Medicine of

[18] παντὸς ἀγαθοῦ κεφάλαιον ἐστιν ἡ προσευχὴ. *Chr. orat. de prec.*
[19] *Luther.*

the soul: Prayer sanctifies every mercy, 1 Tim 4:5. It is the dispeller of sorrow: by venting the grief it easeth the heart. When *Hannah* had prayed, *she went away, and was no more sad,* 1 Sam 1:18. And if it hath these rare effects, then it works for good.

3. The Lord's Supper works for good: It is an Emblem of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, Rev 19:9. And an *Earnest* of that Communion we shall have with Christ in Glory; it is *a feast of fat things*; it gives us bread from Heaven, such as doth not only *preserve life,* but *prevent death.* It hath glorious effects in the hearts of the Godly; it quickens their Affections, strengthens their Graces, mortifies their Corruptions, revives their Hopes, increaseth their Joy. *Luther* saith, *It is as great a work to comfort a dejected soul, as to raise the dead to life*; yet this may, and sometimes is done to the souls of the Godly in the blessed Supper. The Sacrament hath a peculiar excellency above the Word preached. In the Word there is the Breath of God, in the Sacrament the Blood of God; in the Word we hear his Voice, in the Sacrament we have his kiss. The Word proceeds out of God's mouth, the Sacrament out of his sides.

## The Graces of the Spirit

4. The Graces of the Spirit work for good. Grace is to the soul as light to the eye, as health to the body. Grace doth to the soul as a virtuous wife doth to her husband, Prov 31:12. *She will do him good all the days of her life.* How incomparably useful are the Graces! Faith and Fear go hand in hand; Faith keeps the heart cheerful, Fear keeps the heart serious; Faith

keeps the heart from sinking in despair, Fear keeps it from floating in presumption; all the Graces display themselves in their beauty: Hope is the *Helmet,* 1 Thess 5:8. Meekness the *Ornament,* 1 Pet 3:4. Love the *Bond of perfectness,* Col 3:14. The Saints Graces are Weapons to defend them, Wings to elevate them, Jewels to enrich them, Spices to perfume them, Stars to adorn them[20], Cordials to refresh them: And doth not all this work for good? The Graces are our Evidences for Heaven; is it not good to have our Evidences ready at the hour of death?

## The Creatures of God

5. The Creatures of God work for good to the Godly. 1. Creatures *inanimate,* Judge 5:20. *The Stars in their course fought against Sisera*; the Stars as the Host of God gathered in a Battalio, and by their influences raising terrible tempests, did as it were conspire the ruin of *Sisera* and his Army. 2. Creatures *animate.* The Angels, those noble Citizens and Princes of Heaven, work for the good of the Saints[21]. The good Angels are ready to do all offices of love to the people of God, Heb 1:14. *Are they not all ministering Spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?* Some of the Fathers are of opinion, that every Believer hath his Tutelar Angel; it needs no hot debate, it may suffice that we know the whole Hierarchy of Angels is employed for the good of the Saints. The good Angels do service to the Saints:

1. *In life.* The Angel did comfort the Virgin *Mary,* Luke 1:28. The Angel did stop the mouths of the Lyons that they could not hurt *Daniel,* Dan 6:22. A Christian

[20] ψυχὴ λαμπροτέρα γίνεται τὴν δεξαμένη χάριν.
[21] *Domestici Dei, caeli cives, principes paradisi.* Bern.

hath an invisible Guard about him, the Tutelage, and Guardian-ship of Angels, Ps 91:11. *He shall give his Angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways.* The Angels are of the Saints Life-guard, yea, the chief of the Angels; *Are they not all ministering spirits?* The highest Angels take care of the lowest Saints.

2. *At death.* The Angels are about the Saints sick-beds to comfort them. As God comforts by his Spirit, so by his Angels. Christ in his Agony was refreshed by an Angel, Luke 24:45. So are Believers in the agony of death: And when the Saints breath expires, their souls are carried up to Heaven by a Convoy of Angels, Luke 16:22.

3. *At the day of Judgement.* 1. The Angels shall open the Saints Graves, and dig away the earth from their bodies, and shall conduct them into the presence of Christ, when they shall be made like his glorious body, Matt 24:31. *He shall send his Angels, and they shall gather together his Elect, from the four winds, from the one end of Heaven to the other.* 2. The Angels at the day of Judgement shall rid the Godly of all their enemies. Here the Saints are plagued with enemies, Ps 38:20. *They are mine adversaries, because I follow the thing that good is:* well, the Angels will shortly give God's people a Writ of ease, and set them free from all their enemies: Matt 13:38. *The tares are the children of the wicked one, the harvest is the end of the world, the reapers are the Angels; as therefore the tares are gathered and burnt in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world, the Son of man shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things which offend, and them which do iniquity, and cast them into a furnace of fire.* At the day of Judgment the Angels of God will take the wicked, which are the Tares, and

will bundle them up, and throw them into Hell-furnace, and then the Godly will not be troubled with enemies any more: Thus the good Angels work for good. See here the honour and dignity of a Believer, he hath *God's name* written upon him, Rev 3:12. The Holy Ghost dwelling in him, 2 Tim 1:14. And a Guard of Angels attending him.

*Insuper nostro lateri ministros, caelitus addis.*

## The Communion of Saints

6. The Communion of Saints works for good, 2 Cor 1:24 συνεργοὶ ἐσμὲν, *We are helpers of your joy.* One Christian conversing with another, is a means to confirm him: As the stones in an Arch help to strengthen one another; one Christian by imparting his experiences doth heat and quicken another, Heb 10:24. *Let us provoke one another to love, and good works:* How doth Grace flourish by holy conference! A Christian by good discourse drops that oil upon another as makes the Lamp of his Faith burn the brighter.

## Christ's Intercession

7. Christ's intercession works for good. Christ is in Heaven as *Aaron* with his golden plate upon his fore-head, and his precious incense, and he prays for all Believers as well as he did for the Apostles, John 17:20. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for all them that shall believe in me.* When a Christian is weak, and can hardly pray for himself, Jesus Christ is praying for him; and he prays for three things. 1. That the Saints may be kept from sin, v. 15. *I pray that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.* We live in the world as in a Pest-house; Christ prays that his Saints may not be infected with the contagious evil of the times. 2. For his peoples progress in holiness, *vers.*

17. *Sanctify them:* Let them have constant supplies of the Spirit, and be *anointed with fresh oil.* 3. For their glorification, v. 24. *Father, I will that those which thou hast given me, be with me where I am.* Christ is not content till the Saints are in his arms. This prayer which he made on Earth, is the Copy and Pattern of his prayer in Heaven. What a comfort is this, when Satan is tempting, Christ is praying! This works for good.

Christ's prayer takes away the sins of our prayers. As a child (saith St *Ambrose*) that is willing to present his father with a Posy, goes into the Garden, and there gathers some Flowers and some Weeds together, but coming to his mother, she picks out the Weeds, and binds up the Flowers, and so it is presented to the Father. Thus when we have put up our prayers, Christ comes, and picks away the Weeds, *the sin of our prayer,* and presents nothing but Flowers to his Father, which are a sweet smelling savour.

## The Saints' Prayers

8. The joint stock of the Saints prayers work for good to the Godly. The Saints pray for all the Members of the body Mystical; their prayers prevail much[22]. 1. They prevail for recovery out of sickness, Jas 5:15. *The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.* 2. For victory over enemies, Isa 37:4. *Lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left,* v. 36. *Then the Angel of the Lord went forth and smote in the Camp of the Assyrians, an hundred and fourscore and five thousand.* 3. For deliverance out of prison, Acts 12:5. *Prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him*; v. 7. *And behold the Angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison, and he smote Peter on the side, and raised*

[22]Αἱ ψυχαὶ διὰ τῶν ἁγίων προσευχῶν ἁρμόζονται καὶ δρόμον τῆς ἐυσεβείας τρέχουσιν ἐυχερῶς.

*him up, and his chains fell off.* The Angel fetched *Peter* out of prison, but it was prayer fetched the Angel. 4. For forgiveness of sin, Job 42:8. *My servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept.* Thus the prayers of the Saints work for good to the Body Mystical. And this is no small privilege to a Child of God, that he hath a constant Trade of Prayer driven for him. When he comes into any Town or Corporation, he may say, I have some Prayer here, nay, all the world over I have a stock of prayer going for me; when I am indisposed, and out of tune, others are praying for me, who are quick and lively. Thus the best things work for good to the people of God.

# Chapter IV

**Showing that the worst things work for good to the Godly.**

2. The *worst things* work for good to the Godly[23]. Mistake me not, I do not say of their own nature they are good[24], for they are a fruit of the curse; but though they are *naturally* evil, yet they are *morally* good, the wise over-ruling hand of God disposing and sanctifying. As the Elements, though of contrary qualities, yet God hath so tempered them, that they all work in an harmonious manner, for the good of the Universe. Or as in a Watch, the wheels seem to move contrary one to another, but all carry on the motion of the Watch, and help to make the Alarum strike: So things that seem to move cross to the Godly, yet by the wonderful Providence of God work for their good. Among these κάκιστα worst things, there are four sad evils work for good to them that love God.

## SECTION I. Showing that the evil of affliction works for good to the Godly.

1. The evil of affliction works for good. There are two heart-quieting considerations in all the afflictions which befall us.

1. That God hath a special hand in them, Ruth 1:21. *The Almighty hath afflicted me.* Instruments can no more stir till God gives them a Commission, than the Axe

[23] καὶ πάντα περιτρέπει ὁ θεὸς εἰς ἀγαθά. *Aecumon.*

[24] Evil things in their own nature, do not cooperate, but contra-operate.

can cut of it self without an hand. *Job* eyed God in his affliction: therefore, as *Austin* observes, he doth not say, *The Lord gave, and the Devil took away*[25]; but, *The Lord hath taken away.* Who-ever brings an affliction to us, it is God that sends it.

2. The second heart-quieting consideration, is, That afflictions work for good: Jer 24:5. *Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the Land of the Chaldeans for their good. Judahs* captivity in *Babylon,* was לטובה *for their good.* Ps 119:71. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted*[26]. Which Text, like *Moses* his Tree, cast into the bitter waters of affliction, may make them sweet and wholesome to drink of. Afflictions to the Godly are medicinable. Out of the most poisonful Drug God extracts our salvation. Afflictions are as needful as Ordinances, 1 Pet 1:6. No vessel can be made of Gold without fire; so it is impossible that we should be made vessels of honour, unless we are melted and refined in the furnace of affliction. Ps 25:10. *All the paths of the Lord are mercy*; his bloody paths are mercy. As the Limner intermixeth bright colours with dark shadows; so doth the wise God mix *mercy* with *judgement.* Those afflictive providences which seem to be prejudicial, are beneficial: Let us take some Instances in Scripture. *Joseph's* brethren threw him into a pit, afterwards they sell him, then he is cast into prison, yet all this did work for his good: His abasement made way for his advancement; he was made the second man in the Kingdom. Gen 50:20. *Ye thought evil against*

[25] *Non dixit* Job, *Deus dedit, Diabolus abstulit.*

[26] χάριν ὁμολογεῖ τοῖς αὐστηροτέροις τοῦ ἰατροῦ φαρμάκοις. *Theod.*

*me, but God meant it to good. Jacob* wrestled with the Angel, and the hollow of *Jacob's* thigh was out of joint, this was sad; but God turned it to good, for there he saw God's face, and there the Lord blessed him, Gen 32:30. *Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, for I have seen God face to face.* Who would not be willing to have a bone out of joint, so he might have a sight of God? King *Manasseh* was bound in Chains, this was sad to see a Crown of Gold changed into Fetters; but it wrought for his good, for, *When he was in affliction he besought the Lord, and humbled himself greatly, and the Lord was entreated of him,* 2 Chr 33:11, 12. He was more beholding to his Iron Chain, than to his Gold Chain; the one made him proud, the other made him humble. *Job* was a spectacle of misery, he lost all that ever he had, he abounded only in boils and ulcers, this was sad; but it wrought for his good, his grace was more proved and improved; God gave a Testimony from Heaven of his integrity, and did compensate his loss by giving him twice as much as ever he had before, Job 42:10. *Paul* was smitten with blindness, this was uncomfortable, but it turned to his good; God did by that blindness make way for the light of grace to shine into his soul, it was the beginning of an happy conversion, Acts 9:6.

As the hard frosts in Winter bring on the flowers in the Spring; as the night ushers in the morning-star: So the evils of affliction produce much good to those that love God. But we are ready to question the truth of this, and to say as *Mary* did to the Angel, *How can this be?* therefore I shall show you several ways how affliction works for good.

1. As it is our Preacher and Tutor, Mic 6:9. *Hear ye the Rod*[27]. *Luther* saith, he could never rightly understand some of the *Psalms,* till he was in affliction. Affliction teacheth two things. 1. What sin is. In the Word preached, we hear what a dreadful thing sin is, that it is both defiling and damning, but we fear it no more than a painted Lyon; therefore God lets loose affliction, and then we feel sin bitter in the fruit of it. A sick-bed often teacheth more than a Sermon; we can best see the ugly visage of sin in the glass of affliction. 2. Affliction teacheth us to know our selves. In prosperity we are for the most part strangers to our selves; God makes us know affliction, that we may the better know our selves: We see that corruption in our hearts in time of affliction, which we would not believe was there. Water in the glass looks clear, but set it on the fire, and the scum boils up: In prosperity, a man seems to be humble and thankful, the water looks clear, but set this man a little on the fire of affliction, and the scum boils up, much impatience and unbelief appeareth. Oh saith a Christian, I never thought I had had such a bad heart, as now I see I have; I never thought my corruptions had been so strong, and my graces so weak.

2. Afflictions work for good as they are a means to make the heart more upright. In prosperity the heart is apt to be divided, Hos 10:2. The heart cleaves partly to God, and partly to the World; it is like a Needle between two Load-stones, God

[27] *Cum vibices dorso meo imprimeres, praecepta tua cordi meo insculpsisti.* Rivet. in Psal.

draws, and the World draws; now, God takes away the World that the heart may cleave more to him in sincerity. *Corrigere, quasi cor rectum facere*; Correction, is a setting the heart right and strait. As we sometimes hold a crooked stick over the fire to straiten it: So God holds us over the fire of affliction to make us more strait and upright. Oh how good is it, when sin hath bent the soul awry from God, that affliction should straiten it again!

3. Afflictions work for good, as they conform us to Christ. God's Rod is a Pencil to draw Christ's Image more lively upon us. It is good that there should be a symmetry and proportion between the Head and the Members. Would we be parts of Christ's Mystical Body, and not like him? His life (as *Calvin* saith) was a series of suffering, Isa 53:2. *A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief:* He wept, he bled. Was the Head Crowned with Thorns, and do we think to be Crowned with Roses? It is good to be like Christ, though it be by sufferings. Jesus Christ drank a bitter Cup, it made him sweat drops of blood to think of it; and though it be true, he drank the Poison in the Cup (*the wrath of God*) yet there is some Wormwood in the Cup left, which the Saints must drink: Only here is the difference between Christ's sufferings and ours; his were satisfactory, ours are only castigatory.

4. Afflictions work for good to the Godly, as they are destructive to sin. Sin is the Mother, affliction is the Daughter; the Daughter helps to destroy the Mother. Sin is like the Tree that breeds the Worm, and affliction is like the Worm that eats the Tree.

There is much corruption in the best heart; affliction doth by degrees work it out, as the fire works out the Dross from the gold, Isa 27:9. *This is all the fruit, to take away his sin.* What if we have more of the rough File, if we have less Rust? Afflictions carry away nothing but the excrements of sin. If a Physician should say to a Patient, Your body is distempered, and full of bad humors, which must be purged out, or you die; but I will prescribe Physic, which though it make you deadly sick, yet it will carry away the dregs of your disease, & save your life: would not this be for the good of the Patient? Afflictions are the purging Pills God useth to carry away our spiritual distempers; they cure the Tympany of pride, the Fever of lust, the Dropsy of covetousness: Do they not then work for good?

5. Afflictions work for good, as they are a means to loosen our hearts from the world. When you dig away the earth from the root of a Tree, it is to loosen the Tree from the earth: So God digs away our earthly comforts, to loosen our hearts from the earth[28]. We read of a Star, Rev 11:8. *The name of the Star is Wormwood.* Have not we seen this Star appear? Do not we find this *Star Wormwood* in every condition? A Thorn grows up with every Flower.

*Surgit amari aliquid quod in ipsis floribus angat.*

God would have the world hang as a loose Tooth, which being twitched away, doth not much trouble us. Is it not good to be weaned? The oldest Saint

[28] *Eveniunt mala in hac vita, ne viator tendens ad patriam stabulum pro domo diligat.* Aust.

needs it. Why doth the Lord break the Conduit-pipe, but that we may go to him in whom are *all our fresh springs*[29].

6. Afflictions work so good, as they make way for comfort. *In the valley of Achor a door of hope,* Hos 2:15. *Achor* signifies trouble: God sweetens outward pain, with inward peace. John 16:20. *Your sorrow shall be turned into joy.* Here is the Water turned into Wine. After a bitter Pill God gives Sugar. *Paul* had his Prison-Songs. God's Rod hath Honey at the end of it. The Saints in affliction have had such sweet raptures of joy, that they have thought themselves in the borders of the Heavenly *Canaan*; they have gathered *Grapes of Thorns.*

7. Afflictions work for good, as they are a magnifying of us, Job 7:17. *What is man that thou shouldest magnify him, and that thou shouldest visit him every morning?* God doth by affliction magnify us three ways. 1. In that he will condescend so low as to take notice of us; that he will afflict us, rather than lose us. 'Tis an honour that God will mind dust and ashes: 'tis a magnifying of us, that God thinks us worthy to be smitten. God's not striking, is a slighting, Isa 1:5. *Why should ye be stricken any more?* If you will go on in sin, take your course, sin your selves into Hell. 2. Afflictions do magnify us, as they are *Insignia honoris,* Ensigns of Glory, Signs of Son-ship, Heb 12:7. *If you endure chastening, God dealeth with you as Sons.* Every print of the Rod is a badge of honour. 3. Afflictions do really tend to

[29] Ps 87:7.

the magnifying of the Saints, as they make them renowned in the world. Soldiers have never been so admired for their victories, as the Saints have been for their sufferings. The zeal and constancy of the Martyrs in their trials have rendered them famous to posterity. How eminent was *Job* for his patience! God leaves his name upon Record, *Ye have heard of the patience of Job,* Jas 5:11. *Job* the Sufferer, was more renowned than *Alexander* the Conqueror.

8. Afflictions work for good, as they are a means to make us happy, Job 5:17. *Happy is the man whom God correcteth.* What Politician or Moralist ever placed happiness in the Cross? *Job* doth; *Happy is the man whom God correcteth.*

*Quest.* How do afflictions make us happy?

*Answ.* In that afflictions being sanctified, bring us nearer to God[30]. The Moon in the full is further off from the Sun: so are many farther off from God in the full Moon of prosperity: affliction brings them nearer to God. The Load-stone of mercy doth not draw us so near to God, as the Cords of affliction. When *Absalom* set *Joab's* Corn on fire, then he came running to *Absalom,* 2 Sam 14:30. When God sets our worldly comforts on fire, then we run to him, and make our peace with him. When the *Prodigal* was pinched with want, then he returned home to his father, Luke 15:18. When the Dove could find no rest for the sole of her foot, then she flies to the Ark: When God brings a Deluge of affliction upon us, then we fly to the Ark Christ. Thus

[30]συλλέγει πρὸς θεὸν. *Cyril.*

affliction makes us happy in bringing us nearer to God[31]. Faith can make use of the waters of affliction to swim faster to Christ.

9. Afflictions work for good, as they do put to silence the wicked: How ready are they to asperse and calumniate the Godly, that they serve God only for self-interest; therefore God will have his people endure sufferings for Religion, that he may hang a Pad-lock on the lying lips of wicked men. When the Atheists of the world see that God hath a people, who serve him not for a Livery, but for love, this stops their mouths. The Devil accuseth *Job* of hypocrisy, that he was a mercenary man, all his Religion was made up of ends of gold and silver, Job 1:9. *Doth Job serve God for naught? Hast not thou made a hedge about him?* etc. *Well,* saith God, *Put forth thy hand, touch his estate.* The Devil had no sooner received a Commission, but he falls a breaking down *Job's* hedge; Ay, but still *Job* worships God, *Chap.* 1.20. And professeth his faith in him, *Chap.* 13.15. *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.* This did amuse and silence the Devil himself. How doth it strike a damp into wicked men, when they see that the Godly will *iratum colere numen,* keep close to God in a suffering condition, and when they lose all, yet will hold fast their integrity.

10. Afflictions work for good, as they make way for glory, 2 Cor 4:17. Not that they *merit* Glory, but they *prepare* for it. As ploughing prepares the earth for a Crop; so afflictions do prepare, and make us

[31] *Mala quae hic nos premunt ad Deum ire cogunt.*

meet for Glory. The Limner lays his Gold upon dark colours: So God first lays the dark colours of affliction, and then he lays the golden colour of Glory. The Vessel is first seasoned, before Wine is poured into it: The Vessels of mercy are first seasoned with affliction, and then the Wine of Glory is poured in[32]. Thus we see afflictions are not prejudicial, but beneficial to the Saints. We should not so much look at the evil of affliction, as the good; not so much at the *dark side* of the Cloud, as the *light.* The worst that God doth to his children, is to whip them to Heaven.

## SECTION II. Showing that the evil of Temptation works for good to the Godly.

2. The evil of Temptation works for good. Satan is called ὁ πειράζων, the *Tempter,* Mark 4:3. He is ever lying in ambush, *stat in procinctu Diabolus*; he is continually at work with one Saint or other[33]. The Devil hath his Circuit, or Diocese, that he walks every day; he is not yet fully cast into prison, but like a prisoner that goes under Bail, he *walks about* to tempt the Saints. This is a great molestation to a child of God; as it is a trouble to a Virgin to have her chastity daily assaulted. Now concerning Satan's Temptations, there are three things to be considered:

1. His Method in tempting.
2. The Extent of his Power.
3. That these Temptations work for good.

[32] *Ad tempus affligi bonum hominem etiam ex benignitate est, ut scilicet copiosius donetur, & beatior tanta fiat.* Lud. Vives.

[33] ὁ διάβολος ἐπιθηρᾶται πλέον, ὅταν ἴδῃ τὰ φορτία τῆς ἀρετῆς συγκείμενα, καὶ πολὺν τὸν ὄγκον. *Chrysost.*

1. Satan's Method in tempting: Here, take notice of two things.

1. His *Violence* in tempting, and so he is the *Red Dragon:* He labours to storm the Castle of the heart, he throws in thoughts of blasphemy, he tempts to deny God; these are the *fiery Darts* he shoots, whereby he would inflame the passions.

2. His *Subtlety* in tempting, and so he is the *Old Serpent.* There are five chief subtleties the Devil useth.

1. He observes the temper and constitution; he lays suitable baits of temptation. As the Husbandman knows what Grain is proper for the Soil, Satan will not tempt contrary to the natural disposition and temperament: This is his Policy, he makes the Wind and Tide go together: That way the natural Tide of the heart runs, that way the Wind of temptation blows. Though the Devil cannot know men's *thoughts,* yet he knows their *temper,* and accordingly he lays his baits: —*Omnium discutit more* — He tempts the ambitious man with a Crown, the sanguine man with beauty.

2. Satan observes the fittest time to tempt in: As a cunning Angler casts in his Angle when the Fish will bite best. Satan's time of tempting is usually after an Ordinance; and the reason is, because *then* he thinks he shall find us most secure. When we have been at solemn Duties, we are apt to think all is done, and we grow remiss, and leave off that zeal and strictness as before; just as a Soldier, who

after a Battle leaves off his Armour, not once dreaming of an enemy: Now Satan watcheth his time, and when we least suspect, then he throws in a tentation.

3. He makes use of near Relations; the Devil tempts by a proxy: Thus he handed over a temptation to *Job* by his Wife, Job 2:9. *Dost thou still retain thy integrity?* A Wife in the bosom may be the Devil's instrument to tempt to sin.

4. Satan tempts to evil by them that are good; thus he gives poison in a golden Cup: He tempted Christ by *Peter; Peter* dissuades him from suffering; *Master, pity thy self.* Who would have thought to have found the Tempter in the mouth of an Apostle?

5. Satan tempts to sin, under a pretence of Religion. He is most to be feared when *he transforms himself into an Angel of Light.* He came to Christ with Scripture in his mouth; *It is written.* The Devil baits his hook with Religion; he tempts many a man to Covetousness and Extortion, under a pretence of providing for his Family; he tempts some to make away themselves, that they may live no longer to sin against God; and so he draws them into sin, under a pretence of avoiding sin. These are his νοήματα, and subtle stratagems in tempting.

2. The Extent of his Power; how far Satan's power in tempting reacheth.

1. He can propose the Object; as he set a wedge of Gold before *Achan.*

2. He can poison the Fancy, and instill evil thoughts into the mind: As the Holy Ghost doth cast in good motions, so the Devil doth bad; he put it into *Judas* his heart to betray Christ, John 13:2.—

3. Satan can excite and irritate the corruption within, and work some kind of inclinableness in the heart to embrace a temptation. Though it is true, Satan cannot force the Will to yield consent, yet he being an earnest Suitor, by his continual solicitation may provoke to evil. Thus he provoked *David* to number the people, 1 Chr 21:1.—The Devil may by his subtle Arguments dispute us into sin.

3. That these temptations work for good to the children of God. A Tree that is shaken by the wind is more settled and rooted: so the blowing of a temptation doth but settle a Christian the more in grace. Temptations work for good eight ways.

1. Temptation sends the soul to prayer. The more furiously Satan tempts, the more fervently the Saint prays. The Deer being shot with the Dart runs faster to the water: When Satan shoots his fiery darts at the soul, now it runs faster to the Throne of Grace. When *Paul* had the Messenger of Satan to buffet him, 2 Cor 12:8. *For this I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.* Temptation is a Medicine for security. That which makes us pray more, works for good.

2. Temptation to sin, is a means to keep from the perpetration of sin. The more a child of God is tempted, the more he fights against the temptation: The more Satan tempts to blasphemy, the more a Saint trembles at such thoughts, and saith, *avoid*

*Satan.* When *Joseph's* Mistress tempted him to folly, the stronger her temptation was, the stronger was his opposition. That temptation the Devil useth as a Spur to sin, God makes it a Bridle to keep back a Christian from it. The more a chaste Virgin is assaulted, the more she abhors the motion.

3. Temptation works for good, as it abates the swelling of pride: 2 Cor 12:7. *Lest I should be exalted above measure, there was given me a Thorn in the flesh, a Messenger of Satan to buffet me.* The Thorn in the flesh was to prick the Bladder of pride[34]. Better is that temptation which humbles me, than that duty which makes me proud. Rather than a Christian shall be haughty minded, God will let him fall into the Devil's hands a while, to be cured of his Imposthume.

4. Temptation works for good, as it is a Touchstone to try what is in the heart. The word *tentare,* signifies *explorare.* The Devil tempts that he may deceive; but God suffers us to be tempted to try us. 1. Temptation is a trial of our sincerity: It argues our heart is chaste, and loyal to Christ, when we can look a temptation in the face, and turn our back upon it. 2. It is a trial of our Courage: Hos 7:11. *Ephraim is a silly Dove, without an heart.* So it may be said of many, *they are without an heart,* they have no heart to resist temptation; no sooner doth Satan come, but they yield: Like a Coward, as soon as the Thief approacheth, he gives him his purse. But he is the valorous Christian, that

[34]οὐδὲν γὰρ ἡμῶν τῇ φύσει οὕτω συμβάλλεται ὡς τὸ φύσημα τῆς ψυχῆς καταστέλλεσθαι. *Chrysost.*

brandisheth the Sword of the Spirit against Satan, and will rather die than yield. The courage of the *Romans* was never more seen, than when they were assaulted by the *Carthaginians:* The valour & Puissance of a Saint is never more seen, than in a Field-battle, when he is fighting with the *Red-Dragon,* and by the power of faith puts the Devil to flight. That Grace is *tried Gold,* which can stand in the *fiery trial,* and withstand *fiery Darts. Fidei robur potest esse concussum, non excussum*[35].

5. Temptations work for good, as God makes them who are tempted, fit to comfort others in the same distress. A Christian must himself be under the buffetings of Satan, before he can speak a word in *due season* to him that is weary. St *Paul* was versed in temptations, 2 Cor 2:11. *We are not ignorant of his Devices:* and he was able to acquaint others with Satan's cursed Wiles, 1 Cor 10:13. A man that hath rid over a place where there are Bogs and Quick-sands, is the fittest to guide others through that dangerous way. He that hath felt the claws of the roaring Lion, and hath lain bleeding under those wounds, is the fittest man to deal with one that is tempted. None can better discover Satan's sleights and policies, than those who have been long in the fencing School of temptation.

6. Temptations work for good, as they stir up paternal compassions in God to them who are tempted. The Child which is sick and bruised is most looked after. When a Saint lies under the

[35] *Tertul.*

bruisings of temptations, Christ prays, and God the Father pities. When Satan puts the soul into a Fever, God comes with a Cordial; which made *Luther* say, that temptations are *amplexus Christi, Christ's Embraces,* because he doth then most sweetly manifest himself to the soul.

7. Temptations work for good, as they make the Saints long more for Heaven; there they shall be out of Gun-shot: Heaven is a place of rest, no Bullets of temptation fly there. The Eagle that soars aloft in the air, and sits upon high Trees, is not troubled with the stinging of the Serpent: So when Believers are gotten above into the Empyraean Heaven, they shall not be molested with the old Serpent[36]. In this life, when one temptation is over, another comes; this is to make God's people long till death sound a retreat, and calls them off the field where the Bullets fly so thick, to receive a victorious Crown, where, not the Drum, or Cannon, but the Harp and Viol shall be ever sounding.

8. Temptations work for good, as they engage the strength of Christ. Christ is our friend, and when we are tempted he sets all his power on work for us[37]: *For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted*[38]. If a poor soul were to fight alone with the *Goliath* of Hell, he were sure to be vanquished; but Jesus Christ brings in his Auxiliary forces, he gives fresh supplies of grace, 2 Cor 12:9. *And in him*

[36] *Nullae ibi insidiae Daemonum.* Bern.
[37] *Venit Diabolus, subvenit Christus.*
[38] *Deficientem sublevat, et vincentem coronat.* Aug.

*ὑπερνικῶμὲν, we are more than Conquerors.* Thus, the evil of temptation works for good.

But sometimes Satan foils a Child of God; how doth this work for good[39]?

I grant, that through the suspension of divine grace, and the fury of a tentation, a Saint may be overcome; yet this foiling by a tentation shall work for good[40]. 1. By this foil God makes way for the augmentation of grace. *Peter* was tempted to self-confidence, he presumed upon his own strength; and when he would needs stand alone, Christ let him fall; but this wrought for his good, it cost him many a tear, *he went out, and wept bitterly*; and now he grows more modest, he durst not say he loved Christ more than the other Apostles, John 21:15. *Lovest thou me more than these?* He durst not say so, his fall broke the neck of his pride. 2. The foiling by a temptation, causeth more circumspection and watchfulness in a child of God: Though Satan did before decoy him into sin, yet for the future he will be the more cautious, he will have a care of coming within the Lyons chain any more, he is more shy and fearful of the *occasions* of sin; he never goes abroad without his spiritual Armour, and he girds on his Armour by prayer; he knows he walks on slippery ground, therefore looks warily to his steps; he keeps close Sentinel in his soul, and when he spies the Devil coming, he stands to his Arms, and displays *the shield of Faith,* Eph 6:16. This is all the hurt the Devil doth; when he foils a Saint by

[39] *Quest.*
[40] *Answ.*

temptation, he cures him of his careless neglect, he makes him watch and pray more. When wild Beasts get over the hedge, and hurt the Corn, a man will make his fence the stronger: So when the Devil gets over the hedge by a temptation, a Christian will be sure to mend his sense; he is more fearful of sin, and careful of duty. Thus the being worsted by temptation works for good.

*Object.* But if being foiled works for good, this may make Christians careless whether they are overcome by tentations or no?

*Resp.* There is a great deal of difference between falling into a temptation, and running into a temptation; the falling into a temptation shall work for good, not the running into it. He that falls into a River is capable of help and pity, but he that desperately turns into it, is guilty of his own death. 'Tis mad running into a Lyons Den. He that runs himself into a temptation, is like *Saul,* who *fell upon his own sword.*

From all that hath been said, by way of Corollary, see how God doth befool the old Serpent, making his temptations turn to the good of his people. Sure did the Devil know how much benefit accrues to the Saints by temptation, he would forbear to tempt[41]. *Luther* once said, there are three things make a Christian, *Prayer, Meditation, Temptation.* After a Fever the body shoots up more in stature: After Believers have been in a hot fit of temptation, they have shot up more in holiness. St.

[41] *Tentationes quas Diabolus commovet ad interitum, Deus convertit ad profectum.* Bern. *de Teni.*

*Paul* in his voyage to *Rome,* met with a contrary wind, Acts 27:4. So the wind of temptation is a contrary wind to that of the Spirit, but God makes use of this cross wind to blow the Saints to Heaven.

## SECTION III. Showing that the evil of Desertion works for good to the Godly.

3. The evil of *desertion* works for good. The Spouse complains of desertion, Song 5:6. *My beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone.* There is a two-fold withdrawing; either 1. In regard of grace, when God suspends the influence of his Spirit, and with-holds the lively actings of grace. If the Spirit be gone, Grace freezeth into a chillness and dedolency. Or 2. A withdrawing in regard of Comfort; when God with-holds the sweet manifestations of his favour, he doth not look with such a pleasant aspect, but vails his face, and seems to be quite gone from the soul.

God is just in all his withdrawings: we desert him, before he deserts us[42]: We desert God when we leave off close communion with him; when we desert his Truths, and dare not appear for him; when we leave the guidance and conduct of his Word, and follow the *Ignis fatuus* of our own corrupt affections, and passions. We usually desert God first, therefore we have none to blame but our selves.

Desertion is very sad; for as when the light is withdrawn, darkness follows in the air; So when God withdraws, there is darkness and sorrow in the soul. Desertion is *an Agony of Conscience,* as *Alstead* calls it; God holds the soul over Hell; Job 6:9. *The Arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinks up my spirits.* It was a custom among the

[42] *Tu me non deseris nisi prius ego te deseram.* Austin.

*Persians* in their wars (as *Drusius* notes,) to dip their Arrows in the poison of Serpents, to make them more deadly: Thus did God shoot the poisoned Arrow of desertion into *Job,* under the wounds whereof, his spirit lay bleeding. In times of desertion the people of God are apt to be dejected, they dispute against themselves, and think that God hath quite cast them off; therefore I shall prescribe some comfort to the deserted soul. The Mariner when he hath no star to guide him, yet he hath light in his Lanthorn, which is some help to him: So when the poor soul is sailing in the dark of desertion, and wants the *bright morning star,* I shall lay down four Consolations, which are as the Mariners Lanthorn to give some light.

1. None but the Godly are capable of desertion. Wicked men know not what God's love means, nor what it is to want it; they know what it is to want health, friends, trading, but not what it is to want God's favour. Thou fearest thou art not God's child, because thou art deserted, whereas none but the Godly are deserted. The Lord cannot be said to withdraw his love from the wicked, because they never had it. The being deserted, evidenceth thee to be a Child of God. How couldest thou complain that God hath estranged himself, if thou hadst not sometimes received smiles and love-tokens from him?

2. There may be the seed of grace, where there is not the flower of joy. The earth may want a crop of Corn, yet may have a Mine of Gold within. A Christian may have grace within, though the luscious fruit of joy doth not grow. Vessels at Sea, that are richly fraught with Jewels and Spices, may be in the dark, and be tossed in the storm. A soul enriched with the treasures of grace,

may yet be in the dark of desertion, and so tossed as to think it shall be cast away in the storm. *David* in a state of disconsolacy prays, *Take not away thy holy Spirit from me,* Ps 51:11. He doth not pray, saith *Austin,* Lord, *Give me thy Spirit*, but, *Ne tollas spiritum, Take not away thy Spirit*; so that still he had the Spirit of God remaining in him.

3. These desertions are but for a time. Christ may go into the withdrawing room, and leave the soul a while, but he will come again. Isa 54:8. *In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee.* When it is dead low water, the Tide will come in again. Isa 57:6. *I will not be always wroth, for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made.* The tender Mother sets down her child in anger, but she will take it up again into her arms, and kiss it. God may put away the soul in anger, but he will take it up again into his dear embraces, and display the banner of love over it.

4. These desertions work for good to the Godly, and that seven manner of ways.

> 1. Desertion works a cure upon the soul. 1. It cures sinful somnolency. We find the Spouse fallen upon the bed of sloth, Song 5:2, *I sleep*; and presently Christ was gone, Verse 6. *My beloved had withdrawn himself.* Who will speak to one that is drowsy? 2. Desertion cures inordinacy of affection to the world, 1 John 2:15. *Love not the world.* We may hold the world as a Posy in our hand, but it must not lie too near our heart; we may use it as an Inn where we take a bait, but it must not be our home. Perhaps these secular things steal away the

heart too much. Good men are sometimes sick with a Surfeit, and drunk with the luscious delights of prosperity; and having spotted their silver wings of grace, and much defaced God's Image by rubbing it against the earth, the Lord to recover them of this, hides his face in a Cloud; this Eclipse hath good effects, it darkens all the glory of the world, and causeth it to dis-appear.

2. Desertion works for good, as it makes the Saints prize God's countenance more than ever, Ps 63:3. *Thy loving-kindness is better than life*; yet the commonness of this mercy abates the price of it: When pearls grew common at *Rome,* they began to be slighted. God hath no better way to make us value his love, than by withdrawing it a while. If the Sun did shine but once a year, how would it be prized! When the soul hath been long benighted with desertion, Oh how welcome now is the return of the Sun of Righteousness!

3. Desertion works for good, as it is a means to embitter sin to us. Can there be a greater misery than to have God's displeasure? What makes Hell but the hiding of God's face? And what makes God hide his face, but sin? John 20:13. *They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.* So, our sins have taken away the Lord, and we know not where he is laid. The favour of God is the best Jewel; it can sweeten a prison, and unsting death: Oh how odious then is that sin, which robs us of our best Jewel! Sin made God desert his Temple, Ezek 8:6. Sin causeth him to appear as an enemy, and dress himself in armour. This makes

the soul pursue sin with an holy malice, and seek to be avenged of it. The deserted soul gives sin *Gall* and *Vinegar* to drink, and with the Spear of mortification, lets out the heart-blood of it.

4. Desertion works for good, as it works these three gracious effects.

1. It sets the soul a weeping for the loss of God. When the Sun is gone, the dew falls; and when God is gone, tears drop from the eyes. How was *Micah* troubled when he had lost his gods? Judge 18:24. *Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?* So, when God is gone, what have we more? It is not the Harp and Viol can comfort, when God is gone. Though it be sad to want God's presence, yet it is good to lament his absence.

2. Desertion sets the soul a seeking after God. When Christ was stepped aside, the Spouse pursues after him, she seeks him *in the streets of the City,* Song 3:2. And a *non inventus* being returned, she makes a hue and cry after him, *vers.* 3. *Saw ye him whom my soul loves?* The deserted soul sends up whole Volleys of sighs and groans, it knocks at Heaven-gate by prayer, it can have no rest till the golden beams of God's face shine.

3. Desertion puts the Christian upon enquiry; he enquires the cause of God's departure: What is the accursed thing that hath made God angry? Perhaps pride, perhaps surfeit on Ordinances, perhaps worldliness, Isa 57:17. *For the iniquity of his Covetousness, was*

*I wroth; I hid me.* Perhaps there is some secret sin allowed. A stone in the pipe hinders the current of water: So sin lived in, hinders the sweet current of God's love. Thus Conscience as a blood-hound, having found out sin and overtaken it, this *Achan* is stoned to death.

5. Desertion works for good, as it gives us a sight of what Jesus Christ suffered for us. If the sipping of the Cup be so bitter, how bitter was that which Christ drank upon the Cross? He drank a Cup of deadly poison, which made him cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* None can be so sensible of Christ's sufferings, none can be so fired with love to Christ, as those who have been humbled by desertion, and have been held over the flames of Hell for a time.

6. Desertion works for good, as it prepares the Saints for future comfort: The nipping frosts prepare for spring flowers. 'Tis God's way, first to cast down, then to comfort, 2 Cor 7:6. When our Saviour had been fasting, then came the Angels and ministered to him. When the Lord hath kept his people long fasting, then he sends the Comforter, and feeds them with the hidden Manna, Ps 97:11. אור זרע *Light is sown for the Righteous.* The Saints comforts may be hid like seed under ground, but the seed is ripening, and will increase, and flourish into a Crop.

7. These desertions work for good, as they will make Heaven the sweeter to us. Here our comforts are like the Moon, sometimes they are in the full, sometimes in the wain. God shows himself to us a

while, and then retires into the withdrawing room: How will this set off Heaven the more, and make it more delightful and ravishing, when we shall have a constant aspect of love from God, 1 Thess 4:17.

Thus we see desertions work for good: The Lord brings us into the deep of desertion, that he may not bring us into the deep of damnation; he puts us into a seeming Hell, that he may keep us from a real Hell. God is fitting us for that time, when we shall enjoy his smiles for ever; when there shall be neither clouds in his face, or Sun-setting; when Christ shall come and stay with his Spouse, and kiss her with the kisses of his lips, and the Spouse shall never say more, *My Beloved hath withdrawn himself.*

## SECTION IV. Showing that the evil of sin works for good to the Godly.

4. The evil of *sin* works for good; not in its own nature (for it is damnable), but God in his infinite wisdom over-ruling it. This is St *Austin's* gloss upon the Text[43]. I may now say, as the Apostle in another sense, 1 Cor 15:51. *Behold, I show you a Mystery:* Sin it self to the Godly works for good. Indeed 'tis matter of wonder, that any honey should come out of this Lyon. — We may understand it in a double sense.

1. The sins of others work for good to the Godly. 'Tis no small trouble to a gracious heart to live among the wicked, Ps 120:5. *Wo is me that I dwell in Meshech:* Yet even this the Lord turns to good.

[43] *Etiam peccatum ipsum in bonum convertit Deus.* Aug.

1. The sins of others work for good, as they breed holy sorrow. God's people weep for what they cannot reform: Ps 119:136. *Rivers of tears run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy Law. David* was a mourner for the sins of the times; his heart was turned into a Spring, and his eyes into Rivers. Wicked men make merry with sin, Jer 11:15. *When thou dost evil, then thou rejoicest.* But the Godly are *weeping Doves,* they grieve for the oaths and blasphemies of the Age, they take the sins of others, and make them spears to pierce their own souls. This grieving for the sins of others is good. 1. It shows a Child-like heart. 'Tis ingenuity to resent with sorrow the injuries done to our Heavenly Father. 2. It shows a Christ-like heart, Mark 3:5. *He was grieved for the hardness of their hearts.* 3. The Lord takes special notice of these tears; he likes it well that we should weep when his glory suffers. It argues more grace to grieve for the sins of others, than for our own. We may grieve for our own sins, out of fear of Hell, but to grieve for the sins of others, is from a principle of love to God: These tears drop as water from the Roses, they are sweet and fragrant, and God puts them in his Bottle.

2. The sins of others work for good to the Godly, as they set them the more a praying against sin. If there were not such a spirit of wickedness abroad, perhaps there would not be such a spirit of prayer. *Crying Sins* cause *Crying Prayers:* The people of God pray against the iniquity of the times, that God will give a check to sin, that he will put sin to the blush; if they cannot *pray down* sin, they *pray*

*against* it; and this God takes kindly; these prayers shall be both recorded and rewarded. Though we do not prevail in prayer, we shall not lose our prayers, Ps 35:13. *My prayer returned into my own bosom.*

3. The sins of others work for good, as they make us the more in love with grace. The sins of others are a foil to set off the lustre of grace the more. One contrary sets off another: Deformity sets off beauty. The sins of the wicked do much disfigure them: Pride is a disfiguring sin; an ambitious man is but a Bladder whom the Devil hath blown up; now, the beholding another's pride, makes us the more in love with humility. Malice is a disfiguring sin, it is the Devil's picture; the more of this we see in others, the more we fall in love with meekness and charity. Drunkenness is a disfiguring sin, like *Circe's* Cup, it turns men into Beasts, it deprives of the use of reason; the more intemperate we see others, the more we fall in love with sobriety. The black face of sin sets off the beauty of holiness so much the more.

4. The sins of others work for good, as they work in us the stronger opposition against sin, Ps 119:126. *The wicked have made void thy Law; therefore I love thy Law. David* had never loved God's Law so much, if the wicked had not set themselves so much against it. The more *violent* others are against the truth, the more *valiant* the Saints are for it. Living fish swim against the stream; the more the Tide of sin comes in, the more the Godly swim against it. The impieties of the times, provoke holy

passion in the Saints: that anger is without sin, which is against sin. The sins of others are as a Whet-stone to set the sharper edge upon us, they whet our zeal and indignation against sin the more.

5. The sins of others work for good, as they make us more earnest in working out our salvation. When we see wicked men take such pains for Hell, this makes us more industrious for Heaven[44]. The wicked have nothing to encourage them, yet they sin; they venture shame and disgrace, they break through all oppositions; Scripture is against them, and Conscience is against them, there is a flaming sword in their way, yet they sin. Lam 5:9. *We gat our bread with the peril of our lives.* Sinners eat the bread of wickedness with the peril of their souls. Godly hearts seeing the wicked thus mad for the *forbidden fruit,* and hackneying out themselves in the Devil's service, are the more emboldened and quickened in the ways of God, they will take Heaven as it were by storm. The wicked are *swift Dromedaries* in sin, Jer 2:23. And do we creep like Snails in Religion? Shall impure sinners do the Devil more service, than we do Christ? Shall they make more hast to a Prison, than we do to a Kingdom? Are they never weary of sinning, and are we weary of praying? Have not we a better Master than they? Are not the paths of virtue pleasant? Is not there joy in the way of duty, and Heaven at the end? The activity of the sons of *Belial* in sin, is a

[44] *Impii quam strenue serviunt Diabolo!* Cyprian.

spur to the Godly to make them mend their pace, and run the faster to Heaven.

6. The sins of others work for good, as they are Glasses in which we may see our own hearts. Do we see a flagitious impious sinner? Behold a picture of our hearts, such should we be if God did leave us; what is in other men's *practise,* is in our *nature.* Sin in the wicked, is like fire on a Beacon that flames and blazeth forth, sin in the Godly is like fire in the Embers. *Christian,* though thou dost not break forth into a flame of scandal, yet thou hast no cause to boast, for there is much sin raked up in the Embers of thy nature; thou hast *the root of bitterness* in thee, and wouldst bear as hellish fruit as any, if God did not either curb thee by his power, or change thee by his grace.

7. The sins of others work for good, as they are a means to make the people of God more thankful. When you see another infected with the plague, how thankful are you, that God hath preserved you from it? It is a good use that may be made even of the sins of others, to be more thankful; why might not God have left us to the same *excess of riot?* Think with thy self, O Christian, why should God be more propitious to thee, than to another? Why should he take thee out of the wild Olive of nature, and not him? How may this make thee to adore free grace! What the *Pharisee* said boastingly, we may say thankfully, Luke 18:11. *God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers,* etc. So we are to adore the riches of grace, that we are not as others, Drunkards, Swearers,

Sabbath-breakers. Every time we see men ranting it in sin, we are to bless God we are not such. If we see a frantic person, we bless God it is not so with us: Much more when we see others under the power of Satan, we are to make our thankful acknowledgment that it is not our condition.

8. The sins of others work for good, as they are a means to make God's people better. *Christian,* God can make thee a gainer by another's sin: The more unholy others are, the more holy thou art. The Roses that grow near Garlic, are sweetest: So another's unsavouriness makes a Christians graces send out a more fragrant perfume. The more a wicked man gives himself to sin, the more a godly man gives himself to prayer, Ps 109:4. *But I give my self to prayer.*

9. The sins of others work for good, as they give an occasion to us of doing good: Were there no sinners, we could not be in such a capacity for service. The Godly are often a means to convert the wicked: their prudent advise, and pious example, is a *lure* and bait to draw sinners to the embracing of the Gospel. The disease of the Patient works for the good of the Physician; by emptying the Patient of noxious peccant humours, the Physician enricheth himself: So by converting sinners from *the error of their way,* our Crown comes to be enlarged, Dan 12:3. *They that turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the Stars for ever and ever:* Not as Lamps or Tapers, but *sicut Stellae,* as the *Stars* for ever. Thus we see the sins of others work for our good.

2. Our *own sins* shall work for good: This must be understood warily, when I say the sins of the godly work for good, not that there is the least good in sin. Sin is like poison, which corrupts the blood, infects the heart, and without a Sovereign Antidote brings death: Such is the venomous nature of sin 'tis deadly and damning[45]: Sin is worse than Hell, but yet, God by his mighty over-ruling power makes sin in the issue turn to the good of his people; God can make a Treacle of this poison: Hence, that golden saying of St. *Austin, God would never permit evil, if he could not bring good out of evil.* The Reliques and remains of corruption in the Saints, work for good several ways.

1. Sin makes them weary of this life. That sin is in the godly, *is sad,* but that it is a burden, *is good.* St. *Paul*'s afflictions (pardon the expression) were but a play to him in comparison of his sin; he rejoiced in tribulation, 2 Cor 7:4. But how did this bird of Paradise weep and bemoan himself under his sins! Rom 7:24. *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* A Believer carries his sins, as a Prisoner his shackles: Oh how does he long for a Goal-delivery! This sensibility of sin is good.

2. This in-being of corruption makes the Saints prize Christ more. He that feels his sin, as a sick man feels his sickness, how welcome is Christ the Physician to him! He that feels himself stung with sin, how precious is the brazen Serpent to him! When *Paul* had cried out of a *body of death,* how thankful was he for Christ! Rom 7:25. *I thank God*

[45] *Peccato rum oleum spinas Gehennales facit pullulare* Born.

*through Jesus Christ my Lord.* Christ's blood saves from sin, and is the sacred ointment which kills this Quick-silver.

3. Sin works for good, as it is an occasion of putting the soul upon six rare Duties.

1. It puts the soul upon self-searching. A child of God being conscious to himself of sin, takes the Candle and Lanthorn of the Word, and searcheth into his heart: he desires to know the worst by himself; as a man who is distempered in body, desires to know the worst of his disease. Though our joy lies in the knowledge of our graces, yet there is some benefit in the knowledge of our corruptions: Therefore *Job* prays, *Make me to know my transgressions,* Job 13:23. 'Tis good to know our sins, that we may not flatter our selves, or take our condition to be better than it is. 'Tis good to find out our sins, lest they find us out.

2. The inherency of sin puts a child of God upon self-abasing. Sin is left in a godly man, as a Cancer in the breast, or a bunch upon the back, to keep him from being proud. Gravel and Dung are good to ballast a Ship, and keep it from overturning: The Dung of sin helps to ballast the soul, that it be not overturned with vain-glory. We read of the *spots of God's children,* Deut 32:5. When a godly man looks his face in the glass of Scripture, and sees the spots of infidelity and hypocrisy, this makes the plumes of Pride fall; they are humbling spots. 'Tis a good use may be made even of

our sins, when they occasion low thoughts of our selves: Better is that sin which humbles me,[46], than that duty which makes me proud. Holy *Bradford* uttered these words of himself, *I am* (saith he) *a painted hypocrite*; and *Hooper, Lord, I am Hell, and thou art Heaven.* From the Thorn of sin, the Saints have gathered the Grape of Humility.

3. Sin puts a child of God upon self-judging; he is *sui Judex,* he passeth a Sentence upon himself, Prov 30:2. *I am more brutish than any man.* 'tis dangerous to judge others, but it is good to judge our selves, 1 Cor 11:31. *If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged.* When a man hath judged himself, now Satan is put out of Office: When he lays any thing to a Saints charge, he is able to retort and say, It is true Satan, I am guilty of these sins, but I have judged my self already for them; and having condemned my self in the lower Court of Conscience, God will acquit me in the upper Court of Heaven.

4. Sin puts a Child of God upon self-conflicting. Spiritual-self conflicts with carnal-self, Gal 5:17. *The Spirit lusts against the flesh.* Our life is a wayfaring life, and a warfaring life; there is a duel fought every day between the *two Seeds:* A Believer will not let sin have peaceable possession: If he cannot keep sin *out,* he will keep sin *under* : though he cannot

[46] *Melius est peccatum humilians, quam justitia inflans.* Austin.

quite overcome, yet he is overcoming, Rev 2:7 τῷ νικῶντι, *to him that is overcoming.*

5. Sin puts a Child of God upon self-observing: He knows sin is a Bosom-Traitor, therefore narrowly observes himself. A subtle heart needs a watchful eye. The heart is like a Castle that is in danger every hour to be assaulted; this makes a Child of God lie always Sentinel, and keep a Guard about his heart. A Believer hath a strict eye over himself, lest he fall into any scandalous enormity, and so open a sluice to let all his comfort run out.

6. Sin puts the soul upon self-reforming[47]. A child of God does not only find out sin, but drive out sin; one foot he sets upon the neck of his sins, and the other foot he *turns to God's Testimonies,* Ps 119:59. Thus the sins of the Godly work for good; God makes the Saints *Maladies* their *Medicines.*

But let none abuse this Doctrine; I do not say that to an impenitent person sin works for good, no it works for his damnation; but it is *to them that love God:* And for you that are Godly, I know you will not draw a wrong conclusion from this, either to make light of sin, or to make bold with sin[48]; if you should do so, God will make it cost you dear. Remember *David,* he ventured presumptuously on sin, and what

[47] *Vt ignes ignibus extinguuntur, venenis venena depelluntur, calores Febrium medicinalibus caloribus franguntur, ita nihil impedit quin peccata peccatis curentur.* Aug. *contra* Pelag.

[48] *Ne dicas ero sine metu, etc.* Luther.

got he? He lost his peace, he felt the terrors of the Almighty in his soul: Though he had all helps to cheerfulness, he was a King, he was of a ruddy sanguine complexion, he had skill in Music, yet nothing could administer comfort to him, he complains of his *broken bones*[49], Ps 51:8. And though he did at last come out of that dark Cloud, yet some Divines are of Opinion, that he never recovered his full joy to his dying day. If any of God's people should be tampering with sin, because God can turn it to good; though the Lord doth not damn them, he may send them to Hell in this life, he may put them into such bitter agonies, and soul-Convulsions, as may fill them full of horror, and make them draw nigh to despair: Let this be a Flaming Sword to keep them from coming near the *forbidden Tree.*

And thus I have shown, that both the best things, and the worst things, by the over-ruling hand of the great God, do work together for the good of the Saints.

[49] *Longo tempore cum aculeo & morsu illius peccati conflictatur, quantumvis remissum.* Luther in *Gen.*

# Chapter V

### Showing the Reason of the Proposition.

The grand Reason why all things shall work for good,[50] is the near and dear interest which God hath in his people. The Lord hath made a Covenant with them, Jer 32:38. *They shall be my people, and I will be their God.* By virtue of this compact, all things do, and must work for good to them. Ps 50:7. *I am God, even thy God.* This word אלהיך *Thy God,* is the sweetest word in the Bible, it implies the best relations; and it is impossible there should be these relations between God and his people, and every thing not work for their good. This expression, *I am thy God,* implies,

1. The relation of a Physician; I am thy Physician. God is 1. A *Skilful* Physician, therefore knows what is best[51]. God observes the several tempers of men, and knows what will work most effectually; some are of a more sweet disposition, and are drawn by mercy; others are more rugged and knotty pieces; these God deals with in a more forcible way. Some things are kept in Sugar, some in Brine. God doth not deal alike with all, he hath Trials for the strong, and Cordials for the weak. 2. God is a *Faithful* Physician, therefore will turn all to the best. If he doth not give thee *ad voluntatem,* it shall be *ad sanitatem*[52]; If God doth not give thee that which thou likest, he will give thee that which thou needest. A Physician

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[50] *Reason.*

[51] οὐκ οὕτως ἴσμεν τὸ συμφέρον ἡμῖν ὡς αὐτὸς ἐπίσταται *Chrysost.*

[52] *Austin.*

doth not so much study to please the taste of the Patient, as to cure his distemper. We complain such sore trials lie upon us; let us remember God is our Physician, therefore he labours rather to heal us, than humour us. God's dealings with his children, though they are *sharp,* yet they are *safe,* and in order to a Cure, Deut 8:16. *That he might do thee good in the latter end.*

This word, *Thy God,* implies the relation of a Father. A Father loves his child; therefore whether it be a smile or a stroke, it is for the good of the child: I am *Thy God,* thy Father, therefore all I do is for thy good. Deut 8:5. *As a man chastens his Son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.* God's chastening is not to destroy, but to reform. God cannot hurt his children, for 1. He is a *tender-hearted* Father, Ps 103:13. *Like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* Will a father seek the ruin of his child, the child that came out of his loins, that bears his image? All his care and contrivance is for his child; who doth he settle the inheritance upon but his child? God is tender-hearted, the *Father of mercies,* 2 Cor 1:3. He begets all the mercies and bowels in the creatures. 2. He is an *everlasting* Father, Isa 9:7. He was our Father from eternity: Before we were Children, God was our Father, and he will be our Father to eternity. A Father provides for his child while he lives; but the Father dies, and then the child may be exposed to injury: But God never ceaseth to be a Father; thou that art a Believer, hast a Father that never dies, and if God be thy Father, thou canst never be undone, all things must needs work for thy good.

3. This word, *Thy God,* imports the relation of an Husband; this is a near and sweet relation. The Husband seeks the good of his Spouse; he were unnatural that should go about to destroy his Wife, Eph 5:29. *Did ever any man hate his own flesh?*

There is a marriage-relation between God and his People[53], Isa 54:5. *Thy Maker is thy Husband.* God entirely loves his People, Isa 43:4. *He engraves them upon the Palms of his hands,* Isa 49:16. *He sets them as a Seal upon his Breast,* Song 8:6. *He will give Kingdoms for their Ransom,* Isa 43:3. Which shows how near they lie to his heart. If he be an Husband whose heart is enamoured with love, then he will seek the good of his Spouse; either he will shield off an injury, or will turn it to the best.

4. This word, *Thy God,* implies the relation of a Friend, Song 5:16. *This is my Friend.* A Friend is *Anima dimidium* (as *Austin* saith), half of ones self; he is studious and inquisitive how he may do his friend good, he promotes his welfare as his own. *Jonathan* ventured the King's displeasure for his friend *David,* 1 Sam 19:4. God is our friend, therefore will turn all things to our good. There are false friends; Christ was betrayed by a friend: but God is the best friend.

1. He is a faithful friend, Dan 7:9. *Know therefore that the Lord thy God he is God, the faithful God.* 1. He is faithful in his love: He gave his very heart to us, when he gave the Son out of his bosom; here was a pattern of love without a parallel. 2. He is faithful in his promises, Titus 1:2. *God that cannot lie hath promised.* He may change his promise, but cannot break it. 3. He is faithful in his dealings; when he is afflicting he is faithful, Ps 119:75. *In faithfulness hast thou afflicted me*; he is sifting and refining us as Silver, Ps 66:10.

2. He is an immutable friend, Heb 13:5. *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* There are five Seals set to that promise, οὐ, μὴ, οὐδ', οὐ, μὴ, Friends often fail at a

[53] *Anima fidelis Deum habet sponsum.* Gulielm. Paris.

pinch. Many deal with their friends as women do with their flowers, while they are fresh they put them in their bosoms, but when they begin to wither they throw them away; or as the Traveller doth with the Sun-Dial; if the Sun shines upon the Dial, the Traveller will step out of the Road, and look upon the Dial; but if the Sun doth not shine upon it, he will ride by, and never take any notice of it: So if prosperity shine on men, then friends will look upon them, but if there be a Cloud of adversity on them, they will not come near them: but God is a friend for ever; *I will not leave thee.* Though *David* walked in the shadow of death, he knew he had a friend by him, Ps 23:4. *I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.* God never takes off his love wholly from his people, 'tis *Amicitia immortalis*[54], John 13:1. *He loved them εἰς τέλος, to the end:* God being such a friend he will make all things work for our good. There is no friend, but will seek the good of his friend.

5. This word, *Thy God,* imports yet a nearer relation, the relation between the Head and the Members. There is a Mystical union between Christ and the Saints: He is called κεφαλὴ, *The Head of the Church,* Eph 5:23. Doth not the Head consult for the good of the Body? The Head guides the Body, it sympathizeth with it, it is the fountain of spirits, it sends forth influence and comfort into the Body: All the parts of the Head are placed for the good of the Body; the Eye is set as it were in the Watch-Tower, it lies Sentinel to spy any danger that may come to the Body, and prevent it. The Tongue is both a Taster and an Orator. If the Body be a Microcosm, or little world, the Head is the Sun in this world, from whence

[54] *Austin.*

proceeds the light of Reason. The Head is placed for the good of the Body. Christ and the Saints make one Body Mystical. Our Head is in Heaven, and sure he will not suffer his Body to be hurt, but will consult for the safety of it, and make all things work for the good of the Body Mystical.

# Chapter VI

### The Inferences drawn from the Proposition. A Use of Information.

1. IF all things work for good, hence learn,[55] That there is a Providence: Things do not work of themselves, but God sets them a working for good.[56] God is the great Disposer of all events and issues, he sets every thing a working, *His Kingdom ruleth over all,* Ps 103:13. It is meant of his providential Kingdom. Things in the world are not governed by *second Causes,* by the counsels of men, by the Stars and Planets, but by divine Providence. Providence is *Regina mundi,* the Queen and Governess of the world. There are three things in Providence. 1. πρόγνωσις, God's *foreknowing*; 2. προορισμὸς, God's *determining*; 3. διοίκησις, God's *directing* all things to their periods and events: Whatever things do work in the world, God sets them a working. We read in the first of *Ezekiel* of *Wheels,* and *Eyes* in the Wheels, and the *moving* of the Wheels: The Wheels are the whole Universe, the Eyes in the Wheels are God's Providence, the moving of the Wheels is the hand of Providence turning all things here below.That which is by some called Chance-medley, is nothing else but the result of Providence[57]

[55] *Use* of Information.
[56] 1 *Branch.*
[57] 1 Kgs 22:34.

Learn to adore Providence Providence hath an influence upon all things here below; 'tis this that mingles the Ingredients, and makes up the whole Compound.

2. It shows us the happy condition of every Child of God; *All things work for his good,* the *best* and *worst* things: Ps 112:4[58]. *Unto the upright ariseth light in darkness.* The most dark cloudy Providences of God have some Sun-shine in them[59]. What a blessed condition is a true Believer in! When he dies he goes to God, and while he lives, every thing shall do him good; — affliction is for his good. What hurt doth the fire to the gold, only purify it? What hurt doth the Fan to the Corn, only separate the Chaff from it? What hurt do Leeches to the body, only suck out the bad blood? God doth never use his *staff,* but to beat out the dust. Affliction doth that which the Word many times will not, it *opens the ear to Discipline,* Job 36:10. When God lays men upon their backs, then they look up to Heaven. God's smiting his people is like the Musicians striking upon the Viol, which makes it put forth a melodious sound. How much good comes to the Saints by affliction? When they are pounded and broken, they send forth their sweetest smell. Affliction is a bitter root, but it bears sweet fruit, Heb 12:11. *It yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness.* Affliction is the High-way to Heaven; though it be Flinty and Thorny, yet it is the nearest way. Poverty shall. Starve our sins; sickness shall make grace more healthful[60], 2 Cor 4:16. Reproach shall cause *the Spirit of God, and of Glory to rest upon us,* 1 Pet 4:14 ἐγκλήματα, ἐγκωμία; death shall stop the Bottle of Tears, and open the Gate of Paradise. A Believers dying day, is his ascension day to glory. Hence it

[58] 2 *Branch.*

[59] Τῶ δὲ θεοφιλοῦντι πάντα γίγνεσθαι τὰ ἄριστα δῆλον ἐστι. *Plato.*

[60] *Languor corporis salutem animae parturit.*

is, the Saints have put their afflictions in the Inventory of their riches, Heb 11:26. *Themistocles* being banished his own Country, grew afterwards in favour with the King of *Egypt,* whereupon he said, *Periissem, nisi periissem, I had perished, if I had not perished.* So may a Child of God say, If I had not been afflicted, I had been destroyed; if my health and estate had not been lost, my soul had been lost.

3.[61] See then what an encouragement here is to become Godly! *All things shall work for good:* Oh that this may tempt the world to fall in love with Religion. Can there be a greater Load-stone to piety? Can any thing more prevail with us to be good, than this, *All things shall work for our good*? Religion is the true Philosophers stone, that turns every thing into Gold: Take the sourest part of Religion, the *suffering part,* and there is comfort in it. God sweetens sufferings with joy, he candies our Wormwood with Sugar; oh how may this bribe us to Godliness! Job 22:21. *Acquaint thy self with God, and be at peace, so good shall come unto thee.* No man did ever come off a loser by his acquaintance with God; *thereby good shall come unto thee,* abundance of good, the sweet distillations of Grace, the *Hidden Manna,* yea, every thing shall work for good: Oh then get acquaintance with God, espouse his Interest.[62]

4. It shows us the miserable condition of wicked men: To them that are godly evil things work for good, to them that are evil, good things work for hurt; *illis qui oderunt deum, etiam bona cedunt in malum.*

1. *Temporal good things* work for hurt to the wicked. Riches and Prosperity[63]; they are not *munera,* but *in-*

[61] 3 *Branch.*

[62] 4 *Branch.*

[63] *In mundo splendor opum, gloriae majestas, amicitiarum presidia, verborum blanditiae voluptatum illecebrae ab amore dei homines abstrahunt.*

*sidiae,* as *Seneca* speaks. Worldly things are given to the wicked as *Michael* was given to *David,* for a snare, 1 Sam 18:21. The Vulture draws sickness from a perfume: so do the wicked from the sweet perfume of Prosperity: Their mercies are like poisoned bread given to Dogs: Their Tables are sumptuously spread, but there is a hook under the bait, Ps 69:22. *Let their Table become a snare:* All their enjoyments are like *Israel's* Quails, which were sauced with the wrath of God, Num 11:33.—*Foenus pecuniae, funus anima* —. Pride and Luxury are the *Twins* of Prosperity: Deut 32:15. *Thou art waxen fat; then, he forsook God*[64]. Riches are not only the *Spiders web,* unprofitable, but the *Cockatrice egg,* pernicious, Eccl 5:13. *Riches kept for the hurt of the Owner: Et transeunt, et vulnerant*[65]. The common mercies wicked men have, are not Loadstones to draw them nearer to God, but Millstones to sink them deeper in Hell, 1 Tim 6:9. Their delicious dainties are like *Haman's Banquet*; after all their Lordly fare, death will bring in the Reckoning, and they must pay the reckoning in Hell.

2. *Spiritual good things* work for hurt to the wicked; from the flower of heavenly blessings they suck poison.

1. The Ministers of God work for their hurt. The same wind that blows one Ship to the Haven, blows another Ship upon a Rock. The same breath in the Ministry, that blows a godly man to Heaven, blows a profane sinner to Hell. They who come with the *Word of Life* in their mouth, yet to many are *a savour of death,* Isa 6:10. *Make the heart of this*

[64] *Fulgentes voluptatis scintillulae praestigiis suis fascinant mentem, et πρὸς τὸ ἀκαλλὲς rapide impellunt.*

[65] *Ambrose.*

*people fat, and their ears heavy.* The Prophet was sent upon a sad Message, to preach their Funeral Sermon. Wicked men are worse for preaching, Amos 5:10. *They hate him that rebukes in the Gate.* Sinners grow more resolved in sin; let God say what he will, they will do what they list, Jer 44:16. *As for the word which thou hast spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee.* The word preached is not *healing*, but *hardening*. And how dreadful is this for men to be sunk to Hell with Sermons!

2. Prayer works for their hurt, Prov 8:15. *The Sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord.* A wicked man is in a great strait; if he prays not, he sins, if he prays, he sins, Ps 109:7. *Let his prayer become sin.* It were a sad Judgment if all the meat a man did eat should turn to ill-humors, and breed diseases in the body: So it is with a wicked man; that Prayer which should do him good, works for his hurt; he prays against sin, and sins against his prayer; his Duties are tainted with Atheism, fly-blown with Hypocrisy, God abhors them.

3. The Lord's Supper works for their hurt, 1 Cor 10:31. *Ye cannot eat of the Lord's Table, and the Table of Devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy?* Some of the *Jews* kept their Idol Feasts, yet would come to the Lord's Table; saith the Apostle, *Do you provoke the Lord to wrath?* Profane persons feast with their sins, yet will come to feast at the Lord's Table: This is to provoke God: To a sinner there is *death in the Cup,* he *eats and drinks his own damnation,* 1 Cor

11:29. Thus the Lord's Supper works for hurt to impenitent sinners. After *the Sop the Devil enters.*

4. Christ himself works for hurt to desperate sinners; he is λίθος προσκόμματος, *a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence,* 1 Pet 2:7. He is so accidentally and occasionally, through the pravity of men's hearts; instead of believing in him, they are offended at him. The Sun, though in its own nature is pure and pleasant, yet it is hurtful to sore eyes. Jesus Christ is as well for the *fall,* as the *rising* of many, Luke 2:34. Sinners stumble at a Saviour, and pluck Death from the Tree of Life. As Chemical Oils recover some Patients, but destroy others: So the Blood of Christ, though to some it is medicinable, to others it is damnable. Here is the unparalleled misery of such as live and die in sin, The best things work for their hurt; Cordials themselves kill.

5. See here the wisdom of God,[66] who can make the worst things imaginable turn to the good of the Saints; he can by a divine Chemistry extract Gold out of dross. ὦ βάθος — *O the depth of the wisdom of God*! Rom 11:33. It is God's great design to set forth the wonder of his wisdom. The Lord made *Joseph's* prison a step to preferment. There was no way for *Jonah* to be saved, but by being swallowed up. God suffered the *Egyptians* to hate *Israel,* Ps 106:41. And this was the means of their deliverance. St *Paul* was bound with a Chain, and that Chain which did bind him was a means to enlarge the Gospel, Phil 1:12. This wise Physician can of the Viper make a Treacle. God doth enrich by impoverishing,

[66] 5 *Branch.*

he causeth the augmentation of Grace by the diminution of an Estate: When the Creature goes further from us, it is that Christ may come nearer to us. God works strangely; he brings Order out of Confusion, Harmony out of Discord; he makes use many times of unjust men, to do that which is just: *He is wise in heart,* Job 10:4. He can reap his Glory out of men's fury[67], Ps 76:10. Either the wicked shall not do the hurt which they intend, or they shall do the good which they do not intend. God often helps when there is least hope, and saves his people in that way, which they think he will destroy: He made use of the High-Priests malice and *Judas* his Treason, to redeem the World. God hath sometimes much ado to please us; through indiscrete passion, we are apt to find fault with things that fall out; which is as if an illiterate man should censure Philosophy; or a blind man find fault with the work in a Landscape. Job 11:12. *Vain man would be wise.* Silly animals will be taxing Providence, and calling the wisdom of God to the Barr of *Reason.* God's ways are *past finding out,* Rom 11:33. They are rather to be admired, than fathomed. There is never a Providence of God, but hath either a *mercy,* or a *wonder* in it. How stupendous and infinite is that wisdom, that makes the most cross, perplex dispensations work for the good of his children!

6. How little cause have we then to be discontented at outward trials and emergencies?[68] What? Discontented at that which shall do us good? *All things shall work for good.* There are no sins God's people are more subject to than unbelief and impatience; they are ready, either to *faint* through unbelief, or *fret* through impatience. When men fly out against

[67] τὸ κλυδώνιον ἐιασε γενέσθαι καὶ βαπτισθῆναι τὸ σκάφος οὐκ ἐιασεν

[68] 6 *Branch.*

God by discontent and impatience, it is a sign they do not believe this Text. Discontent is an *ungrateful* sin, because we have more mercies than afflictions; and it is an *irrational* sin, because afflictions work for good. Discontent is a sin which puts us upon sin, Ps 37:8. *Fret not thy self to do evil.* He that frets will be ready to do evil: Fretting *Jonah,* was sinning *Jonah,* Chapter 4:9. The Devil blows the coals of passion and discontent, and then warms himself at the fire. Oh let us not nourish this angry Viper in our Breast. Let this Text breed patience, *All things shall work for good to them that love God.* Shall we be discontented at that which works for our good[69]? If a friend should throw a bag of money at another, and in throwing it, should break his head, he would not be troubled much, seeing by this means he hath got a bag of money. So the Lord may bruise us by afflictions, but it is to enrich us, these afflictions work for us *a weight of glory*; and shall we be discontented?

7. See here that Scripture fulfilled, Ps 73:1. *God is good to Israel.*[70] When one looks upon cross Providences, and sees the Lord covering his people with ashes, and *making them drunk with Wormwood,* Lam 3:15. He would be ready to call in question the Love of God, and to say that he hath dealt hardly with his people; Oh no, *yet God is good to Israel,* because he makes all things work for good. Is not he a good God, who turns all to good? He works out sin, and works in grace; is not this good? 1 Cor 11:32. *We are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.* The Hell of affliction is to save us from the Hell of damnation. Let us always justify

[69]μὴ ἀλγῶμεν ἐπὶ ταῖς θλίψεσιν, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐκ τῶν θλίψεων κέρδος λογιζόμενοι, πάντα δεξιῶς φέρωμεν τὰ συμπίπτοντα. *Chrysost.*

[70]7 *Branch.*

God; when our outward condition is never so bad, let us say, *yet God is good.*

8. See what cause the Saints have to be frequent in the work of thanksgiving![71] Christians are herein defective; though they are much in supplication, yet little in gratulation. The Apostle saith, ἐν παντὶ, *In every thing giving thanks,* 1 Thess 5:18. Why so? Because God makes every thing work for our good. We will thank the Physician though he gives us a bitter Pill which makes us sick, because it is to make us well; we will thank any man that doth us a good turn; and shall not we be thankful to God who makes every thing work for good to us? God loves a thankful Christian. *Job* thanked God when he took all away, Job 1:21. *The Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord*: Many will thank God when he gives, *Job* thanks him when he takes away, because he knew God would work good out of it. We read of Saints with Harps in their hands, Rev 14:2. An Emblem of praise. We shall meet many Christians who have tears in their eyes, and complaints in their mouths, but few with Harps in their hands, who in affliction praise God; to be thankful in affliction, is a work peculiar to a Saint. Every Bird can sing in Spring, but some Birds will sing in the dead of Winter. Every one almost can be thankful in prosperity, but a true Saint can be thankful in adversity. A good Christian will bless God, not only at the Sun-rising, but at the Sun-setting. Well may we in the worst that befalls us, have a *Psalm* of thankfulness, because all things work for good[72]. Oh be much in blessing of God: we will thank him that doth befriend us. —

[71] 8 *Branch.*

[72] τοῦτο φιλοσόφου ψυχῆς, ὑπὲρ ἁπάντων δοξάζειν, μὴ μόνον ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐυεργεσίων ἀλλὰ καὶ τιμωρίων. *Chrysost.* in Psal.

9. If the worst things work for good to a Believer, what shall the best things, Christ, and Heaven? How much more shall these work for good? If the Cross hath so much good in it,[73] what hath the Crown? If such precious Clusters grow in *Golgotha,* how delicious is that fruit which grows in *Canaan?* If there be any sweetness in the waters of *Marah,* what is there in the wine of Paradise? If God's Rod hath Honey at the end of it, what hath his golden Scepter? If the bread of affliction tastes so savoury, what is *Manna?* what is the Heavenly *Ambrosia?* If God's blow and stroke work for good, what shall the smiles of his face do? If *Grapes* may be gathered of *Thorns,* what fruit will the *Tree of Life* yield? If temptations and sufferings have matter of joy in them, what shall *Glory* have? If there be so much good out of evil, what then is that good, where there shall be no evil? If God's *chastening mercies* are so great, what will his *crowning mercies be? Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

10. If God makes all things to turn to our good,[74] how equal is it that we should make all things tend to his glory? 1 Cor 10:31. *Do all to the glory of God.* The Angels glorify God, they sing divine Anthems of praise; how then ought man to glorify him, for whom God hath done more, than for the Angels! He hath dignified us above them in uniting our nature with the God-head. Christ hath died for us, and not the Angels: The Lord hath given us, not only out of the common stock of his bounty, but he hath enriched us with Covenant-blessings, he hath bestowed upon us his Spirit; he studies our welfare, he makes every thing work for our good; Free-grace hath laid a plot for our Salvation. If God seeks our good, shall not we seek his glory?

[73] 9 *Branch.*
[74] 10 *Bran.*

*Quest.* How can we be said properly to glorify God, he is infinite in his perfections, and can receive no augmentation from us?

*Answ.* It is true, in a strict sense we cannot bring glory to God, but in an *Evangelical* sense we may. When we do what in us lies to lift up God's name in the world, and cause others to have high reverential thoughts of God, this the Lord interprets a glorifying of him; as a man is said to dishonour God, when he causeth the name of God to be evil spoken of.

*Quest.* How many ways are we said to advance God's glory? *Answ.* Three ways. 1. When we aim at his glory[75]; when we make him the first in our thoughts, and the last in our end. As all the Rivers run into the Sea, and all the Lines meet in the Center, so all our actions terminate and center in God. 2. We advance God's glory by being fruitful in grace, John 15:18. *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit.* Barrenness reflects dishonour upon God; then we glorify God, when we grow in fairness as the Lilly, in tallness as the Cedar, in fruitfulness as the Vine: The Spouses Breasts were like *Clusters of Grapes,* Song 7:7.— 3. We glorify God, when we give the praise and glory of all we do unto God. It was an excellent and humble Speech of the King of *Sweden,* He feared the peoples ascribing that glory to him, which was due to God, would remove him before the work was done. When the Silk-worm weaves her curious work, she hides her self under the Silk, and is not seen. When we have done our best, we must vanish in our own thoughts, and transfer the glory of all to God. 1 Cor 15:10. *I labour more abundantly than they all:* One would think this speech savoured of pride? But the Apostle pulls off the Crown from his own head, and sets

[75] ὁ πάντα ποιῶν διὰ τὸν θεὸν πάντως ἀπολαύσεται τῆς ἀμοιβῆς·

it upon the head of Free-grace, *Yet not I, but the Grace of God which was with me. Constantine* did use to write the name of Christ over his *Door,* so should we over our *Duties.*

Thus let us endeavour to make the name of God glorious and renowned. If God seek our good, let us seek his glory; if he makes all things tend to our edification, let us make all things tend to his exaltation. So much for the first part of the Text, *the Privilege.*

# Chapter VII

**Showing the Nature, Cause, Kinds, Properties, and Degree of love to God.**

2. I Proceed to the second general Branch of the Text, the *Persons* interested in this Privilege, and they are doubly qualified.

1. They are *Lovers* of God: *All things work together for good, τοῖς ἀγαπῶσι τὸν θεὸν, to them that love God.* Despisers and Haters of God, have no *lot* or *part* in this privilege, it is *children's bread,* it belongs only to them that *love God.* Because love is the very heart and spirit of Religion, I shall the more expatiate upon this; and for the further discussion of it, I shall clear these five things.

1. The Nature of love to God.
2. The Ground of love to God.
3. The Kinds of love to God.
4. The Properties of love to God.
5. The Degree of love to God.

## The Nature of Love

1. The *Nature* of divine love. Love is an expansion of soul, or the inflaming of the affections, whereby a Christian breaths after God as the supreme and sovereign good. St *Austin* in his second Tome, calls love *Pondus anima*: Love is to the soul as the weights to the Clock, it sets the soul a going towards God; it is the wing by which we fly to Heaven; by love we cleave to God, as the Needle to the Load-stone.

## The Ground of Love

2. The *Ground* of love to God, and that is, *knowledge. Ignoti nulla cupido* — We cannot love that which we do not know. That our love may be drawn forth to God, we must know these three things in him.

1. A *fulness,* Col 1:19. He hath a fulness of grace to cleanse us, and of glory to crown us, a fulness not only of *sufficiency,* but *redundancy*; he is a Sea of goodness without bottom and banks.

2. A *freeness.*— *Fluit acrius amne perenni* —God hath an innate propensness to dispense mercy and grace, he drops as the Honey-comb, Rev 22:17. *Whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely*: God doth not require we should bring money with us, only appetite.

3. A *Propriety.* We must know this fulness in God is ours, Ps 48:14. *This God is our God.* Here is the ground of love, *Deity* and *Propriety.*

## The Kinds of Love

3. The *Kinds* of love, which I shall branch into these three.

1. There is a love of *Appretiation,* when we set an high value upon God, as being the most sublime and infinite good; we so esteem of God, as if we have him we care not though we want all things else. The Stars vanish when the Sun appears: All creatures vanish in our thoughts when the Sun of righteousness shines in his full splendour, Song 1:13. *A bundle of Myrrh is my well-beloved unto me, and as a cluster of Camphire.*

2. A love of *Complacency* and delight: So *Aquinas* defines love to be *complacentia amantis in amato*: As a man takes delight in a friend whom he loves. The soul

that loves God rejoiceth in him, as in his treasure, and rests in him, as in his Center. The heart is so set upon God as it desires no more, John 14:8. *Show us the Father, and it sufficeth.*

3. A love of *Benevolence,* which is a wishing well to the Cause of God[76]. He that is endeared in affection to his friend, wisheth all happiness to him. This is to love God, when we are well-wishers, we desire that his Interest may prevail; our Vote and Prayer is, that his name may be had in honour; that his Gospel, which is *the Rod of his strength,* may like *Aarons Rod,* blossom, and bring forth Almonds.

## The Properties of Love

4. The *Properties* of love.

1. Our love to God must be *entire,* and that *ex part subjecti,* in regard of the *Subject,* it must be with the whole heart. Mark 12:30. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God ἐξ ὅλης καρδίας, with all thy heart.* In the Old Law, an High Priest was not to marry with a Widow, nor with an Harlot; not with a Widow, because he had not her first love, nor with an Harlot, because he had not all her love. God will have the whole heart. Hos 10:2. *Their heart is divided.* The true Mother would not have the child divided; nor God will not have the heart divided: God will not be an *Inmate,* to have only one Room in the heart, and all the other Rooms let out to sin. It must be an entire love.

2. It must be a *sincere* love, Eph 6:24. *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus ἐν ἀφθαρσία in sincerity.*

[76] Φιλεῖν ἐστι βούλεσθαι τινὶ ὁ ὄντα ἀγαθὰ, etc. *Aristot.*

Sincere, *quasi sine cera*; it alludes to Honey that is pure, and hath no Wax in it: Our love to God is sincere, when it is *pure,* and without self-respects: This the Schoolmen call, *Amor amicitiae, a love of friendship.* We must love Christ *propter Christum* (as *Austin* saith) for *himself*: as we love sweet Wine for its taste. God's Beauty and Love must be the two Load-stones to draw our love to him. *Alexander* had two friends, *Ephestion* and *Craterus; Ephestion* saith he, loves me because I am *Alexander: Craterus* loves me because I am *King Alexander*: The one loved his person, the other loved his benefits. Many love God because he gives them Corn and Wine, and not for his intrinsical excellencies. *Lycurgus* would have Virgins to be married without dowry, because their Husbands should marry them purely for love. We must love God more for what he is, than for what he bestows. True love is not mercenary: You need not hire a Mother to love her child: A soul deeply in love with God needs not be hired by rewards; he cannot but love him for that oriency of beauty that sparkles forth in him.

3. It must be a *fervent* love. The Hebrew word for *love* אהבא signifies ardency of affection. Saints must be Seraphims, burning in holy love. To love one coldly, is all one as not to love him. The Sun shines as hot as it can. Our love to God must be intense and vehement; like the *Coals of Juniper,* which are most acute and fervent, Ps 120:4. Our love to transitory things must be indifferent; we must love *quasi non, as if we loved not,* 1 Cor 7:30[77]. But our love to God must flame forth. The Spouse was

[77] *Non jubet Apostolus ut mundana haec abjiciamus, sed ne simus hisce fluxis rebus immersi; tunc enim non possidemus, sed ab illis possidemur.* Beza.

*amor perculsa, Sick of Love* to Christ, Song 2:5. We can never love God as he deserves: As God's punishing us is less than we deserve, Ezra 9:13. So our loving him is less than he deserves.

4. Love to God must be *active*; it is like fire, which is the most active element; it is called, *The Labour of Love,* 1 Thess 1:3. Love is no idle grace, it sets the head a studying for God, the feet a running in the ways of his Commandments: *The love of Christ constrains,* 2 Cor 5:13. Pretences of love are insufficient. True love is not only seen at the Tongues end, but at the Fingers end; 'tis *the labour of love.* Those living creatures, Ezek 1:8. Had wings, and hands under their wings: an Emblem of a good Christian; he hath not only the wings of faith to fly, but hands under his wings *he works by love,* he *spends and is spent for Christ.*

5. Love is *Liberal*; it hath Love-tokens to bestow, 1 Cor 13:4. *Charity, χρηστεύεται, is kind:* Love hath not only a smooth tongue, but a kind heart. *David's* heart was fired with love to God, and *he would not offer that to God which cost him nothing,* 2 Sam 24:24. Love is not only full of *Benevolence,* but *Beneficence*; Love which enlargeth the heart, never straitens the hand. He that loves Christ, will be liberal to his Members; he will be *eyes to the blind, feet to the lame*; the backs and bellies of the poor, shall be the furrows where he sows the golden Seeds of liberality. Some say they love God, but their love is lame of one hand, they give nothing to good uses. Indeed faith deals about invisibles, but God hates that love which is invisible: Love is like new Wine which will have vent; it vents it self in good works. The Apostle speaks it in honour of the *Corinthians,* that they gave to the poor

Saints, not only *to,* but *beyond* their power, 2 Cor 8:2. Love is bred at Court, it is a Noble Munificent grace.

6. Love to God is *peculiar:* He who is a Lover of God, gives him such a love, as he bestows upon none else. As God gives his children such a love as he doth not bestow upon the wicked, *electing, adopting* love; so a gracious heart gives to God such a special distinguishing love, as none else are sharers in. 2 Cor 11:2. *I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste Virgin to Christ.* A Wife espoused to an Husband, gives him such a love as she hath for none else; she doth not part with her conjugal love to any, but her husband: So a Saint espoused to Christ, gives him a peculiarity of love, a love incommunicable to any other, namely, a love joined with adoration. Not only the *love* is given to God, but the *soul,* Song 4:8. *A garden enclosed, is my Sister, my Spouse.* The heart of a Believer is Christ's Garden, the Flower growing in it, is love mixed with Divine Worship, and this Flower is for Christ alone to smell to; the Spouse keeps the Key of the Garden, that none may come there but Christ.

7. Love to God is *permanent*; it is like the fire the Vestal Virgins kept in *Rome,* it doth not go out; true love boils over, but doth not give over. Love to God, as it is sincere without hypocrisy, so it is constant without apostasy. Love is like the Pulse of the body, always beating; 'tis not a Land-flood, but a Spring. As wicked men are constant in love to their sins; neither shame, nor sickness, nor fear of Hell, will make them give over their sins: so nothing can hinder a Christians love to God: Nothing can conquer love, not any difficulties, or oppositions, Song 8:6. *Love is strong as the Grave.* The Grave

swallows up the strongest bodies; so Love swallows up the strongest difficulties, Song 8:7. *Many waters cannot quench love:* Neither the sweet waters of pleasure, nor the bitter waters of persecution: love to God abides firm to the death, Eph 3:17. *Being rooted and grounded in love.* Eight things, as Chaff and Feathers, are quickly blown away; but a tree that is rooted, abides the storm; he that is rooted in love endures: True love never ends but with the life.

## The Degrees of Love

5. The *Degrees* of love. We must love God above all other objects[78]. Ps 73:25. *There is nothing on earth I desire in comparison of thee.* God is the quintessence of all good things, he is superlatively good; now the soul seeing a super-eminency in God, and admiring in him that constellation of all excellencies, is carried out in love to him in the highest degree. *The measure of our love to God,* saith *Bernard, must be to love him without measure*[79]. God who is the chief of our happiness, must have the chief of our affections, Song 8:2. *I would cause thee to drink of my spiced Wine, of the juice of my Pomegranate.* If the Spouse hath any love better than other, a Cup more juicy and spiced, Christ shall drink, of that. The creature may have the Milk of our love, but God must have the Cream. Love to God must be above all other things, as the Oil swims above the Water.

1. We must love God more than *Relations:* As in case of *Abraham's* offering up *Isaac; Isaac* being the son of his old age, no question he loved him entirely, and doted

[78] *Minus Domine te amat, qui aliquid tecum amat.* Austin.
[79] *Modus diligendi Deum, est diligere Deum sine modo.* Bern.

on him; but when God saith, *Abraham offer up thy son*; though it were a thing might seem, not only to pose his *Reason,* but his *Faith,* for the *Messiah* was to come of *Isaac,* and if he be cut off, where shall the world have a Mediator? Yet such was the strength of *Abraham's* faith, and the ardency of his love to God, that he will take the sacrificing Knife, and let out *Isaac's* blood. Our blessed Saviour tells us of *hating* Father and Mother, Luke 14:26. Christ would not have us unnatural; but if our dearest Relations lie in our way, and would hinder us from Christ, either we must step over them, or tread upon them, Deut 33:9. Though some few drops of love may run beside to our Kindred and Alliance, yet the full torrent must run out after Christ; Relations may lie in the *bosom,* but Christ must lie in the *heart.*

2. We must love God more than *Estate.* Heb 10:34. *Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods.* They were glad they had any thing to lose for Christ. If the world be laid in one Scale, and Christ in the other, he must weigh heaviest. And is it thus? Hath God the highest room in our affections? *Plutarch* saith, When a Dictator was created in *Rome,* all other Authority was for the time suspended: So when the love of God bears sway in the heart, all other love is suspended, and is as nothing in comparison of this love.

# Chapter VIII

### Containing a sharp Corrective to those that do not love God.

*Use* 1. This may serve for a sharp Reprehension to such as have not a dram of love to God in their hearts:[80] And are there such Miscreants alive? He who loves not God, *aut lapis est, aut belluae,* he is a Beast with a man's head. Oh wretch, Dost thou live upon God every day, yet not love him? If one had a friend that fed him continually with money, and gave him all his allowance, were not he worse than a *Barbarian,* that did not respect and honour that friend? Such a friend is God, he gives thee thy breath, he bestows a livelihood upon thee, and wilt thou not love him? Thou wilt love thy Prince if he saves thy life, and wilt thou not love God who gives thee thy life? What Load-stone so powerful to draw love, as the blessed Deity? He is blind whom beauty doth not tempt; he is sottish, who is not drawn with the Cords of love. When the body is cold, and hath no heat in it, it is a sign of death: That man is dead, who hath no heat of love in his soul to God. How can he expect love from God, who shows no love to him? Will God ever lay such a Viper in his bosom, as spits forth the poison of malice and enmity against him?

This Reproof falls heavy upon the Atheists of this Age, who are so far from loving God, that they do all they can to spite him; *They declare their sin as Sodom,* Isa 3:9. *They set*

[80] *Use* 1. Reproof.

*their mouth against the Heavens*[81], in pride and blasphemy, and bid open defiance to God; These are Monsters in Nature, Devils in the shape of men: Let them read their doom, 1 Cor 16:22. *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha*[82]; that is, let him be accursed from God, till Christ's coming to Judgment[83]; let him be heir to a curse while he lives, and at the dreadful day of the Lord, let him hear that heart-rending sentence pronounced against him, *Go thou cursed.*

[81] Ps 73:9.

[82] *Idem significat vox* חרם *apud Hebraeos.*

[83] τὸ ἀνάθεμα παντελῶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἀποκόπτει. *Chrysost.* de Anathem.

# Chapter IX

### Discovering the Signs, or Fruits of love to God.

*Use* 2. Let us try our selves impartially,[84] whether we are in the number of those that love God. For the deciding of this, (our love will be best seen by the Fruits of it) I shall lay down fourteen Signs, or Fruits of love to God, and it concerns us nearly to search, whether any of these Fruits grow in our Garden.

1. The first Fruit of love is, *musing of the mind upon God.* He who is in love,[85] his thoughts are still upon the Object: He who loves God, is ravished and transported with the Contemplations of God, Ps 139:17. *When I awake, I am still with thee.* The thoughts are as travellers in the mind: *David's* thoughts kept Heaven-Road, *I am still with thee.* God is the Treasure, and where the Treasure is, there is the heart. By this we may try our love to God: What are our thoughts most upon? Can we say we are ravished with delight when we think on God? Have our thoughts got wings? Are they fled aloft? Do we contemplate Christ and Glory? Oh how far are they from being lovers of God, who scarce ever think of God? Ps 10:4. *God is not in all his thoughts.* A sinner crowds God out of his thoughts; he never thinks of God, unless with horror, as the Prisoner thinks of the Judge.

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[84] *Use* 2. Trial.

[85] 1. *Fruit* of love.

2. The Second Fruit of love is, *desire of Communion:*[86] Love desires familiarity and intercourse, Ps 84:2. *My heart and flesh crieth out for the living God.* King *David* being debarred the House of God, where was the Tabernacle, (the visible token of his presence) he now breaths after God, and in an holy *Pathos* of desire, cries out for the living God. Lovers would be parleying together. If we love God we prize his *Ordinances,* because there we meet with God: He speaks to us in his Word, and we speak to him in Prayer. By this let us examine our love to God. Do we desire intimacy of communion with God? Lovers cannot be long asunder. Such as love God, have an holy fondness, they know not how to be from him; they can want any thing but God's presence; they can want health and friends, they can want a full Table, but they cannot want God: Ps 143:7. *Hide not thy face from me, lest I be like them that go down into the Grave.* Lovers have their λειποθυμίαι, fainting fits: *David* was ready to faint away, and die, when he had not a sight of God. They who love God cannot be contented with having Ordinances, unless they may enjoy God in them; that were to lick the glass, and not the honey.

What shall we say to them who can be all their lives long without God? They think God may be best spared: They complain they want health and trading, but not that they want God. Wicked men are not acquainted with God; and how can they love who are not acquainted? Nay, which is worse, they do not desire to be acquainted with God, Job 21:14. *They say to God, depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.* Sinners shun acquaintance with God, they count his presence a burden; and are these Lovers of God? Doth that woman love her husband, who cannot endure to be in his presence?

[86] 2. *Fruit.*

3. The Third Fruit of love is *grief.* Where there is love to God,[87] there is a grieving for our sins of unkindness against him. A Child that loves his Father cannot choose but weep for offending him. The heart that burns in love, melts in tears: O that I should abuse the love of so dear a Saviour! Did not my Lord suffer enough upon the Cross, but must I make him suffer more? Shall I give him more *Gall and Vinegar* to drink? How dis-loyal and dis-ingenious have I been? How have I grieved his Spirit, trampled upon his Royal Commands, slighted his Blood? This opens a Vein of godly sorrow, and makes the heart bleed afresh. Matt 26:75. *Peter went out, and wept bitterly.* When *Peter* thought how dearly Christ loved him; he was taken up into the Mount of *Transfiguration,* Christ showed him the Glory of Heaven in a Vision; now that he should deny Christ after he had received such signal love from him, this broke his heart with grief, *he went out, and wept bitterly.*

By this let us try our love to God: Are our hearts spiritual Limbecks, dropping the water of godly tears? Do we grieve for our unkindness against God, our abuse of mercy, our non-improvement of Talents? How far are they from loving God, who sin daily, and their hearts never smite them! They have a Sea of sin, and not a drop of sorrow; they are so far from being troubled, that they make merry with their sins, Jer 11:15. *When thou dost evil, then thou rejoicest.* Oh wretch, did Christ bleed for sin, and dost thou laugh at it? These are far from loving God: Does he love his friend, that loves to do him an injury?

4. Another Fruit of love is *Magnanimity.*[88] Love is valorous, it turns cowardice into courage: Love will make one adven-

[87] 3. *Fruit.*
[88] 4. *Fruit.*

ture upon the greatest difficulties and hazards; *Amor nescit difficultates.* The fearful Hen will fly upon a Dog or Serpent, to defend her young ones. Love doth infuse μεγαλόψυχον θυμὸν, a spirit of Gallantry and Fortitude into a Christian. He that loves God will stand up in his Cause, and be an Advocate for him: Acts 4:20. *We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.* He who is afraid to own Christ, hath but little love to him. *Nicodemus* came sneaking to Christ *by night,* John 3:2. He was fearful of being seen with him in the day time. *Love casts out fear.* As the Sun expels Fogs and Vapours; so doth Divine Love in a great measure expel carnal Fear. Doth he love God, that can hear his blessed Truths spoken against, and be silent? He who loves his friend, will stand up for him, and vindicate him when he is reproached. Doth Christ appear for us in Heaven, and are we afraid to appear for him on Earth? Love animates a Christian; it fires his heart with zeal, and steels it with courage.

5. The fifth Fruit of love is, *sensibility.* If we love God,[89] our hearts ache for the dishonours done to God by wicked men: To see, not only the Banks of *Religion,* but *Civility,* broken down, and a Flood of wickedness coming in; to see God's Sabbaths profaned, his Oath violated, his Name dishonoured; if there be any love to God in us, we shall lay these things to heart. *Lot's* righteous soul was *vexed for the unclean conversation of the wicked,* 2 Pet 2:17. He took the sins of *Sodom,* and made Spears of them to pierce his own soul. How far are they from loving God, who are not at all affected with his dishonour? If they have but Peace and Trading, they lay nothing to heart. A man who is dead drunk, though another be bleeding to death by him, he never minds, or is sensible:

[89] 5. *Fruit.*

so, many being drunk with the wine of Prosperity, when the honour of God is wounded, and his Truths lie a bleeding, they are not sensible. Did men love God, they would grieve to see his Glory suffer, and Religion it self become a Martyr.

6. The sixth Fruit of love is, *Antipathy against sin.*[90] Fire purgeth the Dross from the Metal. The Fire of Love purgeth out sin. Hos 14:8. *Ephraim shall say, what have I to do any more with Idols?* He that loves God, will have nothing to do with sin, unless to give battle to it. Sin is *Dei-cidium,* it strikes not only at God's *Honour,* but his *Being.* Doth he love his Prince, that harbours him who is a Traitor to the Crown? Is he a friend to God, who loves that which God hates[91]? The love of God, and the love of sin, cannot dwell together: The Affections cannot be carried to two contraries at the same time. A man cannot love health, and love poison too: so, one cannot love God, and sin too. He who hath any secret sin in his heart allowed, is as far from loving God, as Heaven and Earth are distant one from the other.

7. Another Fruit of love is, *Crucifixion.*[92] He who is a Lover of God, is dead to the world, Gal 6:14. *I am crucified to the world*; I am dead to the honours and pleasures of it. He who is in love with God, is not much in love with any thing else[93]: His love to God moves as the Sun in the Firmament, swiftly; but his love to the world, is as the motion of the Sun upon the Dial, which is very slow. The love of God, and the violent love of the world, are inconsistent[94]. 1 John 2:15. *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* Love to God

[90] 6. *Fruit.*

[91] *Quomodo amas Deum, cum adhuc amas quod odit Deus?* Austin.

[92] 7. *Fruit.*

[93] *Cui Christus dulcescit, mundus amarescit.* Bern.

[94] *Fortis est ut mors amor; sicut mors violentèr separat animas a corpore, ita amor Dei violentèr segregat hominem a mundano amore.* Isidor.

swallows up all other love; as *Moses*'s Rod swallowed up the *Egyptian* Rods. If a man could live in the Sun, what a small Point would all the Earth be! So when a man's heart is raised above the world, in the admiring and loving God, how poor and slender are these things below! They seem as nothing in his eye. It was a sign the Primitive Christians did love God, their money did not lie near their heart, but they *laid down their money at the Apostles feet,* Acts 4:35.

Try by this your love to God. What shall we think of such as have never enough of the world? They have the dry Dropsy of Covetousness, thirsting insatiably after riches, Amos 2:7. *That pant after the dust of the earth.* Never talk of your love to Christ (saith *Ignatius*) ὅταν τὸν κόσμον προτιμᾶτε, when you prefer the world before the *Pearl of price*; and are there not many such who prize their gold above God? If they have a South-Land, they care not for the *water of life*; they will sell Christ and a good Conscience for money. Will God ever bestow Heaven upon them, who so basely undervalue him, preferring glittering dust, before the glorious Deity? What is here in the Earth that we should so set our hearts upon it? Only the Devil makes us look upon it through a Multiplying Glass. The world hath no real intrinsical worth; it is but Paint and Alchemy. The world hath two Breasts, the one Breast is dry, it is *vanity*; the other Breast runs blood, it is *vexation.*

8. The next Fruit of love is *fear.*[95] In the Godly love and fear do kiss each other. There is a double fear ariseth from love.

1. A fear of *displeasing.* The Spouse loves her husband, therefore will rather deny her self, than displease him. The more we love God, the more fearful we are

[95] 8. *Fruit.*

of grieving his Spirit, Gen 39:9. *How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?* When *Eudoxia* the Empress threatened to banish *Chrysostom, Tell her* (saith he) *I fear nothing but sin.* That is a blessed love which puts a Christian into an hot fit of *zeal,* and a cold fit of *fear,* making him shake and tremble, and not dare willingly to offend God.

2. A fear *mixed with jealousy,* 1 Sam 4:13. *Elis heart trembled for the Ark.* It is not said, his heart trembled for *Hophni* and *Phinehas,* his two sons, but his heart trembled for the *Ark,* because if the *Ark* were taken, then *the glory was departed.* He that loves God is full of fear lest it should go ill with the Church; he fears lest profaneness (which is the plague of Leprosy) should increase, lest Popery get footing, lest God should go from a People. The presence of God in his Ordinances, is the beauty and strength of a Nation. The *Trojans* had the Image of *Pallas,* and they had an opinion that as long as that Image was preserved among them, they should never be conquered. So long as God's presence is with a people, so long they are safe; but the soul inflamed in love to God, fears lest the visible tokens of God's presence should be removed.

By this Touch-stone let us try our love to God. Many fear lest peace and Trading go, but not lest God and his Gospel go; are these Lovers of God? He who loves God is more afraid of the loss of spiritual blessings than temporal. If the *Sun of Righteousness* remove out of our Horizon, what can follow but darkness? What comfort can an Organ, or Anthem give, if the Gospel be gone? Is it not like the sound of a Trumpet, or a Volley of shot at a Funeral?

9. If we are lovers of God, *we love that which God loves.*[96]

1. We love God's Word. *David* esteemed the Word, for the *sweetness* of it, above honey, Ps 119:103. And for the *value* of it, above gold, Ps 119:72. The Lines of Scripture are richer than the Mines of Gold. Well may we love the Word; it is the Load-Star that directs us to Heaven, it is the Field in which the *Pearl* is hid. That man who loves not the Word, but thinks it too strict, and could wish any part of the Bible torn out (as that Adulterer did the seventh Commandment) he hath not the least spark of love in his heart.

2. We love God's day; we do not only keep a Sabbath, but love a Sabbath. Isa 58:13. *If thou call the Sabbath a delight.* The Sabbath is that which keeps up the face of Religion amongst us; this day must be consecrated as glorious to the Lord. The house of God is βασιλικὴ, the Palace of the Great King; on the Sabbath God shows himself there, through the Lattice. If we love God, we prize his day above all other days. All the week would be dark, if it were not for this day; on this day Manna falls double; now, if ever, Heaven-gate stands open, and God comes down in a golden shower: This blessed day the Sun of Righteousness riseth upon the soul. How doth a gracious heart prize that day, which was made on purpose to enjoy God in?

3. We love God's Laws. A gracious soul is glad of the Law, because it checks his sinful exorbitances. The heart would be ready to run wild in sin, if it had not some blessed restraints put upon it by the Law of God. He that loves God, loves his Law, the Law of repentance, the Law

[96] 9. *Fruit.*

of self-denial. Many say they love God, but they hate his Laws, Ps 2:3. *Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.* God's precepts are compared to *cords,* they bind men to their good behaviour; but the wicked think these *cords* too strait, therefore they say, *let us break them.* They pretend to love Christ as a *Saviour,* but hate him as a *Prince.* Christ tells us of his *yoke,* Matt 11:29. Sinners would have Christ put a Crown upon their head, but not a yoke upon their neck. He were a strange King should rule without Laws.

4. We love God's picture, we love his Image shining in the Saints, 1 John 5:1. *He that loves him that begat, loves him also that is begotten of him.* 'tis possible to love a Saint, yet not love him *as* a Saint; we may love him for something else, for his ingenuity, because he is affable and bountiful. A beast loves a man, but not *quatenus homo, as* he is a man, but because he feeds him, and gives him provender. But to love a Saint *as he is a Saint,* this is a sign of love to God. If we love a Saint for his Saint-ship, as having something of God in him, then we love him in these four Cases.

1. We love a Saint though he be poor. A man that loves gold, loves a piece of gold though it be in a rag: So though a Saint be in rags, we love him, because there is *aliquid Christi,* something of Christ in him.

2. We love a Saint though he hath many personal failings. There is no perfection here; in some, rash anger prevails; in some, inconstancy; in some, too much love of the world. A Saint in this life is like gold in the ore, much dross of infirmity cleaves to him, yet we love him for the grace that is in him.

A Saint is like a fair face with a scar: We love the beautiful face of holiness, though there be a scar in it. The best Emerald hath its blemishes, the brightest Stars their twinklings, and the best of the Saints have their failings. Thou that canst not love another because of his infirmities, how wouldst thou have God love thee? Hast not thou good store?

3. We love the Saints though in some lesser things they differ from us. Perhaps another Christian hath not so much light as thou, and that may make him err in some things; wilt thou presently un-Saint him, because he cannot come up to thy light?[97] Where there is union in *Fundamentals,* there ought to be union in *Affections.*

4. We love the Saints though they are persecuted. We love precious Metal though it be in the furnace. St *Paul* did bear in his body the *marks* of the Lord Jesus, Gal 6:17. Those marks were like the *Soldiers scar,* honourable. We must love a Saint as well in Chains, as in Scarlet. *Constantine* did kiss the hole of *Paphnusius* his eye, because he suffered the loss of his eye for Christ. If we love Christ, we love his persecuted Members.

If this be to love God, when we love his Image sparkling in the Saints, Oh then, how few Lovers of God are to be found! Do they love God, who hate them that are like God? Do they love Christ's person, who are filled with a spirit of revenge against his people? How can that wife be said to love her husband, that tears his picture? Surely

[97] ☜

*Judas* and *Julian* are not yet dead, their spirit lives in the world. Who are guilty but the innocent? What greater crime than holiness, if the Devil may be one of the grand Jury? Wicked men seem to bear great reverence to the Saints departed; they canonize dead Saints, but persecute living. In vain do men stand up at the Creed, and tell the world, *They believe in God,* when they abominate one of the Articles of the Creed, namely, *The Communion of Saints.* Surely, there is not a greater sign of a man ripe for Hell, than this, not only to *want* grace, but to *hate* it.

10. Another blessed sign of love, is, *to entertain good thoughts of God.* He that loves his friend construes what his friend doth in the best sense. 1 Cor 13:5. *Love thinketh no evil.* Malice interprets all in the *worst sense*; Love interprets all in the *best sense*; it is an excellent Commentator upon Providence; *It thinks no evil.* He that loves God, hath a good opinion of God; though he afflicts sharply, yet the soul takes all well. This is the Language of a gracious spirit: My God sees what an hard heart I have, therefore drives in one Wedge of affliction after another, to break my heart; he knows how full I am of bad humors, how sick of a Pleurisy, therefore lets me blood to save my life; this severe dispensation is either to mortify some corruption, or to exercise some grace: How good is God that will not let me alone in my sins, but smites my body, to save my soul! Thus he that loves God, takes every thing in good part. Love puts a candid gloss upon all God's actions. Thou who art apt to murmur at God, as if he had dealt ill with thee, be humbled for this; say thus with thy self, if I loved God more, I should have better thoughts of God. 'Tis Satan that makes us have good thoughts of our selves,

and hard thoughts of God. Love takes all in the fairest sense, *it thinketh no evil.*

11. The eleventh Fruit of love is *Obedience,* John 14:21. *He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them,*[98] *he it is that loveth me.—Pater adsum, impera quid vis*—[99]. 'Tis a vain thing to say we love Christ's person, if we slight his Commands. Doth that Child love his Father, who refuseth to obey him[100]? If we love God, we will obey him in those things which cross flesh and blood:

1. In things difficult.
2. In things dangerous.

1. In *things difficult.* As 1. In mortifying sin. There are some sins which are not only near to us as the garment, but dear to us as the eye; if we love God, we will set our selves against these, both in purpose and practise. 2. In forgiving our enemies. God commands us upon pain of death to forgive, Eph 4:32. *Forgiving one another*[101]. This is hard, 'tis crossing the stream; we are apt to forget kindnesses, and remember injuries; but if we love God, we will pass by offences. When we seriously consider how many Talents God hath forgiven us, how many affronts and indignations he hath put up at our hands, this makes us write after his Copy, and endeavour rather to bury an injury, than retaliate it.

2. In *things dangerous.* When God calls us to suffer for him, we will obey. Love made Christ suffer for us; love was the Chain that fastened him to the Cross: So if we love God, we shall be willing to suffer for him. Love hath

[98] 11 *Fruit.*

[99] *Plaut.*

[100] *Amore Deum. & obedire, duae sunt alae, quibus evoles ad coelos, transveharis ad sanctos, inseraris inter Angelos.* Austin. de vis. infi.

[101] πρὸς τὸν ἐχθρὸν μηδέποτε ἀπεχθῶς ἔχε.

a strange quality, it is the least suffering grace, and yet it is the most suffering grace: It is the least suffering grace in one sense; it will not suffer known sin to lie in the soul unrepented of, it will not suffer abuses and dishonours done to God, thus it is the least suffering grace; yet it is the most suffering grace, it will suffer reproaches, bonds, imprisonments, for Christ's sake, Acts 21:13. *I am ready not only to be bound, but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus.* 'tis true, every Christian is not a Martyr, but he hath a spirit of Martyrdom in him, he saith as *Paul ἑτοίμως ἔχω I am ready to be bound,* he hath a disposition of mind to suffer, if God call. Love will carry men out above their own strength. *Tertullian* observes how much the Heathen suffered for love to their Country. —*Vicit amor Patriae*—If the Spring-head of Nature riseth so high, surely Grace will rise higher. If love to their Country will make men suffer, much more should love to Christ. 1 Cor 13:7. *Love endureth all things. Basil* speaks of a Virgin condemned to the fire, who having her life and estate offered her, if she would fall down to the Idol, answered, *Let life and money go, welcome Christ*[102]. It was a noble and zealous speech of *Ignatius, Let me* (saith he) *be ground with the teeth of wild beasts, if I may be God's pure Wheat*[103]. How did divine affection carry the Primitive Saints above the love of life, and the fear of death? St *Steven* was stoned, St *Luke* hanged on an Olive Tree, St *Peter* crucified at *Jerusalem* with his head downward[104]. These divine *Hero's* were willing to suffer,

[102] *Valeat vita, pereat pecunia.*

[103] δι' ὀδόντων θηρίων ἀλήθομαι ἵνα καθαρὸς ἄρτος θεοῦ εὑρεθῶ. Ignat.

[104] *Euseb.*

rather than by their cowardice to make the name of God suffer. How did St *Paul* rattle his Chain that he wore for Christ[105]? He did glory in it, ὡς γύνη φιλόκοσμος as a woman that is proud of her Jewels, saith *Chrysostom.* And holy *Ignatius* did wear his Fetters as a Bracelet of Diamonds. Heb 11:35. *Not accepting deliverance.* They refused to come out of Prison on sinful terms, they preferred their innocency before their liberty.

By this let us try our love to God, have we a spirit of Martyrdom? Many say they love God, but how doth it appear? They will not forgo the least comfort, or undergo the least cross for his sake. If Jesus Christ should have said to us, I love you well, you are dear to me, but I cannot suffer, I cannot lay down my life for you, we should have questioned his love very much; and may not Christ suspect us, when we pretend love to him, yet will endure nothing for him? They who bear true affection to God, will according to their vow in Baptism, fight under his Banner to the death, and make Christ's Crown flourish in their ashes.

12. He who loves God, *will endeavour to make him appear glorious in the eyes of others.*[106] Such as are in love will be commending, and setting forth the amiableness of those persons whom they love. The Love-sick Spouse describes Christ in all his beauty, Song 5:11.13. *His head is as the most fine Gold, his cheeks are as a bed of Spices.* If we love God, we will spread abroad his excellencies, that so we may raise his fame and esteem, and may tempt others to fall in love with him. Love cannot be silent, we shall be as so many Trumpets, sounding forth the freeness of God's Grace, the Transcendency of his

[105] Acts 28:20.
[106] 12 *Fruit.*

Love, the Glory of his Kingdom. Love is like fire; where it burns in the heart, it will break forth at the lips, it will be elegant and pathetical in setting forth God's praise: Love must have vent.

13. The Thirteenth Fruit of love is,[107] *To long for Christ's appearing.* 2 Tim 4:8. *Henceforth there is a Crown of Righteousness laid up for me, and not for me only, but for them which love Christ's appearing.* Love desires union, *Aristotle* gives the reason, because joy flows from union. When our union with Christ is perfect in glory, then our joy will be full. He that loves Christ, loves his appearing. Christ's appearing will be an happy appearing to the Saints. His appearing *now,* is very comfortable, when he appears for us as an Advocate, Heb 9:24. But the other appearing will be infinitely more, when he shall appear for us as our Husband; he will at that day bestow two Jewels upon us. 1. His love; a love so great and astonishing, that it is better felt than expressed. 2. His likeness, 1 John 3:2. *When he shall appear, we shall be like him.* And from both these, *Love* and *Likeness,* infinite joy will flow into the soul. No wonder then he who loves Christ, longs for his appearance. Doth not the Bride long for the Marriage-day? *The Spirit and the Bride say come, even so come Lord Jesus,* Rev 22:17. By this let us try our Love to Christ. A wicked man who is αὐτοκατάκριτος self-condemned, is afraid of Christ's appearing, he wisheth he would never appear; but such as love Christ, are joyful to think of his coming in the Clouds; they shall then be delivered from all their sins and fears, they shall be acquitted before men and Angels, and shall be for ever translated into the Paradise of God.

[107] 13 *Fruit.*

14. *Love will make us stoop to the meanest offices.*[108] Love is an humble grace, it doth not walk abroad in state, it will creep upon its hands, it will stoop and submit to any thing whereby it may be serviceable to Christ. As we see in *Joseph of Arimathea,* and *Nicodemus,* both of them Honourable Persons, yet one takes down Christ's body with his own hands, and the other embalms it with sweet odours; it might seem much for persons of their rank to be employed in that service, but love made them do it. If we love God we shall not think any work too mean for us, wherein we may be helpful to Christ's Members. Love is not squeamish, it will visit the sick, relieve the poor, wash the Saints wounds. The Mother that loves her child, is not coy and nice, she will do those things about her child, which others would scorn to do. He who loves God will humble himself to the meanest office of love to Christ and his Members. These are the fruits of love to God. Happy are they, who can find these Out-Landish Fruits growing in their souls.

[108] 14 *Fruit.*

# Chapter X

**An Exhortation to love God.**

*Use* 3. The third Use is of Exhortation,[109] and it hath three Branches. 1. Let me earnestly persuade all, who bare the name of Christians, to become Lovers of God, Ps 31:23.[110] *O love the Lord all ye his Saints.* There are but few that love God: Many give him an hypocritical kiss, but few love him. 'Tis not so easy to love God as most imagine. The *Affection* of love is natural, but the *Grace* is not. Men are by nature θεοστυγεῖς *God-haters,* Rom 1:30. The wicked would fly from God; they would neither be under his rules, nor within his reach; they *fear* God, but do not love him. All the strength in men or Angels, cannot make the heart love God: Ordinances will not do it of themselves, nor Judgements; it is only the Almighty and Invincible power of the Spirit of God can infuse love into the soul; this being so hard a work, it calls upon us for the more earnest prayer and endeavour after this Angelical grace of love[111]. To excite and inflame our desires after it, I shall prescribe twenty Motives.

## Motives to Love God

1. Without this all our Religion is vain. 'Tis not duty, but love to duty, God looks at; 'tis not how much we do,[112] but how

[109] *Use* 1. Exhortation.

[110] 1. *Branch*

[111] *Impium est Deum non diligere, cui vicem rependere non possumus, etiamsi diligamus.* Austin

[112] 1. *Motiv.*

much we love. If a servant doth not his work willingly, and out of love, it is not accepted. Duties not mingled with love, are as burdensome to God, as they are to us. *David* therefore counsels his son *Solomon* to serve God with a willing mind, 1 Chr 28:9. To do duty, without love, is not *sacrifice,* but *penance.*

2. Love is the most noble and excellent grace, it is a pure flame kindled from Heaven, by it we resemble God who is *love.* Believing and obeying do not make us like God, but by love we grow like him, 1 John 4:16. Love is a grace doth most delight in God, and is most delightful to him. That Disciple which was most full of love, lay in Christ's bosom. Love puts a verdure and lustre upon all the Graces: the Graces seem to be eclipsed, unless love shine and sparkle in them: Faith is not true, unless *it work by love*; the waters of repentance are not pure, unless they flow from the Spring of love. Love is the *savoury meat* God loves, it is the Incense makes all our Services fragrant and odoriferous; it is *Vinum aromaticum, the Spiced Wine, and the juice of the Pomegranate.*

3. Is any thing unreasonable that God requires? 'Tis but our love; if he should ask our estate, or the fruit of our bodies, could we deny him? But he asks only our love; he would only pick this flower; is this an hard request? Was there ever any debt so easily paid as this? We do not at all impoverish our selves by paying it. Love is no burden. Is it any labour for the Bride to love her Husband? Love is delightful; *Non potest amor esse, et dulcis non esse*[113].

4. God is the most adaequate and complete object of our love: all the excellencies that lie scattered in the creatures, are twisted together, and united in him; he is a Magazine of blessings; he is Wisdom, Beauty, Love, yea the quintessence

[113] *Bern.*

of Goodness; he is *Optimus Maximus*; there is nothing in God can cause a nauseating or loathing; the Creature doth sooner surfeit than satisfy; but there are fresh beauties sparkling forth in God; the more we enjoy of him, the more we are ravished with delight.

There is nothing in God to dull our affections, or quench our love, no infirmity, no deformity, which do usually weaken and cool love. There is that delicious sweetness in God, as may not only *entice,* but *command* our love. If there were more Angels in Heaven than there are, and all those glorious Seraphims had an immense flame of love burning in their breasts to eternity, yet could they not love God equivalently to that infinite perfection and transcendency of goodness which is in him. Surely then here is enough to tempt us to fall in love with God; we cannot spend our love upon a better object.

5. Love doth facilitate Religion, it oils the Wheels of the affections, and makes them more lively and cheerful in God's service; love takes off the tediousness in duty. *Jacob* thought seven years but little, for the love he did bear to *Rachel.* Love makes duty a pleasure. Why are the Angels so swift and winged in God's service? It is because they love him. Love is never weary. He that loves Gold is never weary of telling it; and he that loves God, is never weary of serving him.

6. God desires our love. It were much for a King to desire the love of a woman that is deformed and leprous. We have lost our beauty, and stained our blood, yet the King of Heaven is a Suitor to us. What is there in our love that God should come a wooing for it? What is God the better for our love? He doth not want it, he is infinitely blessed in himself; if we deny him our love, he hath more sublime creatures who pay

the cheerful tribute of love to him. God doth not need our love, yet he seeks it.

7. God hath deserved our love; how hath he loved us! Our affections should be kindled at the fire of God's love. What a miracle of love is it, that God should love us, when there was nothing in us lovely! Ezek 16:6. *When thou wast in thy blood, I said unto thee, live.* The time of our loathing, was the time of God's loving. We had something in us to provoke fury, but nothing to entice love. What an Hyperbole of love was it to give Christ to us[114]? That Christ should die for sinners, God hath set all the Angels in Heaven a wondering at this love. St *Austin* saith, *The Cross was a Pulpit, and the lesson Christ preached in it, was love.* O the living love of a dying Saviour! *per vulnera viscera*— Me-thinks I see Christ upon the Cross bleeding all over, me-thinks I hear him say to us, reach hither your hands, put them into my sides, feel my bleeding heart, see if I love you not? And will you not bestow your love upon me? Will you love the world more than me? Did the world appease the wrath of God for you? Have not I done all this? And will you not love me? 'Tis natural to love where we are loved. Christ having set us a Copy of love, and written it in his Blood, let us labour to write after so fair a Copy, and imitate him in love.

8. Love to God is the best self-love. 'Tis self-love to get the soul saved; by loving God we forward our own salvation: 1 John 4:16. *He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.* And he is sure to dwell with God in Heaven, that hath God dwelling in his heart. So that to love God is the truest self-love; he that doth not love God, doth not love himself.

9. Love to God evidenceth sincerity, Song 1:4. *The upright love thee.* Many a child of God fears he is an Hypocrite; dost

[114] *Si amor augeatur in fonte, necesse est & in fluxu.* Gulielm. Parisiens.

thou love God? When *Peter* was dejected in the sense of his sin, he thought himself unworthy that ever Christ should take notice of him, or employ him more in the work of his Apostleship; see how Christ goes about to comfort him, Job 21:15. *Peter, lovest thou me?* As if Christ had said, Though thou hast denied me through fear, yet if thou canst say from thy heart thou lovest me, thou art sincere and upright. To love God is a better sign of sincerity, than to fear him. The *Israelites* feared God's Justice, Ps 78:34. *When he slew them, they sought him, and enquired earnestly after God.* But what came all this to? vv. 36, 37. *Nevertheless, they did but flatter him with their mouth, and lied to him with their tongue; for their heart was not right with him.* That repentance is no better than flattery, which ariseth only from fear of God's Judgements, and hath no love mixed with it. Loving of God evidenceth that God hath the *heart*; and if the heart be his, that will command all the rest.

10. By our love to God, we may conclude God's love to us. 1 John 4:9. *We love him, because he first loved us.* O saith the soul, if I knew God loved me, I could rejoice; dost thou love God? Then thou mayst be sure of God's love to thee. As it is with Burning Glasses; if the Glass burn, it is because the Sun hath first shined upon it, else it could not burn: So if our hearts burn in love to God, it is because God's love hath first shined upon us, else we could not burn in love. Our love is nothing but the reflex of God's love.

11. If you do not love God, you will love something else, either the *world* or *sin*; and are these worthy of your love? Is it not better to love God than these?

First, It is better to love God than the World, as appears in these eight particulars.

1. If you set your love on worldly things, they will not satisfy: You may as well satisfy your body with air, as your soul with earth, Eccl 5:10. Job 20:22. *In the fulness of his sufficiency, he shall be in straits.* Plenty hath its penury. If the Globe of the world were yours, it would not fill. *Adam* had two sons, *Cain* and *Abel: Cain* signifies possession, *Abel* signifies vanity; to show us that in all our possessions there is vanity; and will you set your love on that which will never give you content? Is it not better to love God? He will give you that which shall satisfy, Ps 17. *ult. When I awake, I shall be satisfied with thy likeness.* When I awake out of the sleep of death, and shall have some of the rays and beams of God's glory put upon me, I shall then be satisfied with his likeness.

2. If you love worldly things, they cannot remove trouble of mind; if there be a thorn gotten into the conscience, all the world cannot pluck it out. King *Saul* being perplexed in mind, all his Crown-Jewels could not comfort him, 1 Sam 28:15. — But if you love God, he can give you peace when nothing else can[115]; he can turn the *shadow of death into the morning,* Amos 5:8. He can drop in Christ's blood, which is a cooling Julep; he can whisper his Love by the Spirit, and with one smile scatter all your fears and disquiets.

3. If you love the world, you may love that which may hinder you from Heaven. Worldly contentments may be compared to the Wagons in an Army; while the Soldiers have been victualling themselves at the Wagons, they have lost the Battle, Mark 10:23. *How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God?* Prosperity to many, is like the sail to the Boat, which quickly

[115] χρῆμα γὰρ ἁπάντων τιμαλφέστατον ἡ ἀταραξία. *Cyril.*

overturns it: So that by loving the world, you may love that which will endanger you[116], but if you love God, there is no fear of losing Heaven; he will be a Rock to hide you, but not to hurt you: By loving him we come to enjoy him.

4. You may love worldly things, and they cannot love you again. You love Gold and Silver, but your Gold cannot love you again; you love a picture, but the picture cannot love you again; you give away your love to the Creature, and receive no love back; but if you love God, he will love you again, John 14:23. *If any man love me, my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* God will not be behind-hand in love with us; for our drop we shall receive an ocean.

5. When you love the world, you love that which is worse than your selves. The soul (as *Damascen* saith) is a sparkle of Celestial brightness, it carries in it an Idea and resemblance of God; while you love the World, you love that which is infinitely below the worth of your souls. Will any one lay out cost upon sackcloth? When thou layest out thy love upon the world, thou layest out gold upon dung, thou hangest a Pearl upon a Swine, thou lovest that which is inferior to thy self. As Christ speaks in another sense of the Fowls of the air, Matt 6:26. *Are not ye much better than they?* So I say of worldly things, *Are not ye much better than they?* You love a fair house, a beautiful picture; are not you much better than they? But if you love God, now you place your love on the most noble sublime object, you love that which is better than your selves: God is better than the Soul, better than Angels, better than Heaven:

[116] *In hoc mundo viscosa omnia, & obsessa laqueis.*

6. You may love the world, and have hatred for your love, John 15:19. *Because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* Would it not vex one to lay out money upon a piece of ground, and instead of bringing forth Corn or Grapes, it should yield nothing but Nettles? Thus it is with all sublunary things; we love them, and they prove Nettles to sting. The world is a Step-mother, instead of giving the breast it draws out the sword; we meet with nothing, but either disappointment or discourtesy, Judge 9:15. *Let fire come out of the Bramble, and devour the Cedars of Lebanon.* While we love the Creature, fire comes out of this Bramble to devour us: But if we love God, he will not return hatred for love, Prov 8:17. *I love them that love me.* God may chastise, but he cannot hate. Every Believer is part of Christ, and God can as well hate Christ as hate a Believer.

7. You may over-love the Creature. You may love Wine too much, Silver too much, but you cannot love God too much. If it were possible to exceed, excess here were a virtue; but it is our sin we cannot love God enough, Ezek 16:30. *How weak is thy heart?* So it may be said, How weak is our love to God? 'Tis like water of the last drawing from the Still, which hath less Spirit in it. If we could love God far more than we do, yet it were not proportionable to his worth: So that there is no danger of excess in our love to God.

8. You may love worldly things, and they die and leave you. *Riches take wings,* Relations drop away[117]. The *Romans* painted the vanity of worldly things in the form and shape of a man; in his right hand a *Rose,* in his left hand a *Lilly,* under his feet *Wormwood:* An Emblem

[117] οὐδὲν φαινόμενον αἰώνιον. *Ignat.*

of the world: The Rose is sweet, the Lilly fair, but both fading; and under the feet *Wormwood*; at death all the delights of the world will be bitter. There is nothing here abiding[118]; the Creature hath a little honey in its mouth, but it hath wings, it will soon fly away; —*Vitae primordium, mortis prodromum*—But if you love God, he is *a portion for ever,* Ps 73:26. As he is called a *Sun* for comfort, so a *Rock* for eternity, he abides for ever. Thus we see it is better to love God than the world.

Secondly, It is better to love God than sin. What is there in sin that any should love it[119]? 1. Sin is a debt. *Forgive us our debts.* It is a debt which binds over to the wrath of God; why should we love sin? Doth any man love to be in debt? 2. Sin is a disease, Isa 1:5. *The whole head is sick.* And wilt thou love sin? Will any man hug a disease? Will he love his plague-sores? 3. Sin is a pollution. The Apostle calls it ρυπαρία, *filthiness,* Jas 1:21. It is compared to Leprosy, to poison of Asps, to Vomit. God's heart riseth against sinners, Isa 11:8. *My soul loathed them.* Sin is a misshapen Monster; lust makes a man brutish, malice makes him devilish. What is in sin to be loved? Shall we love deformity? 4. Sin is an enemy. It is compared to a *Serpent,* Prov 23:32. It hath four stings, *Shame, Guilt, Horror, Death.* Will a man love that which seeks his death? Surely then 'tis better to love God than sin[120]. God will save thee, sin will damn thee; is not he bewitched who loves damnation?

12. The relation we stand in to God calls for love. There is near affinity, Isa 54:5. *Thy Maker is thy Husband:* And shall

[118] *Fuit tempus & avidissimos sui deserit, nec quod futurum est, meum est, nec quod fuit; in puncto fugientis temporis pendeo, etc.* Senec. Epist 72.

[119] ὅπου ἁμαρτία, ἐκεῖ χειμῶν

[120] δι' ἁμαρτίας αἱ κακώσεις. *Olympiad.*

not a Wife love her Husband? He is full of tenderness; his Spouse is to him as the Apple of his Eye, he rejoiceth over her as the Bridegroom over the Bride, Isa 62:5. He loves the Believer as he loves Christ, *John* 17. *ult.* the same love for *quality,* though not *equality.* If God be an Husband, shall we not love him? Affinity requires affection. Either we must love God, or we give ground of suspicion that we are not yet married to him.

13. Love is the most abiding grace. This will stay with us when other graces take their farewell. In Heaven we shall need no Repentance, because we shall have no sin; in Heaven we shall not need Patience, because there will be no affliction; in Heaven there shall need no Faith: Faith looks at things *unseen,* Heb 11:1. But then we shall see God *face to face*; and where there is *vision,* there needs no Faith.

But when the other Graces are out of date, love continues; and in this sense the Apostle saith, *Love is greater than Faith,* because it abides longest, 1 Cor 13:8 οὐδέποτε ἐκπίπτει, *Charity never faileth.* Faith is the *Jacob's* Staff we walk with in this life, 2 Cor 7:5. *We walk by Faith*; but we shall set this *Jacob's* Staff at Heavens door, and only love shall enter. Thus love carries away the Crown from all the other graces. Love is the most long-lived grace, it is a blossom of Eternity. How should we strive to excel in this grace, which alone shall live with us in Heaven, and shall accompany us to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb?

14. Love to God will never let sin thrive in the heart. Some Plants will not thrive when they are near together, as the Laurel and Vine: The love of God withers sin: Though the *Old man* live, yet as a *sick man,* it is weak, and draws its breath short. Love, like the *water of Jealousy,* makes the thigh of sin to rot. The Flower of love kills the Weed of sin; though sin

doth not die perfectly, yet it dies daily. How should we labour for that grace, which is the only *aqua-fortis* to destroy sin.

15. Love to God is an excellent means for growth of grace. 2 Pet 3. *ult. But grow in grace.* Growth of grace is very pleasing to God. Christ *accepts* the truth of grace, but *commends* the degrees of grace; and what can more promote and augment grace, than love to God? Love is like watering of the Root, which makes the Tree grow: Therefore the Apostle useth this expression in his prayer, 1 Thess 3:5. *The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God.* He knew this grace of love would nurse and cherish all the graces.

16. The great benefit which will accrue to us, if we love God, 1 Cor 2:9. *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* The Eye hath seen rare sights, the Ear hath heard sweet Music; *But eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor can the heart of man conceive, what God hath prepared for them that love him!* Such glorious rewards are laid up, that (as *Austin* saith) Faith it self is not able to comprehend. God hath promised a Crown of life to them that love him, Jas 1:12. This Crown encircles within it all blessedness, Riches, and Glory, and Delight; and it is a Crown that fades not away, 1 Pet 5:4. Thus God would bribe us to love him by rewards.

17. Love to God is Armour of proof against error. For want of hearts full of love, men have heads full of error: Unholy Opinions are for want of holy Affections. Why are men given up to *strong Delusions,* but because *they received not the Truth in love?* 2 Thess 2:10, 11. The more we love God, the more we hate those Heterodox Opinions that would draw us off from God into Libertinism: The more a man loves health, the more he hates *Mercury.*

18. If we love God, we have all winds blowing for us, every thing in the world shall conspire for our good: We know not what *fiery Trials* we may meet with, but to them that Love God *all things shall work for good:* Those things which work *against* them, shall work *for them*; their Cross shall make way for a Crown; every Wind shall blow them to the heavenly Port.

19. Want of love to God is the Ground of Apostasy. The Seed in the Parable which had no root, fell away: He who hath not the love of God rooted in his heart will fall away in time of temptation. He who loves God, will cleave to him, as Ruth to *Naomi,* Ruth 1:16. *Where thou goest I will go, and where thou diest I will die.* But he who wants love to God will do as *Orpah* to her Mother-in-Law, she kissed her, and took her farewell of her. That Soldier who hath no love to his Commander, when he sees an opportunity he will leave him, and run over to the Enemies side. He who hath no love in his heart to God, you may prick him down for an Apostate.

20. Love is the only thing, in which we can retaliate with God. If God be angry with us, we must not be angry again; if he chide us, we must not chide him again; but if God love us, we must love him again: There is nothing in which we can answer God again, but love; we must not give him word for word, but we must give him love for love. Thus we have seen twenty Motives to excite and inflame our love to God.

## The Means of Love

Quest. *How shall we do to love God?*

*Answ.* 1. Study God: Did we study him more, we should love him more. Take a view of his superlative Excellencies[121],

[121] εἰ δύνασαι νοῆσαι τὸν θεὸν, νοήσεις τὸ ἀγαθὸν ὑπέρλαμπρον, καὶ ὑπερλαμπόμενον. *Merc. Trismegist.*

his Holiness, his incomprehensible goodness: The Angels know God better than we, and clearly behold the splendour of his Majesty, therefore they are so deeply enamoured with him.

2. Labour for an Interest in God, Ps 36:1. *O God, thou art my God*; That Pronoun *My,* is *suavissima amoris illecebra,* a sweet Load-stone to Love; a man loves that which is his own. The more we believe, the more we love: Faith is the Root, and love is the Flower that grows upon it, Gal 5:6. *Faith which worketh by love.*

3. Make it your earnest request to God that he will give you an heart to love him;[122] this is an acceptable request, sure, God will not deny it. When King *Solomon* asked wisdom of God, 1 Kgs 3:9. *Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart*: Verse 10. *The speech pleased the Lord.* So when thou criest to God, Lord, give me an heart to love thee, 'tis my grief I can love thee no more; O kindle this fire from Heaven upon the Altar of my heart; sure this prayer pleaseth the Lord, and he will pour of his Spirit upon thee, whose golden Oil shall make the Lamp of thy Love burn bright.

## Preserving Love from a Consumption

2. I proceed to the second Branch of Exhortation: You who have love to God, labour to preserve it; let not this love die, and be quenched[123]. As you would have God's love be continued to you, let your love be continued to him. Love, as fire, will be ready to go out: Rev 2:4. *Thou hast left thy first love.* Satan labours to blow out this flame, and through neglect of Duty we lose it. When a tender body leaves off clothes, it is apt to get cold: so when we leave off duty, by degrees we

[122] *Dilectio Dei, donum Dei.* Aust.

[123] 2 *Branch*

cool in our love to God. Of all graces, Love is soonest apt to decay; therefore we had need be the more careful to preserve it. If a man hath a Jewel, he will keep it; if he hath Land of Inheritance, he will keep it; what care then should we have to keep this grace of Love? 'Tis sad to see professors declining in their love to God: Many are in a *spiritual consumption,* their Love is decaying.

There are four Signs, whereby Christians may know their love is in a Consumption.

1. When they have lost their taste. He that is in a deep Consumption, hath no taste; he finds not that savoury relish in his meat, as formerly: So when Christians have lost their taste, they find no sweetness in a promise, it is a sign of a spiritual Consumption, 1 Pet 2:3. *If so be ye have tasted the Lord is gracious.* Time was, when they found comfort in drawing nigh to God; His Word was as the dropping honey, very delicious to the palate of their soul: but now it is otherwise, they can taste no more sweetness in spiritual things, than in the *white of an Egg,* Job 6:6. This is a sign they are in a Consumption; to lose the taste, argues the loss of the first love.

2. When Christians have lost their Appetite. A man in a deep Consumption, hath not that Stomach to his meat, as formerly. Time was when Christians did *hunger and thirst after righteousness,* they minded things of an heavenly aspect, the Grace of the Spirit, the blood of the Cross, the Light of God's Countenance; they had a stomach to Ordinances, and came to them as an hungry man to a feast; but now the case is altered, they have no Appetite, they do not so prize Christ, they have not such strong affections to the Word, their hearts *do not burn within them*; a sad presage they are in a con-

sumption, their love is decaying. It was a sign *David's* natural strength was abated, when they covered him with clothes, and yet he gat no heat, 1 Kgs 1:1. So when men are plied with hot Clothes, I mean *Ordinances,* yet they have no heat of affection, but are cold, and stiff, as if they were ready to be laid forth; this is a sign their first love is declined, they are in a deep Consumption.

3. When Christians grow more in love with the World, it argues the decrease of spiritual love. They were once of a sublime Heavenly temper, they did speak the *language of Canaan*; but now they are like the fish in the Gospel, which had *money in its mouth,* Matt 17. *ult.* they cannot lisp out three words, but one is about Mammon; their thoughts and affections (like Satan) are still *compassing the earth*; a sign they are going down the hill apace, their love to God is in a Consumption. We may observe, when Nature decays and grows weaker, persons go more stooping: And truly when the heart goes more stooping to the Earth, and is so bowed together, that it can scarce lift up it self to an Heavenly thought, it is now sadly declining in its first love. When Rust cleaves to Metal, it doth not only take away the brightness of the Metal, but it doth canker and consume it: So when the earth cleaves to men's souls, it doth not only hinder the shining lustre of their graces, but it doth by degrees canker their graces.

4. When Christians make little reckoning of God's Worship; Duties of Religion are performed in a dead formal manner; if they are not left *undone,* yet they are *ill done*; this is a sad Symptom of a spiritual Consumption; Remissness in Duty, shows a decay in our first love. The strings of a Viol being slack, the Viol can never make

good music: When men grow slack in Duty, they pray as if they prayed not, this can never make any harmonious sound in God's Ears. When the spiritual Motion, like that of the Eighth Sphere, is slow and heavy, and the Pulse of the soul beats low, it is a sign Christians have *left their first love.*

Let us take heed of this spiritual Consumption; 'tis dangerous to abate in our love. Love is such a grace as we know not how to be without. A Soldier may as well be without his weapons, a Limner without his pencil, a Musician without his Viol, as a Christian can be without love. The body cannot want its natural heat. Love is to the soul, as the natural heat is to the body, there is no living without it. Love doth influence the graces, it excites the affections, it makes us grieve for sin, it makes us cheerful in God; it is like oil to the wheels; it quickens us in God's service. How careful then should we be to keep alive divine love!

Quest. *How may we keep our love from going out?*

*Answ.* Watch your hearts every day; take notice of the first declinings in grace; observe your selves when you begin to grow dull and listless, and use all means for quickening; be much in prayer, meditation, holy conference. When the fire is going out you throw on fuel: So when the flame of your love is going out, make use of Ordinances, and Gospel-promises, as fuel to keep the fire of your love burning.

## Increasing Love to God

3. Let me exhort Christians to increase in love to God; let your

love be boiled up higher, Phil 1:9[124]. *And this I pray, that your love may abound, μᾶλλον καὶ μᾶλλον. More and more.* Our love to God should be as the light of the morning; first there is the *Crepusculum* or day-break, then it shines brighter to the full Meridian. They who have a few sparks of love should ἀναζωπυρεῖν blow up those divine sparks into a flame. A Christian should not be content with so small a dram of grace, as may make him scruple whether he hath any grace or no, but should be still improving the stock. He who hath a little gold would have more; you who love God a little, labour to love him more. A godly man is like a dropsy man, the more grace he drinks in, the more he thirsts: He is contented with a very little of the world, yet he is never satisfied, but would have more of the Spirit's influence, and labours to add one degree of love to another. To persuade Christians to put more Oil to the Lamp, and increase the flame of their love, let me propound these four divine Incentives.

1. The growth of love evidenceth the truth. If I see the Almond tree bud and flourish, I know there is life in the root. Paint will not grow; an hypocrite, who is but a picture, will not grow; but where we see love to God increasing and growing bigger (as *Elisha's* cloud) we may conclude, it is true and genuine.

2. By the growth of love we imitate the Saints in the Bible: Their love to God, like the *waters of the Sanctuary* did rise higher. The Disciples love to Christ at first was weak, *they fled from Christ,* but after Christ's death it grew more vigorous, and they made an open profession of him. *Peter's* love at first was more infirm and languid, he denied Christ, but afterwards how boldly did he preach him! Acts 4:10. Yea, when Christ put him to a

[124]3 *Branch.*

trial of his love, John 21:16. *Simon, lovest thou me? Peter* could make his humble, yet confident appeal to Christ, *Lord thou knowest that I love thee.* Thus that tender plant which before was blown down with the wind of a temptation, now is grown into a Cedar, which all the powers of hell could not shake.

The growth of love will amplify the reward. The more we burn in love, the more we shall shine in glory: The higher our love, the heavier our Crown.

4. The more we love God, the more love we shall have from him. Would we have God unbosom the sweet secrets of his love to us? Would we have the smiles of his face, the kisses of his lips? Oh then let us strive for higher degrees of love. Saint *Paul* counted Gold and Pearl but dung for Christ, Phil 3:8. Yea, he was so inflamed in love to God, that he could have wished himself *accursed from Christ, for his Brethren the Jews,* Rom 9:3. Not that he could be accursed from Christ; but such was his fervent love, and pious zeal for the glory of God, that he would have been content to have suffered, even beyond what is fit to speak, if God might have had more honour.

Here was love screwed up to the highest pitch, that it was possible for a mortal to arrive at; and behold how near he lay to God's heart! The Lord makes known the *Arcana Coeli,* he takes him up to Heaven a while, and lays him in his bosom, where he had such a glorious sight of God, and heard those ἀῤῥητα ῥήματα, *unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter,* 2 Cor 12:4. Never was any man a loser by his love to God.

5. If our love to God doth not increase, it will soon decrease: If the fire be not blown up, it will quickly go out.

Therefore Christians should above all things endeavour to cherish and excite their love to God. This Exhortation will be out of date when we come to Heaven, for then our light shall be clear, and our love perfect; but now it is in season to exhort, that our love to God may abound *yet more and more.*

# Chapter XI

**Concerning Effectual Calling.**

The second Qualification of the persons to whom this privilege in the Text belongs, is, They are *the called of God:* All things shall work for good τοῖς κλητοῖς, *to them who are called.* Though this word [*called*] be placed in *order* after loving of God, yet in *nature* it goes before it: Love is first *named,* but not first *wrought*; we must be *called* of God, before we can *love* God.

*Calling,* is made in the 30. Verse of this Chapter, the middle link of the golden chain of Salvation; it is placed between Predestination and Glorification; and if we have this middle link fast, we are sure of the two other ends of the Chain. For the clearer illustration of this, there are six things observable.

## SECTION I. A Distinction about Calling.

1. I Shall lay down a *Distinction.* There is a twofold *call.*

    1. An *outward call,* which is nothing else but God's blessed tender of grace in the Gospel, his parleying with sinners, when he woos them to come in and accept of mercy: Of this our Saviour speaks, Matt 20:16. *Many are called, but few chosen.* This external call is insufficient to salvation, yet sufficient to leave men without excuse.

    2. There is an *inward call,* when God doth wonderfully over-power the heart, and draw the will to embrace Christ; This is, as Saint *Austin* speaks, *Vocatio alta, & efficax,* an *Effectual call.* God, by the outward call, blows

a Trumpet in the ear; by the inward call, he opens the heart, as he did the heart of *Lydia,* Acts 16:14. The outward call may bring men to a *profession* of Christ, the inward call brings them to a *possession* of Christ: The outward call doth curb a sinner, the inward call doth change him.

## SECTION II. Our deplorable condition before we are called.

2.WHAT we are before this call. 1. We are in a state of vassalage.[125] Before God calls a man, he is at the Devil's call. If he saith go, he goes: The deluded sinner is like the Slave that digs in the *Mine,* hews in the Quarry, tugs at the Oar; he is at the command of Satan, as the Ass is at the command of the Driver. 2. We are in a state of darkness, Eph 5:8. *Ye were sometimes darkness.* 1. Darkness is very disconsolate. A man in the dark, is full of fear, he trembles every step he takes. 2. It is dangerous: He who is in the dark, may quickly go out of the right way, and fall into Rivers and Whirlpools; So in the dark of ignorance, we may quickly fall into the Whirl-pool of Hell. 3. Before we are savingly called, we are in a state of impotency, Rom 5:6 ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν, *When we were without strength*: No strength to resist a temptation, or grapple with a corruption; sin *cut the lock where our strength lay.* Nay, there is not only impotency, but obstinacy, Acts 7:51. *Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.* Besides indisposition to good, there is opposition. 4. We are in a state of pollution, Ezek 16:6. *I saw thee polluted in thy blood.* The fancy mints earthly thoughts, the heart is the Devil's Forge, where the sparkles of lust fly. 5. We are in a state of damnation; we are born under a sad

[125] *Nihil durius servitute.* Cic.

Planet, John 3:36. *The wrath of God abideth on us.* This is our condition before God is pleased by a merciful *call* to bring us near to himself, and free us from that misery in which we were before engulfed.

## SECT. III. The Means of our blessed Call.

3. THE means of our *Effectual call.* The ordinary means which the Lord useth in calling us, is not by raptures and revelations, as the *Familists* hold, but is,

1. Partly by his *Word*, which is *Virga virtutis, The Rod of his strength,* Ps 110:2. The voice of the Word is God's call to us; therefore he is said [*now*] to speak to us from Heaven, Heb 12:25. That is, in the Ministry of the Word. When the Word calls from sin, it is as if we heard a voice from Heaven.

2. Partly by his *Spirit*; this is the *loud call.* The Word is the *instrumental* cause of our conversion, the Spirit is the *efficient.* The Ministers of God are only the pipes and Organs; it is the Spirit blowing in them, that doth effectually change the heart, Acts 10:44. *While Peter spake, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the Word*[126]. It is not the Husbandmans industry in plowing and sowing, will make the ground fruitful, without the early and latter rain. So it is not the seed of the Word will effectually convert, unless the Spirit put forth its sweet influence, and drops as rain upon the heart: Therefore the help of God's Spirit is to be implored, that he would put forth his powerful voice, and awaken us out of the grave of unbelief. If a man knock at a gate of Brass, it will not open; but if he come with a key in his hand, it will open:

[126] *Nisi spiritus adsit cordi audientis, inanis est labor docentis.*

So when God, who hath *the key of David* in his hand[127], comes, he opens the heart, though it be never so fast locked against him.

## SECTION IV. God's Method in calling Sinners.

4. The Method God useth in calling of sinners. The Lord doth not tie himself to a way, or use the same order with all; he comes

1. Sometimes in the *still voice.* Such as have had godly Parents, and have sat under the warm Sun-shine of Religious education, know not many times *how* or *when* they were called; the Lord did secretly and gradually instill grace into their hearts, as the dew falls insensibly in drops; they know by the Heavenly effects, that they are called, but the time or manner they know not. The finger moves on the Dial, but we are not sensible when it moves. Thus God deals with some.

2. Others are more stubborn and knotty sinners, and God comes to them in a *rough wind*; he useth more wedges of the Law to break their hearts; he deeply humbles them, and shows them they are damned without Christ; then, having Ploughed up the fallow ground of their hearts by humiliation, he sows the seeds of consolation; he presents Christ and mercy to them, and draws their wills, not only to accept Christ, but passionately to desire, and fiducially to rest upon him. Thus he wrought upon *Paul,* and called him from a Persecutor to a Preacher. This call, though it be more visible than the other, yet not more real. A Fontinel may be made in the

[127] Rev 3:7.

body as well by corrosive as incision. God's Method in calling sinners may vary, but the effect is still the same.

## SECTION V. The properties of the divine call.

5. THE Properties of this call.

1. It is a sweet call. God doth so call as he doth allure; he doth not force, but draw. The freedom of the will is not taken away, but the stubbornness of it is conquered[128], Ps 100:3. *Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power.* After this call there are no more disputes, the soul readily obeys God's call: As when Christ called *Zacchaeus* he did joyfully embrace him into his heart and house.[129]

2. It is an holy call. 2 Tim 1:9. *Who hath called us with an holy calling*. This call of God's calls men out of their sins; by it they are consecrated and set apart for God. The Vessels of the Tabernacle were taken from common, and set apart to an holy use; so they who are effectually called, are separated from sin, and consecrated to God's service. The God whom we worship is holy, the work we are employed in is holy, the place we hope to arrive at is holy; all this calls for holiness. A Christians heart is to be the Presence-Chamber of the Blessed Trinity; and shall not *Holiness to the Lord* be written upon it? Believers are Children of God the Father, Members of God the Son, Temples of God the Holy Ghost; and shall not they be holy? Holiness is the Badge and Livery of God's people, Isa 63:18. עם־קדשך *The people of thy holiness.* As chastity distinguisheth a virtuous woman from an harlot: So

[128] *Actio haec non fit coactio; Deus non torquet, sed trahit.*

[129] μὴ βουλομένους οὐ βιάζεται ὁ θεὸς ἀλλὰ ἕλκει.

holiness distinguisheth the Godly from the wicked. It is an *Holy calling*: Let not any man say he is called of God, that lives in sin. Hath God called thee to be a Swearer, to be a Drunkard? Nay, let not the moral person say he is effectually called: What is civility without sanctity? It is but a dead carcass strawed with flowers. The King's picture stamped upon Brass will not go current. The civil man looks as if he had the King of Heavens Image stamped upon him; but he is no better than counterfeit metal, which will not pass for current with God.

3. It is an irresistible call. When God calls a man by his grace, he cannot but come. You may resist the Ministers call, but you cannot resist the Spirit's call: The Finger of the blessed Spirit can write upon an heart of stone, as once he wrote his Laws upon Tables of stone. God's words are *Verba creativa,* Creating words; when he said, *Let there be light,* there was light; and when he saith, *Let there be faith,* it shall be so. When God called *Paul,* he answered to the call, Acts 26:19. *I was not disobedient to the Heavenly vision*[130]. God rides forth conquering in the Chariot of his Gospel; he makes the blind eye see, and the stony heart bleed. If God will call a man, nothing shall *ponere obicem,* or lie in the way to hinder; difficulties shall be untied, the Powers of Hell shall disband, Rom 9:19. *Who hath resisted his will?* God bends the Iron sinew, and cuts asunder the *Gates of Brass,* Ps 107:16. When the Lord toucheth a man's heart by his Spirit, all proud imaginations are brought down, and the Fort-Royal of the Will yields to God. I may allude to that, Ps 114:5. *What ailed thee, O thou Sea, that thou fleddest? And*

[130]Παῦλος μὲν ἀκούσας φωνῆς, εὐθέως ὑπήκουσε, καὶ πολλὴν ἐπεδείξατο τὴν μεταβολήν. *Chrys.*

*thou Jordan, that thou wert driven back?* The man that before was as a raging Sea, foaming forth wickedness, now on a sudden he flies back and trembles, he falls down as the *Jailer, What shall I do to be saved?* What *ails thee, O Sea?* What ails this man? The Lord hath been effectually calling him, he hath been a working a work of grace, and now his stubborn heart is conquered by a sweet violence.

4. It is an high calling, Phil 3:14. *I press toward the mark, for the price of the high calling of God.* It is an high calling; 1. Because we are called to high exercises of Religion; to die to sin, to be crucified to the world, to live by faith, to *have fellowship with the Father,* 1 John 1:3. This is an high calling, here is a work too high for men in a state of nature to perform. 2. It is an high *calling,* because we are called to high Privileges, to Justification and Adoption, to be made *Co-heirs with Christ*[131]. He that is effectually called is higher than the Princes of the earth.

5. It is a gracious *call,* it is the fruit and product of free-grace. That God should call some, and not others; *some taken, and others left*; one called who is of a more rugged morose disposition, another of acuter parts, of a sweeter temper, rejected, here is free-grace: That the poor should be *rich in faith, heirs of a Kingdom,* Jas 2:5. And the Nobles, and Great ones of the world for the most part reprobated, 1 Cor 1:26. *Not many Noble are called.* What is this free and rich grace? Matt 11:26. *Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.* That in the same Sermon one should be effectually wrought upon, another,

[131]Rom 8:17 συγκληρονόμοι *Aeternae vitae & gloriae participes; aperiuntur, hic nobis limpidissimi fontes,* etc. Beza.

no more moved than a dead man with the sound of Music; that one should hear a Spirit's voice in the Word, another not hear it; that one should be softened and moistened with the influences of Heaven; another, like *Gideons dry fleece* hath no dew upon him; behold here distinguishing grace! The same affliction converts one, hardens another? Affliction to one, is as the bruising of Spices, which cast forth a fragrant smell; to the other is as the stamping of Weeds in a Mortar, which are more unsavoury; whence is this, but the εὐδοκία, the free-grace of God? It is a *gracious calling,* it is all enamelled and inter-woven with free-grace, *Si cogitare coeperis O anima mea, quot, & quales sint qui hanc quae tibi data est gratiam consequi non potuerunt; audisti certe quod multae gentes pertransierunt, quae omnes sine cognition Dei in interitum sempiternum dilapsae sunt omnibus illis redemptor tuus te praetulit, gratiamque ejus largitus est; & quare hoe? Nullam praeter salvatoris Charitatem, invenire poteris Causam; elegit te in omnibus, assumpsit te ex omnibus, amavit te pre omnibus, ut memorial ejus semper esset apud te*[132].

6. It is a glorious call, 1 Pet 5:10. *Who hath called us into his eternal Glory.* We are called to the glorious enjoyment of the ever-blessed God: As if a man were called out of a Prison to sit upon a Throne. *Quintus Curtius* writes of one, who digging in his Garden was called to be King. Thus God calls us *to Glory and Virtue,* 2 Pet 1:3. First, to Virtue, then to Glory. At *Athens* there were two Temples, the Temple of Virtue, and the Temple of Honour; and no man could go to the Temple of Honour, but through the Temple of Virtue. So God calls us first to

[132] *Austin.*

*Virtue,* and then to *Glory.* What is the glory among men, which most so hunt after, but a feather blown in the Air? What is it to the *weight of glory?* Is there not great reason we should follow God's call? He calls to preferment; can there be any loss or prejudice in this? God would have us part with nothing for him, but that which will damn us if we keep; he hath no design upon us, but to make us happy; he calls us to salvation, he calls us to a Kingdom: Oh how should we then, with *Bartimaeus,* throw off our ragged coat of sin, and follow Christ when he calls!

7. It is a rare call; but few are savingly called, Matt 22:14. *Few are chosen*: Few, not *Collectively,* but *Comparatively.* The word ἐκκαλεῖν to *call,* signifies to choose out some from among others. Many have the light brought to them, but few have their eyes anointed to see that light, Rev 3:4. *Thou hast ὀλίγα ὀνόματα, few Names in Sardis that have not defiled their Garments.* The Devil hath the Vintage, God hath only a few gleanings. How many Millions sit in *the Region of darkness?* and in those Climates where the Sun of Righteousness doth shine, many there are, who receive the *light* of the Truth, not the *love.* There are many Formalists, but few Believers. There is something looks like Faith, which is not. The *Cyprian* Diamond (says *Pliny*) sparkles like the true Diamond, but it is not of the right kind, it will break with the hammer: So the Hypocrites faith will break with the hammer of Persecution. But few are truly called. The number of precious stones are few to the number of gravel-stones. Most men shape their Religion according to the fashion of the times; they are for the Music and the Idol, Dan 3:7. The serious thoughts of this, would make us *work out salvation with fear,* and labour to be

in the number of those few, whom *God* hath translated into a state of grace.

8. It is an unchangeable call, Rom 11:9. *The Gifts and calling of God are χαρίσματα ἀμεταμέλητα, without Repentance*; that is (as a learned Writer saith) those gifts which flow from Election[133]. When *God* calls a man, he doth not repent of it: *God* doth not as many friends, love one day, and hate another; or as Princes, who make their Subjects favourites, and then throw them in Prison. This is the blessedness of a Saint, his condition admits of no alteration. *God's call* is sounded upon his *decree,* and his decree is immutable. Acts of grace cannot be reversed. God blots out his peoples *sins,* but not their *names.* Let the world ring changes every hour, a believers condition is fixed and unalterable.

## SECT. VI. Showing the end of Effectual Calling.

6. The end of our *Heavenly Calling,* and that is the honour of the High God, Eph 1:12. *That we should be to the praise of his glory.* He that is in the state of nature, is no more fit to honour God, than a Brute is to put forth acts of Reason. A man before conversion continually reflects dishonour upon God. As black vapours which arise out of Fenny Moorish grounds do cloud and darken the Sun. So out of the natural man's heart arise black vapours of sin, which cast a cloud upon God's glory. The sinner is versed in Treason, but understands nothing of Loyalty to the King of Heaven. Ay, but there are some whom the lot of Free-grace falls upon, and these shall be taken as Jewels from among the Rubbish, and be *effectually called,* that they may lift up God's name and

[133] *Willet.*

honour in the world. The Lord will have some in all Ages, who shall oppose the corruptions of the times, bear witness to his truths convert sinners from the error of their ways: He will have his Worthies, as King *David* had. They who have been Monuments of God's mercies, will be Trumpets of his praise.

# Chapter XII

**Two Inferences drawn from the Proposition.**

1. IT shows us the necessity of effectual calling; without it there is no going to Heaven: We must be *made meet for the inheritance,* Col 1:12. As God makes Heaven fit for us, so he makes us fit for Heaven; and what gives this idoneity and meetness, but effectual Calling? A man remaining in the filth and rubbish of nature, is no more fit for Heaven, than a dead man is fit to inherit. The *High Calling* is not a thing arbitrary, or indifferent, but as needful as salvation; yet, alas, how is this one thing needful neglected! Most men, like the people of *Israel,* wander up and down *to gather straw,* but mind not evidences of their effectual Calling.

2. Take notice what a mighty power God puts forth in Calling of sinners[134]! God doth so *call* as *draw,* John 6:44. Conversion is styled a *Resurrection,* Rev 20:6. *Blessed is he that hath part in the first Resurrection*; that is a rising from sin to grace. A man can no more convert himself, than a dead man can raise himself. It is called a Creation, Col 3:10. To create is above the power of nature.

But say the *Arminians,* the Will is not dead, but sleepeth, and God by a moral persuasion does only awaken us, and then the will can obey God's call and move of it self to its own conversion[135].

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[134] 2 *Branch.*

[135] *Object.*

To this I answer, Every man is by sin bound in fetters, Acts 8:23[136]. *I perceive thou art in the bond of iniquity.* A man that is in fetters if you use arguments, and persuade him to go, is that sufficient? There must be a beating off his fetters, and setting him free, before he can walk: So it is with every natural man, he is fettered with corruption; now the Lord by converting grace must file off his fetters, nay, give him legs to run too, or he can never obtain salvation.

[136] *Answ.*

# Chapter XIII

**Exhorting to the heavenly Calling.**

2. Labour to clear this to your own souls, that you are savingly called, 2 Pet 1:10. *Give diligence to make your calling sure.* This is the great business of our lives, to get sound evidences of our *effectual calling.* Acquiesce not in outward privileges, do not cry as the Jews, *The Temple of the Lord*; rest not in Baptism; what is it to have the Water, and want the Spirit? Be not content that you were born within the sound of *Aarons* Bells, that Christ hath been preached to you; Satisfy not your selves with an empty profession; all this may be, and yet you are no better than blazing Comets; but labour to evidence to your souls that you are *called of God*: Be not *Athenians* to enquire News, what is the state and complexion of the times? What are the effects of such an Eclipse? What changes are like to happen in such a year? What is all this if you are not *effectually called?* what if the times should have a fairer aspect? What though *glory did dwell in our Land,* if grace doth not dwell in our hearts?[137] Oh my Brethren, when things are dark without, let all be clear within, *Give diligence to make your calling sure*; 'tis both feasible and probable, God is not wanting to them that seek him; let not this great business hang in hand any longer. If there were controversy about your Land, you would use all means to clear your Title; and is salvation nothing? Will not you clear your Title here? Consider how sad your case is if you are not *effectually called.*

[137] Ps 35:9.

1. You are strangers to God; The Prodigal went into a far Country, Luke 15:13. To imply that every sinner before conversion is *a far off* from God, Eph 2:12. *At that time ye were without Christ, strangers to the Covenants of Promise.* Men dying in their sins have no more right to Promises than strangers have to the right-Privileges of free-born Citizens. If you are strangers, what language can you expect from God, but this, *I know you not?*

2. If you are not *effectually called,* you are enemies, Col 1:21. *Alienated and enemies.* There is nothing in the Bible you can lay claim to but the threatings: you are heirs to all the plagues written in the Book of God: Though you may resist the Commands of the Law, you cannot fly from the Curses of the Law. Such as are enemies to God, let them read their doom. Luke 19:27. *But those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.* Oh therefore, how nearly doth it concern you, to make your *calling* sure? How miserable and damnable will your condition be, if Death call you, before the Spirit call you!

*Quest.* 1. But is there any hope of my being called? I have been a great sinner.

*Answ.* Great sinners have been called. *Paul* was as bloody a persecutor, as ever *Domitian* or *Julian*; yet he was called[138]. Some of the Jews, who had an hand in crucifying Christ, were called. God loves to display the Flag of Free-grace to sinners. Therefore be not discouraged; you see a golden Cord let down from Heaven, for poor trembling souls to lay hold upon.

[138] μήτε ὁ πρὸς τὸν πυθμένα τῆς κακίας κατελθὼν ἀπελπιζέτω ἑαυτοῦ τὴν σωτηρίαν. *Chrysost.*

## Signs of Effectual Calling

*Quest.* 2. But how shall I know that I am *effectually called?*

*Answ.* 1. He who is *savingly called,* is called out of himself; not only *sinful self,* but *righteous self*; he denies his duties and moral endowments, Phil 3:9. *Not having mine own righteousness.* He whose heart God hath touched by his Spirit, lays down the Idol of Self-righteousness at Christ's feet for him to tread upon; he useth morality, and Duties of Piety, but doth not trust to them. *Noah*'s Dove made use of her wings to fly, but trusted to the Ark for safety. This is excellent, when a man is called out of himself. This self-renunciation is (as *Austin* saith) *Primus ad fidem aditus,* the first step to saving faith.

2. He who is *effectually called* hath a visible change wrought; not a change of the *faculties,* but of the *qualities*; he is altered from what he was before; his *body* is the same, but not his *mind*; he hath *another spirit*[139], he is *alter idem. Paul* was so changed after his conversion, that people did not know him, Acts 9:21. Oh what a Metamorphosis doth grace make! 1 Cor 6:11. *And such were some of you; but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified*[140]. Grace is the true *Verticordia,* it turns the heart. In *effectual calling* there is a threefold change wrought.

1. There is a change wrought in the *Understanding*: Before, there was ignorance, *darkness was upon the face of the deep,* but *now* there is light, Eph 5:8. *Now ye are light in the Lord.* The first work *God* made was light; so it is in the new Creation; he who is savingly called, saith as that man in the Gospel, John 9:25. *Whereas I was*

[139] Num 14:24.

[140] Abluti *a sordibus peccatorum* Sanctificati *per renovationem interioris hominis.* Clarius.

*blind, now I see.* He sees that evil in sin, and excellency in the ways of God, as he never saw before. Indeed this light which the blessed spirit brings may well be called θαυμαστὸν φῶς, *a marvelous light,* 1 Pet 2:9. *That ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you into his marvelous light*[141]. It is a marvelous light in six respects, 1. Because it is strangely conveyed; it doth not come from the Celestial Orbs, where the Planets are, but from the Sun of Righteousness. 2. It is marvelous in the effect: This light doth that which no other light can, it makes a man see himself blind. 3. It is a marvelous light, because it is more penetrating; other light may shine upon the face, this light shines upon the heart, and enlightens the Conscience, 2 Cor 4:6.— 4. It is a marvelous light, because it sets those that have it a marveling: they marvel at themselves, how they could be contented so long without it; they marvel that their eyes should be opened, and not others; they marvel that notwithstanding they hated and opposed this light, yet it should shine in the Firmament of their souls. This is that the Saints will stand wondering at to all eternity. 5. It is a marvelous light, because it is more virtual than any other; it doth not only enlighten, but quicken, it makes alive those who *were dead in trespasses and sins*; therefore it is elegantly called *Lumen vita, the light of life,* John 8:12.— 6. It is a marvelous light, because it is the beginning of the everlasting light. The light of grace is the morning-star which ushers in the Sun-light of glory.

Now then Christian, Canst thou say, that this marvelous light of the Spirit hath dawned upon thee? When

[141] *Inseritur θαυμαστὸν ad denotandam hujus lucis excellentiam.* Grot.

thou wert enveloped in ignorance and didst neither know *God* nor thy self, suddenly, *A light from Heaven shined round about thee.* This is one part of that blessed change which is wrought in the *effectual calling*.

2. There is a change wrought in the *Will* Rom 7:18. *To will is present with me.* The Will which before opposed Christ, now embraceth him; the Will which was an Iron Sinew, now is like melting Wax, it readily receives the stamp and impression of the holy Ghost. The Will as the *Primum Mobile,* moves heavenward, and carries all the Orbs of the affections along with it. The regenerate Will answers to every call of God, as the Echo answers to the voice, Acts 9:6. *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* The Will now becomes a Volunteer, it lifts it self under the *Captain of Salvation*[142]. Oh what an happy change is wrought here! Before Will kept Christ out, now it keeps sin out.

3. There is a change in the *Conversation.* He who is called of God, walks directly contrary to what he did before; he walked before in envy, and malice, now he walks in love; before he walked in pride, now in humility: The Current is carried quite another way, Acts 23:1. *I have lived in all good Conscience.* As in the heart there is a *New-birth,* so in the life a *New Edition,* Thus we see what a mighty change is wrought in such as are called of God.

How far are they from this *effectual call,* who never had any change! They are the same they were forty, fifty years ago, as proud and carnal as ever; they have seen many changes in the times, but they have had no change

[142]Heb 2:10.

in their hearts. Let not men think to go to Heaven *per saltum,* to leap out of the Harlots lap into *Abraham's* bosom; either they must have a gracious change while they live, or a cursed change when they die.

3. He who is called of God, esteems of this call as the highest blessing. A King whom *God* hath called by his grace esteems it more that he is called to be a Saint, than that he is called to be a King; he values his *High-Calling* above his *High-Birth. Theodosius* thought it a greater honour to be a *Christian,* than to be an *Emperor.* A carnal person can no more value spiritual blessings, than a child can value a knot of Diamonds; he prefers his worldly grandeur, his ease, plenty, titles of honour, before conversion; he had rather be called *Duke* than *Saint*; a sign he is a stranger to effectual calling. He who is enlightened by the Spirit, counts holiness his best Heraldry, and looks upon his *effectual calling* as his *preferment*; when he hath taken this degree, he is a Candidate for Heaven.

4. He who is effectually called, is called out of the World; it is an *Heavenly Calling,* Heb 3:1. He that is called of God minds the things of an Heavenly aspect; he is in the world, but not *of* the world. Naturalists say of precious stones, though they have their matter from the earth, yet their sparkling lustre is from the influence of the Heavens: So it is with a godly man, though his body be from the earth, yet the sparkling of his affections is from Heaven; his heart is drawn into the *upper Region,* as high as Christ. He doth not only cast off every *wicked work,* but every *earthly weight*; he is not a *Worm,* but an *Eagle.*

5. Another sign of our *effectual calling,* is diligence in our *ordinary calling*. Some brag of their *high calling,* but they lie idle at Anchor. Religion doth not seal Warrants to idleness.

Christians must not be as the *Leviathan,* which is made to *play in the Sea,* Ps 104:26. Idleness is *Balneum Diaboli,* the *Devil's Bath*; a slothful person becomes a prey to every tentation. Grace while it cures the heart doth not make the hand lame. He who is called of God, as he works for heaven, so he works in his trade[143]. Now if upon search, you can find that you are effectually called, I have three Exhortations to you.

[143] *Vt rosa de spinis nascitur, ita e laboribus fructus capitur jucundissimus.* Erasm.

# Chapter XIV

**Three Exhortations to them who are called.**

## Admire Free Grace

1. Admire and adore God's free-grace in calling you; that God should leap over so many, that he should pass by the wise and noble, and that the lot of free-grace should fall upon you! That he should take you out of a state of vassalage, from grinding at the Devil's Mill, and should set you above the Princes of the Earth, and call you to inherit the Throne of Glory! Fall upon your knees, break forth into a thankful triumph of praise; Let your hearts be ten-stringed Instruments, to sound forth the memorial of God's mercy. None so deep in debt to Free-grace as you, and none should be so high mounted upon the Pinnacle of thanksgiving. Say as the sweet Singer, Ps 145:2. *I will extol thee, O God my King, every day will I bless thee, and I will praise thy name for ever.* Those who are Patterns of mercy, should be Trumpets of praise. Oh long to be in Heaven, where your thanksgivings shall be purer, and shall be raised a Note higher.

## Pity Those Who Are Uncalled

2. Pity those who are not yet called. Sinners in Scarlet are not objects of *envy,* but *pity,* they are under *the power of Satan,* Acts 26:18. They tread every day on the Banks of the bottomless pit; and what if death should give them a jog? Oh

pity unconverted sinners. If you pity an Ox or an Ass going astray, will not you pity a Soul going astray from God, who hath lost his way, and his wits, and is upon the precipice of damnation.

Nay, not only pity sinners, but pray for them; Though they curse, do you pray, You will pray for persons distracted; Sinners are distracted, Luke 15:17. *When he came to himself*; it seems the *Prodigal* before conversion was not himself. Wicked men are going to execution; Sin is the halter which strangles them, Death turns them off the Ladder, and Hell is their burying place; & will not you pray for them when you see them in such danger?

## Walk Worthy of Your High Calling

3. You who are effectually called honour your high calling, Eph 4:1. *I therefore beseech you, that you would walk worthy*[144] *of the vocation wherewith you are called.* Christians must keep a Decorum; they must observe the τὸ πρέπον, what is comely[145]. This is a seasonable advice, when many who profess to be called of God, yet by their loose incautelous walking, they cast a blemish on Religion, whereby the ways of God are evil spoken of. It is *Salvians* Speech, What do *Pagans* say when they see Christians live scandalously? *Sure Christ taught them no better.* Will you reproach Christ, and make him suffer again, by abusing your Heavenly calling[146]? 'Tis one of the saddest sights, to see a man lift up his hands in prayer, and with those hands oppress; to hear the same tongue praise God, and at another time lie and slander; to

[144] ἀξίως.

[145] *O anima mea formam tuam excole frontem orne, maculas terge, mores corrige, dignam sponsam omni nisu te redde.* Ausl.

[146] λέγουσι Χριστὸν ἵνα Χριστὸν ἀθετήσωσι. *Ignat.* Epist. ad *Trall.*

hear a man in words profess God, and in works deny him: Oh how unworthy is this! Yours is a holy calling, and will you be unholy? Do not think you may take liberty as others. The *Nazarite* that had a vow on him, separated him self to God, and promised abstinence; though others did drink Wine, it was not fit for the *Nazarite* to do it: So though others are loose and vain, it is not fit for them who are set apart for God by effectual calling. Shall not Flowers sweeter than Weeds? You must be λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν, *A peculiar People,* 1 Pet 2:9. Not only peculiar in regard of *dignity,* but *deportment.* Scorn things that are sordid and heterogeneous to the Gospel. *Scipio* refused the embraces of an Harlot, because he was General of an Army Abhor all motions to sin, because it will disparage your high calling.

Quest. *What is it to walk worthy of our Heavenly calling?*

*Answ.* 1. It is to walk regularly, when we tread with an even foot, and walk according to the Rules and Axioms of the Word. A true Saint is for *Canonical Obedience,* he follows the canon of Scripture, as the Greek word is, Gal 6:16. *As many as walk according to this Canon*[147]. When we leave men's *inventions,* and cleave to God's *institutions*; when we walk after the Word, as *Israel* after the *pillar of fire*; this is walking worthy of our Heavenly calling.

2. To walk worthy of our calling, is, to walk singularly, Gen 7:1. *Noah was upright in his Generation.* When others walked with the Devil, *Noah* walked with God. We are forbidden to run with the multitude, Exod 23. Though in civil things singularity is not commendable, yet in Religion it is good to be singular. *Melancthon* was the glory of the age he lived in. *Athanasius* was

[147] κανόνι.

singularly holy, he appeared for God when the stream of the times ran another way. It is better to be a pattern of holiness, than a Partner in wickedness: It is better to go to Heaven with a few, than to Hell in the crowd. We must walk *Antipodes* to the men of the world.

3. To walk worthy of our calling, is to walk cheerfully; Phil 4:4. *Rejoice in the Lord evermore.* Too much drooping of spirit disparageth our high calling, and makes others suspect the godly life to be Cynical and Melancholy. Of all complexions Christ loves the Sanguine. *Causinus* in his Hieroglyphics speaks of a Dove, whose wings being perfumed with sweet Ointments, did draw the other Doves after her. Cheerfulness is a perfume to draw others to godliness. Religion doth not banish all mirth. As there is a seriousness without sourness, so there is a cheerfulness without lightness. When the Prodigal was converted, *then they began to be merry,* Luke 15:24. Who should be cheerful if not the people of God? They are no sooner *born of the Spirit,*[148] but they are heirs to a Crown: God is their Portion, and Heaven is their Mansion, and shall not they rejoice?

4. To walk worthy of our calling is to walk wisely. Walking wisely implies three things.

1. To walk warily, Eccl 2:14. *The wise man's eyes are in his head.* Others watch for our halting, therefore we had need look to our standing. We must beware, not only of *Scandals,* but *Indecencies,* lest by our indiscretion we open the mouths of others with a fresh cry against Religion. If our piety will not convert men, our prudence may silence them.

[148] 2 Tim 4:8.

2. To walk courteously. The Spirit of the Gospel is full of sweetness and candour, 1 Pet 3:8. *Be courteous,* φιλόφρονες Take heed of a morose supercilious behaviour. Religion doth not take away civility, but refine it, Gen 23:7. *Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the children of Heth.* Though they were of an Heathenish Race, yet *Abraham* gave them a civil respect. S. *Paul* was of an affable temper, 1 Cor 9:20. *I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.* In lesser matters the Apostle yielded to others, that by his obliging carriage he might win upon them, and catch them by an holy guile.

3. To walk magnanimously. Though we must be humble, yet not base. 'Tis unworthy to prostitute our selves to the lusts of men. What is sinfully imposed ought to be zealously opposed. Conscience is God's Diocese, where none hath right to visit, but he who is *The Bishop of our souls,* 1 Pet 2:25. We must not be like hot Iron, which will be beat into any form. A brave spirited Christian will choose rather to die, than suffer the Virginity of his Conscience to be superstitiously deflowered. Here is the *Serpent* and the *Dove* united, sagacity and innocency; this *prudential walking* comports with our high calling, and doth not a little adorn the Gospel of Christ.

5. To walk worthy of our calling, is to walk influentially; to do good to others, and to be rich in acts of mercy, Heb 13:16.[149] Good works honour Religion. As *Mary* poured the ointments on Christ; so by good works

[149] *Vt vita ex sensu & motu dignoscitur, ita fides ex operibus.* Bern

we pour sweet ointments on the head of the Gospel, and make it give forth a fragrant smell. Good works, though they are not *Causes* of Salvation, yet they are *Evidences.* When with our Saviour we go about doing good, and send abroad the refreshing influences of our liberality; now we walk worthy of our high calling.

Lastly,[150] Here is matter of Consolation to you who are effectually called, God hath magnified rich grace towards you; you are called to great honour, to be Co-partners with the Angels, and Co-heirs with Christ: This should revive you in the worst of times. Let men reproach and miscall you; set *God's calling* of you, against *man's miscalling*: Let men persecute you to death, they do but give you a pass, and send you to Heaven the sooner: How may this cure the trembling of the heart! What though the Sea roar, though the Earth be unquiet, though the Stars are shaken out of their place? You need not fear; you are *called,* therefore are *sure to be crowned.*

[150] *Use ult.*

# Chapter XV

**Concerning God's Purpose.**

3. The third and last thing in the Text, which I shall but briefly glance at, is, The Ground and Original of our *Effectual Calling*, in these words, κατὰ πρόθεσιν, *According to his purpose: Anselm* renders it, *according to his good will*[151]. *Peter Martyr* reads it, κατὰ γνώμην, according to his *Decree*; and so *Beza* Interprets it. This purpose, or decree of God is the fountain-head of all our spiritual blessings[152]; it is *causa* προηγουμένη, the impulsive cause of our Vocation, Justification, Glorification; it is the highest link in the Golden Chain of Salvation. What is the reason that one man is called, and not another? It is from the eternal purpose of God. God's Decree gives the casting voice in man's salvation.

[151] *Signif. aeternum Dei beneplacitum.* Anselm.

[152] πρόθεσις *est decretum Dei, a aeterno sanctum, ex mera ipsius non scrutanda sed adoranda voluntate.* Beza

# Chapter XVI

**Showing that all must be resolved into God's purpose.**

Let us ascribe the whole work of grace to the pleasure of God's Will[153]. God did not choose us because we were worthy, but by choosing us makes us worthy. Proud men are apt to assume and arrogate too much to themselves in being sharers with God. While many cry out of Church-sacrilege, they are in the mean time guilty of a far greater sacrilege, in robbing God of his glory, while they go to set the *Crown of Salvation* upon their own head: but we must resolve all into God's *purpose.* The Signs of salvation are in the Saints, but the Cause of salvation is in God. If it be God's purpose that saves, then,

1. Not *Free-will.* The *Pelagians* are strenuous asserters of Free-will, they tell us, that a man hath an innate power to his own conversion; but this Text confutes it, our calling is *according to God's purpose,* The Scripture plucks up the Weed of Freewill by the roots, Rom 9:16. *It is not of him that willeth.* All depends upon the πρόθεσις, the *purpose* of God. When the Prisoner, is cast at the Bar, there is no saving him unless the King hath a purpose to save him. God's purpose is his Prerogative Royal.

2. If it be God's purpose that saves, then not *merit. Bellarmine* holds, that good works do expiate sin, and merit Glory; no, the Text saith, We are called according to *God's*

[153] *Use.* 1.

*purpose:* and there is a parallel Scripture, 2 Tim 1:9. *Who hath saved us, and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace.* There is no such thing as merit: Our best works have in them, both defection and infection, and so are but *splendida peccata,* glittering sins; Therefore if we are called and justified, it is God's purpose brings it to pass.

*Object.* But the Papists allege that Scripture for merit, 2 Tim 4:8. *Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day.* This is the force of their Argument, If God in justice rewards our works, then they merit salvation.

*Resp.* To this I answer. First, God gives a reward as a just Judge, not to the worthiness of our works, but to the worthiness of Christ. 2. God as a just Judge rewards us, not because we have deserved it, but because he hath promised it.[154]; God hath two Courts, a Court of Mercy, and a Court of Justice: the Lord condemns those works in the Court of Justice, which he Crowns in the Court of Mercy: Therefore that which carries the main stroke in our salvation, is the πρόθεσις, the *Purpose* of God.

3. If the purpose of God be the Springhead of happiness, then we are not saved for *Faith foreseen.* It is absurd to think any thing in us could have the least influence upon our Election[155]. The *Arminians* say, that God did foresee that such persons would believe, therefore did choose them; and so they would make the business of salvation to depend upon something in us: Whereas God doth not choose us for faith, but to faith, Eph 1:4. *He hath chosen us, that we should be holy*; not because we would be holy, but that we might be holy. We

[154] *Debitorem se fecit Dominus, non accipiendo, sed promittendo.* Aug.
[155] *Opera praevisa non póssunt esse causae Praedestinationis.* Pet. Mar.

are elected to holiness, not for it[156]. What could God foresee in us but Pollution, and rebellion? If any man be saved, it is κατὰ πρόθεσιν, *according to God's purpose.*

*Quest.* How shall we know that God hath a purpose to save us?

*Answ.* By being effectually called. 2 Pet 1:10. *Give diligence to make your calling and election sure.* We make our *Election* sure, by making our *Calling* sure. 2 Thess 2:13. *God hath chosen you to salvation through sanctification.* By the Stream, we come at last to the Fountain: If we find the Stream of Sanctification running in our souls, we may by this come to the Spring-head of Election. When a man's eyes are so weak that he cannot look up to the Firmament, yet he may know the Moon is there, by seeing it shine upon the water: So though I do not look up into the secret of God's purpose, yet I may know I am elected, by the shining of sanctifying grace in my soul. Whosoever he be that can find the Word of God transcribed and copied out into his heart, may undeniably conclude his Election.[157]

## The Saints' Comforts Built upon This Impregnable Rock

*Use.* 2. Here is a sovereign *Elixir,* or unspeakable comfort to them who are the called of God; their salvation rests upon God's purpose, 2 Tim 2:19. *The foundation of God standeth sure,* having *this Seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.* Our Graces are imperfect, our comforts ebb and flow, but *God's foundation standeth sure.* They who are built upon this Rock of God's *Eternal Purpose,* need not fear falling away; neither

[156] *Deus elegit fideles ut sint, non quia jam erant.* Aug. de Praedest.
[157] *Use.* 2.

the power of man, nor violence of temptation, shall never be able to overturn them.