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THE  
SOULES  
PREPARATION  
FOR CHRIST:

BEING  
A TREATISE OF  
CONTRITION.

Wherein is discovered  
*How God breakes the Heart, and  
wounds the Soule, in the conver-  
sion of a Sinner to Himselfe.*

---

PSAL. 51. 17.

*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit :  
A broken and a contrite heart, O God,  
shew wilt not despise.*



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T H B



*T H E*  
**S O V L E S**  
preparation for  
**C H R I S T.**

**A C T S 2. 37.**

*Now when they heard this, they were pricked  
in their hearts, and said to Peter and  
the other Apostles, Men and Brethren;  
What shall wee doe to be saved?*



**N** this great worke of pre-  
paration for Christ, observe  
two things, First, the dis-  
pensation of the worke of  
Grace on Gods part, he  
puls a sinner from sinne to  
himselfe; and secondly, the  
frame and temper of spirit  
that God workes in the  
hearts of those that hee  
doth draw: and that makes its selfe knowne in  
two particulars; partly in Contrition, partly in Hu-  
mili-

**A**

## 2 — *The Soules preparation*

miliation. For our better proceeding in the prosecution of these two mayne points, I shall handle them severally, and at large. And first, we will sift out what this Contrition and Humiliation is, that wee may not deceve our selves, and thinke wee have them, when it is nothing so.

### [ *What Contrition is.* ]

This Contrition (as I conceive) is nothing else; but namely, when a sinner by the sight of sinne and wildnesse of it, and the punishment due to the same, is made sensible of sinne, and is made to hate it, and hath his heart separated from the same; & the sight of sinne makes it selfe knowne in three particulars.

First, when the soule is sensible of sinne;

Secondly, when it hath a hearty and sound sorrow for the same, and an earnest detestation of it.

Thirdly, when he hath his heart separated from his corruptions. All these are not wrought so much by any power that is in us, as by the Almighty power of God working in us; for the sinner would not see his sinne, but the Lord forceth him, as the holy Prophet saith: *Thou holdest my eyes waking, I am sore troubled that I cannot speake, Psal. 74. 4.* The Lord holds sinne to a carnall sinfull wretch, so that his sinne walketh, and sleepeth, and goeth with him; nay, the soule of a poore sinner would beat back the blow, and would not have the word to teach him, hee labours to shift off the arrowes of the Almighty, which the Lord shooteth into the soule: but the Lord will not suffer him so to doe; *Tby arrowes sticke fast in mee, and tby hand presseth me sore. Psal. 38. 2.* As if the Prophet had said, I would faine have beat backe thine arrowes, but they sticke fast in me: and I would have shaken off

off the burden that lay upon me, but thine hand pressed me sore, so that at last, when the sinner sees hee cannot shake off the arrowes, then hee is content to be separate from his corruptions.

This is in generall in the text, wherein you shall plainly see these three particulars fully expressed.

First, *the sight of sinne* by the hearing of *Peters words*, and it was not by the bare hearing of his words only, but when *Peter* came forth what roundly home to them, and said; This is *Christ Iesus* whom ye have crucified, then followes the former worke, namely, the acknowledgement of their sinnes, and the first cause that made them see their sinne, was a particular application of their sins, he came punctually and particularly to them, and said, You are they that have crucified the Lord Christ, this touched them, and made them see their sinnes.

Secondly, *the daily and serious meditation and apprehension of their sinnes*, and of those truthes, which were delivered in the word, *hearing*, that is, daily pondring and considering of the evils, that were committed by them, and shewed to them.

Thirdly, *they were pricked*, they did not pricke themselves, but the Lord followed the truth that was delivered, and by his Almighty hand did make that word prosperous to their soules: and though they would not pierce themselves, yet the Lord pierced them.

The second part of it is in these words, *they were pricked in their hearts*, not in their hands or eyes, but in their hearts.

The third part is in the separation from sinne in these words, *Men and brethren, what shall we doe?* Whatsoever you would have us to doe, we will doe it, and whatsoever sinne is forbidden, we are con-

#### 4 *The Soules preparation*

sent to be rid of it; nay, nothing was too heard, or too much for them.

Give me leave to take a doctrine by the way from the words; they, when *they heard this*, who were these (*they?*) see this in the 36 verse, *them that had crucified the Lord of life.*

What, will some say, is it possible that ever they should be so pierced for their sinnes? it was said of *Judas* that betrayed Christ, *It had beene good for that man that he had not bene borne.* What shall we thinke of those that murder Christ; then much more they for killing of him, is it possible the Lord should doe good unto them? yes, even they came to be pricked in their hearts.

From these words this doctrine ariseth, It is possible for the most stuborne sinners upon earth to get a broken heart. *They that stoned the Prophets and killed them that were sent unto them, and slighted all the meanes of grace, they that refused Christ, and would not heare him; they are now brought upon their knees, and are resolved now, if any course might be taken, to get Christ and mercy.* Tit. 1. 12. 13. one of their owne Prophets said, *The Cretians are alwayes lyers, evill beasts, and slow bellies: a man would thinke it a vain thing to meddle with them, they are such desperate wretches: but the text saith, Reprove them sharply, that they may be found in the faith,* so that a Cretian which is a filthy beast, by a sound reprove, may come to be a glorious Saint: and whereas the Jewes had loaden the Lord with their sinnes; therefore it was just with GOD to ease himselfe of his burden, and to send them and their sinnes downe to hell together. Thus a man would think; but the Lord did not so, as we may in *Esa, 43. 23. 25. I am hee that blotte out all thy transgressions, for my owne names sake, I will remember your*  
*your*

*your finnes no more*, and as the *Apostle* saith, Rom. 7. 29. 30. The Gentiles were full of all unrighteousnesse, worse then they almost could be for all kinde of degrees of sinne, and yet many of them became full of all holinesse: *Such were some of you* (saith the *Apostle*.) and in an other place we may see that a *Scarlet* sinner may become a *Saint* in nature: we know, *this* scarlet is such a deepe die, that all the *Art* under heaven cannot alter it: Yet the Lord can make of a *Scarlet* sinner, a milke-white *Saint*, Esa 1. 18. I doe not say it will ever be, and it doth alwayes come to passe, but it is possible.

The reason, is taken from the Lords Almighty goodnesse & power, the Lord is able to supply all wants, and amend that which is a misse, nay, he is able to do more then that thou standest in need of.

When the Lord made Heaven & Earth he did not spend all his strength, that he was able to helpe no more. No, no: he is All-sufficient still, hee is not only able to continue that good, which the creature hath, but to make a glorious supply of wh:soever is wanting, as *David* saith, *He pardoneth all thy iniquities and forgiveth all thy finnes*: Psal. 103. 3. not some, but all, otherwise he were not All-sufficient, unlesse he had a salve for every sore, and a medicine for every malady: if our finnes were more then God could pardon, or if our weakenesses were more able to overthrow us, then his strength to uphold us, he were not All-sufficient: Indeed there are some things which the *Scripture* saith: God cannot doe, but it is not because of the want of power in God, but because there is a weakenesse in the creature: As God cannot deny himselfe: but the more & greater our sins & vvickednesses are, the more will the strength & glory of his power appear in pardoning of them, and whose sin

abounds, there grace abounds much more in the pardoning of the same: Christ is All-sufficient in power to procure mercy for all thy sins, and the Spirit is all-sufficiently able to apply the satisfaction of Christ to thy soule, and therefore be thy condition never so feareful, (the sinne against the holy Ghost onely excepted) there is power and mercy in the Lord to pardon thee, and it is possible for thee to finde mercy.

*Use 1.* The first use is for reproofe, and it checks the desparate discouragement that harbours in the hearts of many poore sinners, that if they finde no power in themselves, no succour in the meanes; they doe question in this case, and presently conclude an impossibility to receive mercy, and they thinke there is no hope of pardon, as heretofore they have had, no care in sinning, because they cannot see how it may bee, they suppose it cannot be. This bringeth a great indignity to the Lord Iesus Christ, and a greate discouragement to themselves: Why? the Lord hath hardnesse, and difficulties at command. When the siege about Ierusalem was mervailous sore, and every man did despaire of any comfort or succour, the Prophet said, *before 10 morrowes this time shall a measure of fine flower be sold for a shekle.* 2. Kings 7. 1. 2. and then a Lord on whose hand the King leaned, saide, If the Lord should marke widdowes in Heaven, how can this thing be? and the Prophet said unto him, *Then shalt see it, but not eat of it,* so it is with many that begg often, and the Lord answereth not, so that the soule is marvailously starved, & the flood of iniquity comes in a maine upon the soule, and all his finnes come to his view, and the heart begins to reason in this manner, If the depths of Gods mercies should be opened, can all these finnes be pardoned & can this  
this



this damned soule of mine be saved? Surely, this cannot be. It is just with God wee should seeke mercy, given to others as bad as wee, and yet we not tast of it, because we distrust the Lord. *Caines* sinne was so much the greater, because hee said it could not be forgiven: so it is a horrible sinne to say, the Lord is not so mercifull, as the devill is malicious; and that the world, and a sinfull heart, shall be more able to damne me then God is to save me: if this were so, God were no God, and Christ no redeemer, and the Spirit no comforter: this is to make sinne, our selves, and the devill above God & the Lord Iesus Christ. Oh therefore, check all those discouragements of soule, which too much prevail with us.

*Vse 2.* Secondly, it is a ground of great encouragement to provoke the hearts of all wicked men under Heaven, to looke out of that condition wherein they are, for some mercy; because the most wicked of the world may bee wrought upon, and the most prophane heart may bee pierced; Who therefore would not have his heart quickned up, to seeke out for recovery from that estate wherein hee is? All you poore creatures, if there bee any here present, as I doubt not but there are; Oh you poore and ungodly sinfull creatures, my soule pities you, you that have had your hands imbrewed in the blood of Christ, and whose finnes are written with a pen of Iron, and are seen in every corner of the street, you that are thus in the gall of bitternesse, and yet in the kingdome of darknesse, though your case for the present be very desperate, yet here is a little twigge in the midst of the maine sea, whereupon you may lay hold. And this may make you looke up, the Lord may shew mercy unto you; as proud, as stubborne, and rebellious as  
 you,

you, have had mercy; If you have the hearts of men, looke for mercy, though your estate be fearefull for the present, yet, it may be good: God hath not set the seale of condemnation upon your finnes, hee hath not yet sent you to hell. Consider this whatsoever thou art, thou yet livest upon the earth, and enjoyest the meanes, and it is possible yet to have all thy finnes pardoned, Oh lay about thee, goe home, and say, Good Lord, were they pierced in their heartes, that pierced the Lord Iesus; and were their soules wounded? In conclusion then, why may not my porphane sinfull heart be humbled and pierced? It may be so; if the Lord say, *Amen*, it will be thus: that disease is not past remedy that hath bene cured in others, therefore let this stay thy heart: as bad as thou, have bene humbled, and brought home, and therefore why not thou?

*Object.* But the soule will say, Can all these abominations be removed? and is it possible all these rebellions of my heart should be pardoned, all this loosenesse and security should be cast behind the backe of the Lord? Surely it cannot be.

*Ans.* It is possible; onely labour thou that it may be, & that thou mayest not be puffed up with presumption, consider these three Cautions in thy seeking.

First, consider in thy seeking, a little mercy will not serve the turne; thou that hast bene an old wheather-beaten sinner, and hast wallowed in thy filthinesse, when thou goest to God for grace, consider it is not a little grace, or a small worke that will doe the deed; it is not a few spoonfulls or buckets-full, that will cleange a foule skinne; so if thou hast had a filthy prophane heart, which hath bene a thorow-fare to all wickednesse, and thou hast thus given thy selfe liberty therunto, and hast

CON-

continued therein. there must be a Well of mercy to purge such a miserable wretch as thou art.

When *David* had committed those two finnes of adultery and had continued in them long, he was forced to begge for much mercy, and to say, *Purge me, wash me, cleave me, Psal. 51.* O Lord these stains are mervailous deepe, therefore purge mee with *hysope*; nay, he had never done with it, because his sins were more then ordinary? So, it will cost a great deale of worke before a loose prophane drunkarde can be made cleane.

Secondly, thou must expect it with much difficulty & hardnesse in thy selfe, thou that hast beene rivetted in thy base lusts and corruptions, the Lord will make all crack before thou shalt finde mercy; thou that hast out-braved heaven with thy prophanesse, the Lord will make thee a mirrour of humiliation, as heretofore thou hast beene a spectacle of filthinesse. A man that hath had a bone long out of joynt, and it is now festred, it will make him cry many an *oh*, before it be brought into his right place againe; So it is with a man whose heart is full of filthinesse, it will cost him much paines and difficulty and heart-smart, before the Lord will bring the soule to a right set againe. *Manasses* humbled himselfe mightily before the Lord, because he had been a mighty proud rebellious man, the Lord made his humiliation as miraculous as his sins had beene, & so *David*, when he had given his sins ease in bedding with them, the Lord brake al his bones, and did awaken him with a witnesse.

3. Lastly, you must resolve to bestow the utmost of your endeavour to get this mercy at the hands of the Lord: It is not a dipping of a foule cloath in water will cleanse it, but it must be soked and rined in it: so you must not thinke to have

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the soule staines of sinne washed away with a few teares ; No, no , you must rub your hearts over & over, and awake your consciences againe and againe ; it is not a little examination, not a little sorrow will serve turne ; the Lord will pull downe those proud hearts of yours, and ( it may be, ) let you goe a begging for mercy all your dayes, and well you may have it at your last gaspe when all is done.

*Doctrine.* The first doctrine I will observe, is this: There must be a true sight of sinne before the soule can be broken ; for the text saith, They did first *heare*, and then apprehend the evill that was done by them ; and thus they were brought to a saving remorse for their sinnes : *Ezek. 36. 31.* the text saith, *Then shall you remember your owne evill wayes & your doings that were not good, and shall loath your selves for your abominations.* First, they shall remember their workes, and then loath themselves : it is the course that *Ephraim* takes in *Jerem. 31. 29.* *After that I was instructed, I smooz upon my thigh, and after I was turned, I repented, I was ashamed and confounded, because I did beare the reproch of my youth.* And it is Gods courle hee takes with his, as in *Iob. 36. 9.* *When the Lord had once gotten his people into fetters, he shewed them their wickednesse, & makes their eares open to discipline.* And in another place the Prophet sheweth the ground and reason why the people repented not, they understood not the ground and reason of their sin, *For no man saith, What have I done ? Jerem. 8. 6. 8.* As a horse rusheth into the battaile and feareth nothing, so a wicked man continues in a sinfull course, never considering what he hath done; the drunkard doth not say, *How have I abused Gods creatures ?* & the dispiser of Gods ordinances doth not say, *How have I rejected the Lord Iesus Christ ?*

Christ? And therefore no wonder though he bee not affected with that he doth.

Now for the better clearing of this doctrine, I will handle these three things, First, I will shew what this true sight of sin is: Secondly, I will shew the reason why there must be a true sight of sinne before the soule can be broken for it: Thirdly, I will make use of the point.

[ *What the true sight of sinne is.* ]

First, it is not every sight of sinne will serve the turne, nor every apprehension of a mans vilenesse; but it must have these two properties in it: First, he must see sinne clearly; Secondly, convictingly.

[ *The property of it.* ]

First, he that will see sin clearly, must see it truly and fully, and be able to fadome the compasse of his corruptions, and to dive into the depth of the wretchednesse of his vile heart, otherwise it will befall a mans sinne as it doth the wound of a mans body: when a man lookes into the wound overly, and doth not search it to the bottome, it begins to fester and ranckle, and so in the end he is slaine by it; so it is with most sinners, we carry all away with this, Wee are sinners; and such ordinary confessions; but wee never see the depth of the wound of sinne; and so are slaine by our finnes. It is not a generall slight, and confused sight of sinne that will serve the turne: it is not enough to say, It is my infirmity, and I cannot amend it; and we are all sinners, and so forth. No, this is the ground why we mistake our evils, and reforme not our wayes, because we have a slight & an overly sight of sinne: a man must prove his wayes as the Goldsmith doth his golde in the fire, a man must search narrowly

narrowly, & have much light to see what the vile-  
 nesse of his owne heart is, and to see what his sin-  
 nes are, that doe procure the wrath of God against him,  
 as the Prophet *David* saith : *I considered my wayes,*  
*and turned my feete into thy testimonies, Psal. 119. 59.*  
 the phrased in the originall is thus much ; I turned  
 my sinnes upside downe ; hee looked all over his  
 wayes. And as in *Zachary 11. 10.* *When the people shall*  
*looke unto him whom they have pierced, and consider the*  
*nature of their sinnes, then shall they mourne :* Note,  
 that this cleare light of sinne may appeare in two  
 particulars.

First, a man must see his sinne nakedly in its  
 owne proper colours, we must not looke upon sin  
 through many mediums, through profits, pleasures,  
 and the contentments of this world ; for so wee  
 mistake sinne : but the soule of a true Christian that  
 would see sinne clearely, hee must strip it cleane of  
 all content and quiet that ever the heart hath re-  
 ceived from any corruption, and the heart must  
 looke upon sinne in the danger of it ; as the adalte-  
 rer must not looke upon sin in regard of the sweet-  
 nesse of it, nor the drunkard upon his sinne in re-  
 gard of the contentment that comes thereby, nor  
 the covetous man in regard of the profit that comes  
 by his sinne : you that are such, the time will come  
 when you must die, and then consider what good  
 these sinfull courses will doe you : how will you  
 judge of sinne then, when it shall leave a blot up-  
 on thy soule, and a pilt upon thy conscience? What  
 wilt thou then thinke of it? We must deale with  
 sinne as with a serpent ; we must not play with a  
 serpent as children doe, because it hath a fine  
 speckled skin, but stie from it, because of the sting :  
 so we must deale with sinne . A prophaine Gallant  
 will prophaine the Sabbaths, because otherwise he  
 should be counted a Puritane : Looke not at the  
 speckled

speckled skinne of sinne : but how thou canst answer for thy sinne before God, especially seeing the Lord saith, *I will not hold that man guiltlesse that blasphemeth my name*, of what place or condicion so ever he be. Looke now on the nature of thy sinne nakedly.

Secondly, we must looke on the nature of sinne in the venome of it, the deadly hurtfull nature that it hath for plagues and miseries, it doth procure to our soules; and that you may doe, partly if you compare it with other things, and partly if you looke at it in regard of your selves : First, compare sinne with those things that are most fearefull and horrible; As suppose, any soule here present were to behold the damned in hell, and if the Lord should give thee a little peepe-hole into hell, that thou didst see the horror of those damned soules, and thy heart begins to shake in the consideration thereof; then propound this to thy owne heart, what paines the damned in hell doe endure for sinne, and thy heart will shake and quake at it, the least sinne that ever thou didst commit, though thou makest a light matter of it, is a greater evill then the paines of the damned in hell, setting aside their sinne; all the torments in hell are not so great an evill, as the least sinne is: men begin to shrinke at this, and loathe to goe downe to hell, and to be in endlesse torments.

[ *What a horrible thing sin is.* ]

Now I will make it good by three reasons, that sinne is a greater evill than those torments and plagues which the damned in hell doe endure.

### I. REASON.

The first reason is this: That which deprives a  
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man of the greatest good, must needs be the greatest evil; nature sayes so much; that which deprives a man of all that comfort and happinesse wherein the soule findes most content, that must needs be the greatest evil of all, but sinne onely deprives a man of the greatest good: for the good of the soule, is, to have a heart united unto God, and to have fellowship with him, to have him, and salvation through him, to be one with the Lord: this is the chiefeft good of the soule: All things here below are made for the good of the body, and the body is made for the good of the soule, and the soule is made for God; and these things here below are onely so far good to us, as they are meanes to make us enjoy a nearer communion with God: and contrarily, riches, and honours, and profits, and pleasures, are as so many curses to us, if by them our hearts be withdrawne from God: The reason why God is estranged from us, it is not because we are poore, or pursued, or imprisoned, or the like; but it is sinne that breakes the union betweene God and us, as the Prophet *Esay* saith; *Your finnes have separated betweene you and your God*: *Esay* 59. 2. Now that which separates from God which is the chiefeft good, it is our finnes; it is not punishment, that takes away the mercy of God from us; but a proud rebellions heart, and the contempt of Gods ordinances; Therefore sinne is farre worse than all the plagues that the damned doe or can suffer.

2. *Reas.* Secondly, because there is nothing so contrary and opposite against the Lord as sin & corruption; and this is the reason why God is the infliector of all the punishments of the damned in hell: it is through the Justice of God that they are damned, because God is of such a pure nature that sinne cannot be in him, nor practised by him.

3. *Reason,*



3. *Reas.* Thirdly, because it is sinne that doth procure all plagues and punishments to the damned, and therefore being the cause why they suffer, it must needs be greater than all punishments: for all punishments are made miserable by reason of sinne, therefore sinne is a greater evill than all the miseries of the damned, If a man were in prison and had the peace of a good Conscience, his prison would be a Pallace unto him, and though a man were in shame and disgrace, and yet have the favour of God, there were no misery in him; so it is with sinne, if no man suffer but for sinne, then sin is a greater evill than all other punishments, as being the fountaine from whence they flow.

Now let us looke upon sinne through these things, and when our corrupt heart provokes us, and the world allures us, and the devill tempts us to take any contentment in a sinfull way, suppose we saw hellfire burning before us, and the pit of hell gaping to swallow us, and sinne enticing of us, and let us say thus to our soules, It is better for a man to be cast into the torments of hell amongst the damned, than to be overcome with any sinne, and so to rebell against the Lord. Now therefore if those plagues and punishments make the soule shake in the consideration of them; Oh then blesse thy selfe so much the more from sinne which is the cause of all plagues whatsoever: Were a man in hell and wanted his sinnes, the Lord would love him in hell, and deliver him from all those plagues: But if any man were free from all punishments, and in honour, and wealth, if hee were a sinfull and wretched creature, the Lord would hate him in the height of all his prosperity, and throw him downe to hell for ever.

Secondly, wee must see sinne simply as it is in it

selfe, in regard of the proper worke of it; it is nothing else but a profest opposing of God himselfe; a sinfull creature joynes side with the devill & the world, & comes in battaile array against the Lord; and flies in the face of the God of hosts, when they they are called *haters of God*, Psalm. 83. that is, see grace in another man, in such a man, & in such a woman & hate them for it; little doe they thinke that they *hate the God of Heaven* and his holy nature; and if it were possible, they would have no God in heaven, to take notice of their sinnes, and call them to account for them, as the wise man *Camael* said to the *Pharises* and *Elders*, *Refraine your selves from these men, and let them alone, for if this Counsell or worke be of men, it will come to nothing, but if it be of God, you cannot destroy it, lest you be found fighters against God*; you make nothing of opposing the Gospell, and preaching thereof; I tell you, that there is never a creature that lives in any such sinfull course, but hee is a fighter against God, and hee resists the Lord as really as one man doth another: And as *Stephen* saith, *Ye stiff-necked & uncircumcised in heart, you have resisted against the holy Ghost*: You must not thinke that you resist men onely, no (poore creatures) you resist the Spirit, and so ayme at the Almighty in opposing of the meanes of grace; What a fearefull condition is this, I pray you, in cold blood consider this; and say thus, Good Lord! What a sinfull wretch am I? that a poore damned wretch of the earth should stand in defiance against the God of hosts, and that I should submit my selfe to the devill, and oppose the *Lord of hosts*?

And as you resist the Lord, so you doe also passe the sentence of condemnation upon your selves, and seale up that dooms which one day shall be  
 execu-

executed upon the wicked in hell at that great day of accompt; that looke what God shall doe then, the same thou doest now by sinning; this is the doome, or (as I may say) the necke-verse of the wicked and the last blow; as now thou doest depart from God by sinning, so then thou shalt depart from God for ever. A wicked man forsakes God, and plucks his heart from under the wisdom of God, that should informe him of the way of life, and the soule saith, God shall not blesse me, God shall not be God unto me; but I will live as I list, and I will run downe post-haste to hell. And when your hearts begin to rise against God and his ordinance, and your soules begin to goe against the Lord, I tell you what I would thicke with my selfe, suppose I heard the voyce of the *Archangell* crying, *Arise ye dead and come to judgement*; and the last trumpet sounding, and the Lord Iesus coming in the heavens with his glorious Angells, and did see the *Genes* standing *on the left hand*, and the *Saints on the right hand*, and with that I did heare the terrible sound, *Depart ye cursed*: would you be content to heare that sentence passe against your soules? Oh what lamentation and woe your poore soules would make in those dayes! and therefore consider it well, and say that I doe that in sinning which the Lord will doe in the day of Iudgement: shall I depart from the Lord, and withdraw my selfe from mercie, and say, Christ shall not rule over mee and save mee? Shall I doe that against my selfe which the Lord shall doe in that day? God forbid. There are two things hardly known; what God is, & what our sins are, or else we hardly apply the knowledge of them to our selves.

*Object.* But some will object and say, if sinne be so vile in it selfe, then why doe not men see it?

[*Why men see not the vilenesse of sinne.*]

*Ans.* To this I answer, the reason why men see not their finnes, though it be so vile, it is mainly upon these two grounds.

First, because wee judge not of sinne according to the Word and verdict of it, but either in regard of the profit that is therein, or the pleasure that wee expect there from. The Vsurer looks on his profit that comes by sinne, and the adulterer on his pleasure; and *Indas* saw the money, but he did not see the malice of his owne heart, nor the want of love to his *Master*, and this made him take up that course which he did, but when hee threw away his thirtie pence, the Lord made him see the vilenesse of his sinne; it came clearly to his sight, and therefore hee cryed out: *I have sinned, in betraying innocents blood.* As bribes blind the eyes of the wise and pervert judgement, so sinne bribes the eyes of the foolish, and therefore the Tradesman seeth much profits come by cozening and false measures, and so gives vway to himselfe therein, but hee sees not the sinne; so the oppressour seeth the morgages, and pawns that comes in, but he cannot see his sinne, till he be laid on his death-bed, and then the Lord sheweth him all the wrong that he hath done.

Secondly, another reason vwhy wee see not the vilenesse of sin, is, because vwee judge the nature of sinne according to Gods patience towards us: as thus, a man commits a sinne, and is not plagued for it, and therefore hee thinks God will not execute judgements upon him at all, *all things continue alike,* (saith the vicked man) as it hee had said, you talke of the vvrath of God that shall be revealed from heaven against all ungodlinesse: But vwhere is the promise of his coming? Doe you not see that  
such

such a man is an oppressour, and a prophane person; yet growes rich and thrives in the world; and because God spares a vicked man still for the present, therefore he thinkes all are but words, he shall be free from the punishment to come (as the Prophet saith in the name of the Lord) *These things hast thou done, and I kept silence. Psal. 50. 2.* when thou wast upon thy Alebench, & there thou didst speake against holinesse and purity: and because I did beare yet, and said nothing; therefore thou speakest vickedly, that *I was even such a one as thy selfe*; The vicked man takes Gods patience to bee a kinde of allowvance to him in his sinne, (as the Wise man saith) *because sentence against an euill worke is not speedily executed. therefore the hearts of the sonnes of men are w:oly set in them to doe mischese,* Eccles 8. 11. and as the Prophet saith, *they call the proud happy, They that worke wickednesse are set up, and they that tempt God are deliuered.* Mal. 3. 15. As vvhould say, you say that the vvrath of God is incensed against swearerers, and drunkards, and the like; but vve see them prosper, and because they doe prosper thus, their hearts are set to vvorke vickednesse: but howvfoever it is true the Lord doth sometime beare vwith vicked men; the longer God staves, the greater account they shall make, & the heavier judgements they shall receive from God. See vvhath Job saith, *Thou scalest up my transgressions in a bagge, and thou sewest up mine iniquities* Job 14. 17. Wicked men doe treasure up vengeance against the day of the Lord, the prophane person treasures up vvrath, and in the eighteenth verse he saith: *The mountains falling come to nothing: as if hee had said, Good Lord, vvhould can beare all these sinnes, that I have committed? Are they all scaled up, and shall all the judgements due unto*

them fall upon me heavier then the mountaines ? Good Lord , vvhhat rocke or mountaine can beare the vveight of my sins thus sealed up and settled , and laid close to my heart. And so God scales up an hundred thousand oaths in one bagge ; & an ocean of pride & mischiefes done to Gods people and Church , are barrellled up in another , & the Lord shall one day lay all these upon thy neck : Who is able to beare all these finnes ?

Nowv it falls out vwith a sinner as it is vwith a bankrupt debtor , one man throwes him into prison , and vvhben he is there , every one comes against him , and so he shall never come out , but die and rott in the prison : so , though the Lord vwill not execute judgement on thee speedily , yet in the end the Lord vwill be paid for all thy finnes ; and vvhben thou art in hell , then mercy , and justice , and patience vwill cry all to heaven for justice and vengeance ; then haply a drunkard is cast into prison for his drunkenesse , and for his blasphemy , and then all his filthinesse comes in as so many bills of inditement against him : Oh therefore labour to see sinne alive : vve play vwith sinne as if it vvere dead : vvhben children see the picture of a dead Lyon upon a vvall , they labour to pull him in pieeces ; but if there vwere a live Lyon in the place , it vwould make the strongest to runne . So thou paintest thy sinne , and sayest , it is thy infirmity , and God forgive your sweareing , and the like ; and thus you dally vwith your sins : but brethren , labour to see sinne alive , and to see sinne roaring upon you ; see the pavve of sinne , and the condemnation that shall be throwne upon the soule by it , and this vwill awake the soule in the apprehension of it .

[*Next*]

[ *How to see our sins convictingly.* ]

Secondly, vve must see sinne convictingly, that it may be so to us as it is in it selfe; that looke vvhath sinne is in it selfe, vvee may so conceive of it in our soules being guilty of it; and this discovers it selfe in these tvvo particulars.

*First*, vvhē vve have a particular apprehension in our ovvne person, that looke vvhath vvee confesse to be in sinne in generall, vve confesse the same in our ovvne soules; and that our finnes are as bad as the finnes of any: this is the cursed distemper of our hearts, hovvsoever vve hold it to be truth in generall, yet vvhē vve come to our ovvne finnes, the case is altered, and vve never come to the right seeing of them, as they concerne our ovvne particular. As the adulterer can easily confesse the danger and filthinesse of that sinne in others, but hee thinks not his sinne to be so vile; as the Wise man saith, *Hee that enters into the house of an harlot, doth hee ever returne againe, doth he ever take hold of the path of life?* Pro. 2. 19. The Lord is pleased to set such a heavie stampe on this sinfull distemperature. These are truthes, and a man in his cold blood vwill easily confesse it in the generall, that hee *never returnes againe*. Take the vvords as they are in the letter of them, and hovvsoever they have some other interpretations, yet in the letter it is thus read, *he is ever hardly recovered*, Hovvsoever it may be, yet vvith much difficulty. *David* had let his soule loose in that, and hee did hardly recover himselfe againe, scarce one of a thousand yet ever tooke hold of the vway of life. And the drunkard vwill confesse the danger of his sinne in generall, vvhē hee sees his drunken mates lie grovelling in the dust, he vwill be ashamed of of it, and say, *Novv no adulteres*

adulterer or drunkard shall ever come into the Kingdome of heaven; but here is the wound of it, when hee comes to his ovne particular drunkenesse and uncleannesse, that he must looke into them, then the sight of a mans knowledge hath not so much power as to judge himsefe rightly, or to make a particular application to himsefe; but hee thinkes his adultery and drunkenesse not like to another mans, or else his knowvledge is but vveake, or else hee seeth as a man in the tvy-light, when the sunne is dovvne, and the heavens begin to vvithdrawv their light: though a man can see to read abroad, yet he cannot see to read in the house or chamber; So it is vvith a vveake knowvledge, and vvith a feeble understanding in a vvicked man, he is not able to see the vile nature of sinne in himsefe, when hee comes to read his ovne closet finnes, and his bosome abominations, then hee hath not so much light as to perceive them so fully in himsefe as he thought to doe; therefore the rule is this: Arrest thy soule in a speciall manner of those finnes vvhereof thou standest guilt; that phrase in *Iob* is to good purpose, *Thou lookest narrowly to my pathes, thou settest a print upon the heeles of my seete*: *Iob* 13. 27. as God followed *Iob* to the hard heeles, and did narrowly observe his vvayes; so deale thou vvith thy ovne soule, and set a print upon the heele of thy heart; arrest thy heart in particular for thy finnes; and I vvould have you perceive your ovne particular finnes, and followv them to your hearts, and make hvy and cry after your finnes, and dragge your hearts before the Lord, and say; Is murther, pride, drunkenesse, and uncleannesse, such horrible finnes, and doth God thus fearefully plague them? Lord, it vvas my heart that vvas proud and vaine, it vvas my tongue that did speake filthy



filthily and blasphemously, my hand hath wrought wickednesse, my eye was wanton, and my heart was uncleane and filthy, Lord here they are; it is my affections that are disorderly, and it is I that doe delight too much in the world: Thus bring thy heart before the Lord; you shall observe the same in *David*, so long as *Nathan* spake of sinne in generall he conceived of it truly, and confessed the vilenesse of it; and the heart of this good King did rage against the man, saying, It is the *Sonne of death*: but as soone as the Prophet had said, *Thou art the man*, though hee never saw his sin kindly before, yet now his heart yeilded & hee began to see himselfe, & his sin in the naturall color of it. So the Apostle *John* saith, *He that hateth his brother is a man slayer, & you know no man slayer hath eternall life abiding in him.*

Then play thou the part of *Nathan*, and say, *I am the man*: it is this wretched heart of mine that hath hated the Saints of God; and therefore if I be a murtherer, will not my sinne keepe me from the Kingdome of heaven as well as another mans? Yes, that it will, if pride and stubbornnesse be such vile finnes in others, then they are so in mee: and as there must be a sight of our personall particular finnes; so,

Secondly, the soule must be set down with the audience of truth, and the conscience of a sinner should be so convicted, as to yeeld and give away to that which is knowne, as not seeking any shift or way to oppose that truth which is revealed; his particular apprehension of sinne, is like the inditement of a sinner before God, & his conviction is that which brings the soule to such a passe, that the heart will not, nay, it dares not, nay (which is more) it cannot escape from the truth revealed:

As

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As when a man is onely arrested, and no more, he may escape, therefore it is not enough particularly to arrest the soule, and bring it under command, that it cannot shift from the truth revealed; When the Lord comes to make rakes in the hearts of such as hee meanes to doe good unto; the text saith, hee will *reprove the world of sinne*, that is, hee will *convince the world of wickednesse*, hee will set the soule in such a stand, that it shall have nothing to say for it selfe, he cannot shift it off; for there is in every mans heart naturally such corrupt carnall pleading, that it labours to defeat and put by the worke of the word, that it may not come home to the heart. As a man in battaile array labours to put by the blow that it may not hit his body; so it is with a corrupt heart when the Word comes home to the soule, as it doth some times into the heart of a drunkard, or an adulterer, or a murtherer, and the word of God seemes to stab the heart, they put by the word of God by carnall shifts, and so breake the power of it, that it cannot have its full blow upon the soule, and so the word takes no place to any purpose in them.

Now this kinde of knowledg takes avay all shifts, that the soule hath nothing to say for it selfe, and pluckes avay all defence, that the edge of the word cannot be blunted, but that it will fall flat on the heart, this is that I would put to your consideration punctually; When there is that wisdom & knowledg revealed to the soule so powerfull, that it prevailes with the heart, and it gives vway thereto, so that all the replies and pleas of the soule be taken avay, and the soule falls under the stroke of the word, not quarrelling, but yeelding it selfe, that the word may worke upon it, and withall there is a *reflesse amazement* put into the

the heart of the creature, and a kinde of dazeling the eye, so that the soule is not content now before it see the worst of his sinne that is revealed, and then it lies under the power of that truth which is made known: these two make it plaine: The Minister saith, GOD hates such and such a sinner; and the Lord hates me too, saith the soule, for I am guilty of that sinne. Many times vwhen a sinner comes into the congregation, and attends unto the ordinary meanes of salvation, if now the Lord be pleased to worke mightily, at last the minde is enlightened, and the Minister meetes vwith his corruptions, as though he were in his bosome, and he answereth all his cavills, and takes away all his objections: With that the soule begins to be amazed to thinke that God should meeete with him in this manner, and saith, If this be so, as it is for ought I know, and if all be true that the Minister saith, then the Lord be mercifull unto my soule, I am the most miserable sinner that ever was borne.

Give mee leave to open a passage or two this way; Suppose there be an ignorant creature, that knoweth nothing, and he thinkes God vwill pardon him because he is so, and he need not consider of this or that vwhich the Minister calls upon him for: see vwhat God saith to such, *It is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them wil not have mercy on them, & he that formed them wil show them no favour*: Esay 27. 11. You thinke to carry all avvay vwith ignorance, but the God of heaven vwill shew you no pitie, and he that made you, vwill not save you: When a poore soule begins to consider of this, hee that made us, vwill save us: Will he not? No, hee vwill not: Not one of you, not your wife, nor children, nor thy servant: this drives the soule into amazement, vwhen the Lords vworks this truth

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in him, and hee frequents the ordinances more diligently, and sayes. If it be so, my case is fearefull; In conclusion hee findes every Minister saith so, and all vvrirings confirme it, and he seeth it is so indeed; and it is the vwill and vway of God: Then the soule is cast, and saith, I see this is just my estate and condition, and therefore vvoe to mee that ever I vvas borne.

This is right conviction, and though his carnall neighbours come to him, and begin to cheere him up, and say, The Lord is more mercifull than men are, *Ministers* must say something, &c. If the heart be truly convicted, it returnes this ansvvere, and saith: I have thought as you doe, but novv I see there is no such matter, these are but figge-tree leaves, and vvil not cover my nakednesse; It is true, Christ came to save sinners, and he came to humble sinners too, hee came to bind up the heart, and he came to breake the heart too. This is a great part of the spirit of bondage spoken of *Rom. 8. 15. VVee have not received the spirit of bondage to feare againe,* when God hath revealed a mans bondage to him: So that he sees himselfe bound hand and foote: for (marke it) so long as a mans keeps in these carnal shifts, he is not in *bondage*, But vvhen he is once in bondage and fetterd; he saith, If ever any had a proud heart, I am hee; If ever any vvere prophane, I am hee; And if ever GOD hated such vvretches, hee hateth me. Novv there is no escape, there is no plea at all, hee vvill not goe avway and say, there is no such matter, *Ministers* may say vvhat they vvill. No, no, the soule that is truly convicted of sinne yeelds it selfe, and saith, I have sinned; *Oh, what shall I doe unto thee thou preserver of man?* saith *Iob*, Chap. 7. 20. as if he had said, Lord, I have no plea at all to make, nor no argument to alledge, for  
my

my selfe, I onely yeeld up the bucklers, I cannot say so bad of my selfe as I am, I have sinned, and done foolishly in thy sight. Thus it is vvith a heart truely convicted, and throughly informed of the vilenesse of sinne; hee doth not vvithdravv himselfe and play least in sight, but hee saith, this is my condition just; the Lord met vvith my heart this day; God resists the proud and prophane in heart, and hee resists mee too; I have heard much, and vvould not bee informed, therefore it is just vvith God to harden my heart for ever; the Lord hath come often vvith many loving persvasions to allure mee, and dravv me to him: If the devill had had the meanes that I have had, he vvould have beene moved and more bettered by them than I have bin, and have done more than I have done's; I have hated and despised all, and to this day I have bin brought upon my knees; shall not Christ rule over me, and yet save me? No it cannot be, except I can bring my neck under the yoke of the Lord Iesus Christ, it is impossible I should be saved by him, I excuse not my selfe Lord; nay, I confesse I know more than all the men in the vvorld can speake by me, and I yeeld to all this and more, vvhat shall I say? *O thou preserver of men!*

*Reason.* The reason vvhy God deals thus vvith poore sinners, is taken from the office vvich the Lord hath placed betweene the heart in man; he ground lies thus.

[ *Why God convinceth men of their sins.* ]

First, you conceive and understand a thing: Secondly, you vvill, and choose it.

The first is the in-let of the heart, so that nothing can affect the heart, but so farre as reason conceiveth it, and ushers it home to the soule, thereupon

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the heart, as the King hath his Councillors which call all matters before them & consult about businesse, and then they bring them before the King, to have a finall sentence from him, to know what he will have, and what he will not have: So the understanding is like the Councillors, and the will is the Queene, the understanding saith, this or that is good, then the will saith, let me have it: the understanding saith, these and these duties are required, and the will embraceth them; the understanding conceives what sinne is, and the will saith, These and these evils have I done, and they will cost mee my life if I repent not: As it was with *Job*, when his *Oxen* and *Castell* were taken, it never troubled him, because he never knew it, but when hee heard of it by the messengers, hee said, *Naked came I out of my mothers wombe.*

There must be a messenger before hee can be grieved for the evil: So it is with the soule of a sinfull creature, the devill hath made a prey and a spoile of him, thou camest into the world in *Adam*, wise, holy, and gracious, but hee hath made thee ungodly and ignorant, and thou consideredst not this till God by his Ministers opens thy eyes, and makes thee see plainly, that the Image of sinne and Satan is upon thee, and that God is now become thy enemy, & that now thou goest on in the way to destruction, & art become the heire apparent of hell: And when these evil-tydings come to the understanding, that leaves them upon the heart and will of a man, and so lets it worke effectually upon it as God doth blesse the same, as *Paul* saith, *I know that through ignorance they did it, if they had knowne the Lord of life, they would never have crucified him,* Acts 3. 17.

This is the cause why we commit sin, because  
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vvee see it not, and therefore vvee sorrow not for it, As it is vvith some hot clymates in the vvorld, though there be never so much heate in the Sun, yet if there bee no entrance for the heat into the house, it vvill not scorch nor heat any, so the understanding is like the dore or entrance into the house, and sin is of a fiery and scorching nature, if there be no passage, if the mind knowv not, the Will vvill not be affected vvith sin, it vvil never scorch his conscience, though a man carry sin enough in his bosome to sinke his soule for ever, yet vvee suffer it not to vvorke upon us, and vve attend not to it, because the brasen vvall keepes it off: as the Proverbe is, That the eye never sees, the heart never rues. Because vve see not our evils, and discern not our sinnes so clearly as vvee should, therefore it is impossible vve should bee touched for them as vvee ought to be.

*Vse. 1.* The first use is for instruction from the former truth delivered, vvee may learne that an ignorant heart is a naughty heart, and a miserable vvretched heart, vvwhether it be out of ignbrance that man cannot, or out of vvilfulnesse that they vvill not apprehend their conditions, both are merveilous sinfull and miserable, I desire to deale plainly in this point, because I knowv there are many that doe flatter themselves in their conditions, and thinke all is vvell vvith them, I vvill say nothing of the cause, but I appeale to the hearts of all that heare mee this day, and your selves shall be Iudges in these particulars: Imagine you did see a poore sinner come before you, & lay open his condition, and bevvaile it vvith bitternesse, saying, That for his ovvne part hee never did find his heart touched for his sinnes, nor sorrow for his corruptions did ever enter into his soule, but hee hath lived senselesse  
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and carelesse, and for this wounding of spirit hee counted it a wonder, for this humblenesse of heart it was ever a riddle unto him: let any one passe sentence upon this man now, and tell mee seriously, what doe you thinke of such a person? I heare (me thinks) every man reason thus, (and every mans heart shakes at it) and saith, Good Lord, what a senselesse poore ignorant creature is this? If no humbling for sinne, no pardoning for sin, and no share in Christ, no salvation. What is this a good heart that is not in the way to receive any good? If a man be never broken for sinne, God will never bind him up, and if never humbled, and burthened for his sinne, God will never ease him of it.

Therefore vvoe to that soule that is thus miserable and accursed, I beseech you passe this sentence against your selues: Oh brethren, the hearts of men are past this brokennesse of spirit, nay, they are enemies to it, they never had their judgements cleared and convicted of their sinnes, and therefore their hearts were never broken, and this brokennesse is so farre from their heart, as it never came into the head, vvee thinke not of the foule nature of sinne: Doest thou thinke this to bee a good heart that was never humbled and prepared for Christ? alas, it is so farre from being truly wrought upon, that it was never in any way to partake of mercy from God, therefore thy condition is meruailous miserable, thy misery is as great as thy sinne, if not greater, because when a lioufull creature is wounded and galled for his sin, there is some hope he may be cured and helped, but an ignorant soule is not capable of it, he is in hell and seeth it not, he is under the powver of Satan, and thinkes himselfe at liberty, nay, for the present, hee is incapable of any good from the meanes appointed to that end.

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It is vvith an ignorant soule as it befell the drunkard that vvas asleepe on the top of the Mast, vwho feares no harme, because hee sees it not. So it is vvith a sinfull heart, hee is resolved to goe on still in his sinne, because hee seeth not the danger: take a man that hath his heart stabbed vvith a Stiletto, and the vvound is so narrowv, that it cannot be searched, there is no meanes to come to it: Iust so it is vvith a blind ignorant heart, there is much meanes vvhereby good might be done to it, but an ignorant heart barres all out, so that nothing can doe good to the soule, All counsels, admonitions, reproofes cannot prevaile, all mercies allure not, because they find no sweetnesse in them, a Minister is as able to teach the stoole vvhereon hee sits as to doe them good. Mee thinkes it is vvith a vvorld of men that live in the bosome of rhe Church, as it is vvith such as have suffered shipvvrack, they are cast upon the vvaves, and their friends are standing upon the shoare, and see them, and mourne for them, there they see one sinking, and another floating upon the vvaves, even labouring for his life, and they sigh and mourne, but cannot helpe him, Iust so is it vvith ignorant people that are svalloved up vvith the floods of iniquity, here is one man going, and there another in the broad vvay to destruction, and vvée pittie them, and pray for them, that God vvould open their eyes, and give them the sight of their sinnes; but alas they are not able to conceive of any thing. Wee cannot come at them, and thus they sinke in their sinnes.

Our Saviour looking over Ierusalem, said, *Oh that thou hadst knowne at least in this thy day the things that belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.* Luke 29.42. As if he had said, *Oh now thy are sinking, they vvill not be reformed:*

not reclaimed, now they are going the way of all flesh, and to hell too, the way of peace is hidden from their eyes, they refuse the means that may doe them good, I might here condemne the Papists that say, ignorance is the mother of devotion, whereas it is the breeder of all wickednesse, and the broad way to hell and everlasting destruction.

*Use.* The use is this, as you desire the comfort of your soules, and to be prepared for mercy, and to partake of that rich grace that is in Christ, as you desire to have the rich promises of the Gospell put over to you, as ever you would have the Lord Iesus Christ a guest to your soules, you are to be entreated to give your soules no content, till you have your eyes so opened to see your finnes, that you may be convicted of them.

*Quest.* Now it may be some will say, it is good that you say: but what means must wee use to come to this sight of sinne?

*Answ.* I answer to such poore soules, give mee leave to doe three things:

[*Meanes how to see sinne convictingly.*]

First, I will shew some meanes how wee may come to see sinne convictingly.

Secondly, I will take a way all the lets that may hinder a man from it.

Thirdly, I will use some motives to stirre us up to use the meanes, and set upon the service, though it bee some what harsh and tedious to our corruptions. The meanes are three.

First, we must goe to God for knowledge; the Lord knowes our hearts, therefore wee must goe to him, that he would make us able to know them too: the Church of *Laodicea* thought none like her selfe, as it is the fashion of many in this age so to doe.

doe, and therefore the Lord said, *Thou thoughtest thy selfe rich and full*, and that thou *didst want nothing*: It is an argument of a proud sinful heart, that hee is alwayes vvell conceited of himselfe, and of his ovvne vvit, grace, and sufficiencie: but marke vvhats the Lord saith to his Church, I counsell thee to buy of me *eye salve*: She thought all her count-  
 pters to be good gold, and all her appearances to be good Religion: But the Lord bids her buy of him *eye salve*, As if hee had said, you see not your finnes, &c. and therefore goe to GOD, and beseech him that dvvells in endlesse light to let in some light into your soules.

When the poore blind man *Bartimous* sat beg-  
 ging by the vway, saying, *O thou sonne of David have mercy upon me*, Mark. 10. 15. and pressed earnestly upon our *Saviour*, in so much that vvhens his *disciples* rebuked him, hee cryed so much the more, *O thou sonne of David have mercy on me*: and vvhens *Christ* said, *What vouldst thou have me to doe for thee*: he answered, *Lord, that I may receive my sight*. If hee did so earnestly seeke for his bodily eyes, much more should vvee for the eyes of our soules, that vvee may see our finnes.

*Object.* A blind mind brings a vvicked heart vvith it, and layes a man open to al finnes, & therefore vve ought to be more pinched for the vvant of this sight, then of our bodily eyes: and if the question be asked, what vouldst thou have? *honour, riches*, or the like?

*Answer*: O Lord, the sight of my sins, I know sin is a vile loathsome thing: O that I could see sinne convictingly and clearely!

## 2. MEANES.

Secondly, labour to acquaint your selves thoroughly  
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with God and with his law, and to see the compass and breadth of it; the words of the commandements are few, but there are many sins forbidden in them, and many duties required.

The Apostle *Paul* thought himselfe once *alive without the Law*, Rom. 7. and who but hee in the world? hee was able to carry all before him, hee thought his penny good silver; but when the *Law came* (saith the text) *then sinne revived*, when God had opened his eyes to see his sinne, and the corruptions of his heart, then he saw himselfe a dead man; yet *Paul* was a Pharisee, and brought up at the feet of *Gamaliel*, and one that did keepe the Law of God in a strict manner. Whence we learne, that a man may be an ignorant man, be his parts never so great for humane learning; and the same Apostle saith, *I had not knowne lust, except the Law had said, thou shalt not lust*, by which is meant the tenth commandement; which forbids the secret distemper of the heart, though there is no delight and consent to it; who but *Paul*? and yet hee knew it not, and therefore no wonder though many otherwise will learned are ignorant in Gods law, therefore looke your selves in this glasse of the Word, all you that say, how ever you are not able to talke so freely as others, yet you have as good a heart to God as the best, I tell you, if you could but see the filthinesse of your hearts, you would bee out of love with your selves for ever.

### 3. MEANS.

Thirdly, binde your hearts to the peace and good behaviour, and be willingly content to take every truth that is revealed, without quarrelling; and I would have a man to bind his heart, hand, and foote, that they may not dare to have any  
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bling against the revealed will of God, that so what ever truth is delivered, though never so crosse and contrary to his corrupt nature, the soule may be willing to bee under the blow of it, and let the strength of the Word come full upon it; And this will make us feelingly to understand our condition: as in *Iob*, when God had taken downe his proud heart; see how he submits himselfe, *Behold, I am vile, what shall I say? I will lay my hand upon my mouth, I have sinned; but I will goe no further.* *Iob* 40.3. as though hee had reasoned thus with himself, I have (I confesse) pleaded too much for my selfe, I have made more shift for my selfe then was needfull, I have gaine-said thy Word, but now no more. Now if any man seeme to quarrell and take up armes against the truth of God, let that man know hee was never truly humbled for his sins: It is a sinfull rebellious spirit that carries it selfe thus against God and his Word; the shifts whereby the soule labours to beat back the power of the Word, may bee reduced to these three heads,

I. S H I F T.

[ *How the soule labours to beat backe the power of the word.* ]

First, the soule hath a slight apprehension of sinne, and thinketh that it is not so haynous, and so dangerous, as those hot spirited Ministers beare men in hand; this is usually the common conceit of all men naturally, and even of us all, more or lesse, to make a slight account of sin, and that for these foure respects.

[ *Why men make slight account of sinne.* ]

First, in respect of the commonesse of it; be-  
cause

cause that every man is guilty of it, wee slight it; what saith one; Good now, what then, are not all sinners, as well as wee? though wee have many failings, yet we have many fellowes.

1. If wee were drunkards, or whoremongers, then it were somewhat: Thou sayest true indeed, thou hast many fellowes in thy sins, and thou shalt have share with many fellowes in the punishment to come; there is roome enough in hell for thee and all thy fellowes, hell hath opened her mouth wide; nay, the more companions thou hast had in thy finnes, the more shall bee thy plagues.

*Quest.* O (saith one) all the world lies in sinne, and wee doe no more than the world doth.

*Answ.* But if the world lies in sinne, Christ never prayed for the world, and he will never save the world; What a senselesse thing is this to bee such a one as God hates? Is this all thy pleasure, that thou art a hater of GOD? What odds is it for a man to bee stabbed with a penknife, or with a speare; or for a man to be murdered in the streets, or in his bed? so, though thy finnes be not hidious blasphemies, & the like, yet if they be petty oathes, they are enough to sinke thy soule; It is not your great swearer, but no swearer shall come into the Kingdome of Heaven. The text saith not, no great liars shall enter into Heaven, but, no lyers shall enter into Heaven; what difference is there betweene a man that goes to hell for open rebellion; and a man that goes to hell for civill profession? and what difference is there betweene an open adulterer and a secret adulterer?

*Quest.* But some will say, Are not all sinfull by nature? and are not some saved? and why not I as well as others?

*Answ.*

For answer, I say, no man is saved by nature; but

but if any be saved, the Lord opens his eyes and breakes his heart, and so it must bee with thee too, if ever thou thinkest to receive any mercy from God.

Secondly, there is also a naturallnesse in a sinfull course, therefore say not, it is my nature and infirmity, and I am of a cholerick disposition, I shall sometimes sweare, when I am angry, and I cannot but be drunke sometimes, when I light into good company.

*Quest.* What would you have us Saints on earth?

*Ans.* I, either Saints or Devils, never sanctified, never saved; never purged, never glorified, as the Apostle Saint Iohn saith, *Hee that hath his hope purgeth himselfe, as he is pure; 1 Ioh. 3, 3.* he stri- veth with his whole endeavour to be pure, and alwayes hee hath a respect to all Gods comman- dements; And as the Author to the *Hebrewes* saith, *Purifire saith and holinesse, without which no man can be saved. Heb. 12. 14.*

If thou dost say, if it were an honour to pray in my family, and if Gentlemen and Knights did it, I would doe it. I tell thee, if *holinesse* doth seeme to fly away by disgrace & persecution, then you must *pur- sue it*; Nay, dost thou say it is thy nature to sin? Then I say the greater is thy wickednesse, if it be thy nature so to doe: Wee hate not a man because he drinkes poyson, but wee hate a Toad because it is of a poysonous nature; therefore rather mourne the more for thy sinnes, because it is thy cursed nature so to doe; And say, *Lord*, did onely temp- tations, or the world allure mee to this, there were some hope that thou wouldest have mercy upon mee: but, O Lord, I have a cursed nature, and though there were no Devils, no world, no temptations outwardly, yet this cursed nature of mine would sinne against thee.

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They that have received Christ, have a new nature; and therefore if I have a carnall corrupt nature, then my condition is most fearefull; And say, did temptations and the world allure me, then there were some hope of mercy; but it is my nature to sinne, and therefore my estate and condition is most miserable and wretched: *Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver mee from this body of death?* Rom. 7.

Thirdly, many say, words are but winde, and all this winde shakes no corne; And so when we presse men to the inward worke of the soule, not onely to keepe men from the halter; but to tell them, they must pull down their proud hearts, and be humbled for their finnes, and the like; then they reply, thoughts fly away suddenly, & thoughts are free.

To which I answer; these words are such wind, as wil blow down thy soule into the bottomlesse pit of hell. It is not I that say so, but our *Saviour* himselfe, *By thy wordes thou shalt be justified; and by thy wordes thou shalt be condemned:* Matth 12.37. Though you make nothing of your swearing, and idle thoughts, and revilings of Gods people; yet the God of Heaven will require them at your hands, and you shall either receive acquittance from Christ, of them, or else vengeance for ever for them: *For the Lord commeth with thousands of his Saints in flaming fire to punishe,* Iud. 15. not onely murderers and adulterers, and the like, but *all ungodly ones;* the Lord will call thee to an accompt for all thy abominations; nay, for all thy speeches against the people of God, upon thy Ale-bench when thou didst toss them to and fro, and the *Lord will see thy finnes in order before thee:* Psal. 50. nay, hee will call thee to an account for them, for all thy



thy thoughts, though they are sudden and quickly passed over, as the Prophet *Ieremiab* saith: *O Ierusalem, how long shall thy vaine thoughts remaine in thee?* *Ierem. 4. 15.* Whatsoever men think of thoughts, yet they are the very life and sinewes of sinne, and they are brought forth by meditation of a mans corruptions in this kind.

[ *How sinfull thoughts are produced.* ]

A man may sin more in thought than in any other kind whatsoever; both in regard of the vile-nesse of sin, and his unavoydablenesse thereof. As theefe cannot rob all the towne, but a covetous man may with all in the towne were hanged, that hee might have their goods; and so an adulterer cannot commit sinne with every woman in the towne, but he may lust after both, the goodly and prophane, and hee may commit adultery both with the chaste and unchaste too in his thoughts; A man may sinne infinitely in this kind, and never have done: for no company nor place can hinder an adulterer from sinning and lusting, nor the malicious man from envying in his heart, nor the covetous man from desiring the goods of other men. Though thou darrest not cut the throat of a Minister, yet thou canst malice all the Ministers in the country.

Fourthly, the soule hath a strange inward resolution of cleaving to sinne, whatsoever can be said or done to the contrary. And this inward resolution of the soule hath a delight in corruptions, though hee die, & bee damned for the same; this plucketh the heart from the Word, and layeth so many mists upon the understanding, that it cannot see the truth; when the soule hath nothing to say for it selfe, is falls to open and profest reviling of Iesus Christ, and defying of him; and hence it is that

after many good arguments the soule stands as it were at a set, and saith, I will not beleevē it though there were five thousand Ministers to perswade mee to it: and why doth he so? hath he any argument to alledge? No, not a word, but hee that is proud will be proud, and hee that is a swearer will sweare, and will not make conscience of any thing; this comes from a proud and a sturdy heart. When *Jeremiah* would have convinced the people of their sinnes, and of the punishments threatned to them, they said, *Thou speakest falsly, there is no such matter: Jer. 43, 2.* So it is, with many a carnall heart now adayes; if the Minister of G O D will not please their phantasies, then all the businesse is, They knew all this before: when as indeed they know nothing at all. Therefore, saith God, *Take heed, there bee not in any of you a roote of bitternesse, if the soule heareth the law and blesseth himself in his wickednesse, and saith, I shall have peace though I walke after the imaginations of my owne heart, the Lord will not spare that man, but the jealousie of the Lord shall smoeke against him, Deut. 32. 28. 29.* this roote of bitternesse is nothing else but sinne, and a resolution to continue in it: For the Lord Iesus sake consider this, there are too many of these in the Congregation, wilt thou not beleevē Gods word, I tell thee thou deniest almost that there is a G O D, and thou renoucest the Lord Iesus Christ and salvation by him, thou sayest in effect, there is no God, and that there is not any meanes of grace revealed. What devilish blasphemy is this? let me speake to the terror of all such hearts, hell never entertained any such thoughts, the devils in hell for ought I know, have not any such profest resolutions, *the devils beleevē and tremble*, the devils beleevē that the *Scriptures* are the word of G O D, and they know there

there is infinite mercy in God, but they shall never taste of it, and they know, all the plagues threatened shall come upon them, and they shake & tremble at the remembrance of it. What, doe the devils consent to the word of God, and conceive of it, and know that it is the truth of God, and shall bee made good upon them? Then good Lord, of what a strange temper art thou, that wilt not beleeve it, and that wilt not consent that it is true? the devil is not worse than thou art in this case: I must confesse that the consideration of these passages sometime makes the soule of a poore Minister shake within him, and were it in my power as it is not, the first worke that I would doe, should bee to humble and breake the hearts of all such vile wretches, but all that I can or wil doe, is this, that which the holy man *Moses* spake, and hee spake it with a marvelous caution, you that never came to the sight of this horrible contempt, *Take heed that there bee not any among you, that saith, It shall goe well with me, whatsoever the Minister saith.* It is as much as your soules are worth: and to such as are guilty of this sinne I will give the same counsell that *Peter* gave to *Simon Magnus*, who had a base esteeme of the gifts of the Spirit: *O (saith Peter) pray that if it bee possible the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee.* Acts. 8. 22. It is a fearefull thing, it is a marvelous opposing of grace, And for you, whose eyes God hath opened, goe home and consider of the miserable estate of all such as lie in this sinne, goe to prayer, and send up requests in the behalfe of all such poore creatures, and say, Is it so Lord, that there are many such who have the name of Christians, that will not bee reformed nor humbled? Good Lord, that many, that have the name of Christians, will not come in, thy word will not

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prevaile nor take place in their hearts? Good Lord breake their hearts in pieces, breake in upon them, and let thy Word overcome them in mercy and compassion, and bring them to the true knowledge of sinne here, and happinesse hereafter. And thus much of the first cavill.

2. *Shife.* Secondly, the soule saith, I confesse I see more now than ever I conceived of before, I did not conceive that sinne was so haynous, and so dangerous as it is: Now I see it is mervailous great and dangerous, yet this is my hope, that whatsoever falls, it will not light upon me, and therefore what need I care, I hope to prevent it, and then all will bee well. When the Word comes faire and full upon the conscience of a man, and would pierce his heart, and meetes him in every place as the Angell did *Balam*, hee will have some fetch or other to put by the Word, and hee sayes, I hope for all this, the danger shall not fall upon mee.

Now the way that the soule useth to put by the word, &c to prevent the danger threatened appears in these three particulars.

[ *How the soule puts by the threathings of the word.* ]

The first is this, how ever sin is never so vile in it selfe, and hee is guilty thereof, yet hee thinkes the God of Heaven doth not attend to his finnes, or else he is not so just or righteous, that hee will punish him for them. Indeed, if he were some notorious wretch, as a murderer, or an adulterer, or a theefe, or such like, then he had cause to feare, but God will not bring him to an account for every small sinne. That this is the sleight of the soule, I will shew you, and then shew you how to avoid it.

It is ordinary with every carnall heart more or lesse, to reason as *Eliphaz* with *Job*, how doth God know? can hee judge through the darke? thicke clouder are a covering to him that hee seeth not, hee walketh in the circuits of heaven, *Job* 22. 13. It is the guise of wicked men to say so: Nay, it is that which the hearts of Gods people are driven to a stand withall, when they consider the passages of wicked men, now God seeth them and doth not punish them, they say, How doth God know? and, *Is there knowledge in the Almighty?* When the *Prophet* saw the way of the wicked to prosper, their eyes to start out with fainesse, hee saith, *Doth God see this, and not punish it?* as if he had said, Did GOD care for all that is done here below, could he brooke such strange oppositions of his word, and his Gospell, and his members? I doubt not, but that there is many an adulterous heart, that thinkes a darke night shall cover all his abominations; and the malicious man that contrives evill against Gods children, hee thinkes that GOD considers not his course, or else that GOD will not trouble himselfe to execute judgement upon him for all his finnes. As the *Prophet* saith, The Lord will not doe Good nor Evil, hee is marvelous quiet, hee will not trouble himselfe, neither for the good, nor for the evill that is deserved by us: Nay, this is the bane of our Ministry, when people heare of many judgements denounced against sinne and sinners (I tell you what they thinke of all this) they thinke they are words of course.

If the adulterer or drunckard did consider that no such person should inherit the Kingdome of Heaven, durst they goe on? surely no. But they thinke they are but the words of some hot spirited Minister, to awe, and scare men, and keepe them in

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compasse, and they will not be perswaded, but GOD is more mercifull then so, that hee should punish for every small sinne, they thinke this is more than reasonable, *Let him make speed* (saith the wicked) *that we may see it*, Esa. 5. 19. *and let the counsell of the most high draw nigh, that we may know it.* Zeph. 1. 12. As if they had said, You Ministers tell us much of Gods wrath against *Ierusalem*, let us see those enemies, and let the Lord bring to passe now, all these words are but winde, &c.

These are the carnall cavills of gracelesse persons, To which I answer, It is desperate ignorance, and mervailous Atheisme of heart, whereby the devill labours to keepe men in sinne, the *Lord knows thy thoughts long before*, if thou wouldest hide thy selte from the Lord in the darke, the day and the night are all one with him, nay, the Lord will *search Ierusalem with candles*: the word in the originall signifies to *tracke her*, Nay, hee will not leave searching till he find thee out, *for the wayes of man are before the Lord, and he ponders all his doings*, Pro 5. 21. *and if our hearts condemne us, God knoweth all things, and is greater then our hearts.* 1 Ioh. 3. 20. Doth thy Conscience check thee for vaine thoughts, and our sed devices? then GOD knoweth much more by thee than thou knowest by thy selfe. God did see *Achan* stealing the *wedge of gold*, and *David* in his adultery, and he seeth all the malice of thy heart against his Saints, and all thy uprising of heart against Gods word: Nay, the Lord seeth all the pranks of the adulterer in the darkest night, and God is just to bring all things to judgement, and thee also to an accompt for them, *In vaine it is for wicked men to digge deeps, to hide their counsell from the Lord: These things hast thou done* (said God) *and I kept silence, and therefore thou thoughtest I was altogether*

*that such a one as thy selfe, but I will reprove thee, and set all thy finnes in order before thee, Plal. 50.*

You must not thinke God is so gentle, No, he will set all your sins in order before you, if not here for your humiliation, yet hereafter for your everlasting confusion: the drunkard shall then see all his pot-companions, and the adulterer his mates, and the unjust person all his trickes, Rom. 2. 14. Inde 25. nay, G O D will not bate thee one thought of thy heart, bee where you will, God will find you out with his judgements, and say, Lo, here is thy pride, and here is thy murder, and here are all thy abominations, this is the wretch that could carry fire in one hand, and water in the other, these are thy finnes, and this shall be thy punishment.

2. *Obiect.* Secondly, if God be so mighty (say they) that he knowes all, and will call us to an account for all, then it is but sorrowing so much the more, and that wee will doe afterwards, and this will make all well enough, it is but repenting.

*Ans.* To this I answer: Doe you make a *bus* at it? be not deceived, *God is not*, nay, cannot be *mocked*, and therefore delude not your owne soules, every repentance will not serve the turne, thou mayest have remorse of heart, and repent, and cry to God for thy finnes, and this tormenting of thy heart will bee but a forerunner of thy everlasting damnation hereafter: the Lord may deale with thee as *Moses* said of the people of *Israel*, *I cu returned and wept before the Lord, but hee would not hearken to your voice.* Deu. I. 14. So the time may come that all weeping and wailing will not serve the turne. You see *Judas* wept, and *brought backe the thirty pieces of silver*, Mat. 27. 3. hee had mervailous horror of conscience, hee tooke shame to himselfe, and made restitution, and yet a damned creature for ever.

Thou that thinkest it such an easie matter, aske thy owne haert this question : Canst thou bee content to lay open all thy cursed sinfull courses, and all the wrong that thou hast done ? Consider what a hard matter it is to bring thy heart to it, to confesse all thy close adulteries, and when thou hast done all this, thou mayest be as farre from salvation as *Judas* was, who went & *hanged himselfe*, therefore it is not every sorrow will serve the turne, and bring comfort to thy soule, but it must bee repentance of the right stampe : And againe, dost thou thinke thou hast repentance at command ? this is that which cuts the throat of mens soules, and deprives them of all the benefit of the meanes of grace, thou art not sure thou shalt live, though thou doest, thou hast power of thy selfe to repent savingly, and shall any man be so fencelesse, as to hang his happinesse on that which cannot helpe him ? If thou didst consider thy owne weakenesse, thou wouldest not say that repentance is in thine owne power. Remember what the *Apostle* saith . 2. Tim. 2. 25. 26. *Proving if peradventure at any time GOD would give repentance, that they may acknowledge the truth, and come to amendment of life out of the snare of the devill.* It is onely but *peradventure*, it is a reare worke, and few have it.

*Quest.* Thirdly, some will say, God may give me repentance, Christ came into the world to *save sinners*, and why may hee not save mee ?

*Answ.* I answere, is that all ? is it come to this ? And who knowes but that GOD may damne thee too ? if that be all, why may you not say more truly, what know I, but that God may give me up to a hard heart, and a blinde minde for ever, and I may for ever bee cast out of the presence of God ? is it but, *It may be all this while* And therefore  
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for a full answer, consider these two things to shake off this carnall security, vvhich by men resolve to pinne their salvation on G O D S mercie, to oppose his mercy. First, know this, that there is a time when God will not shew mercy, Behold, saith God, I gave her a time of repentance, but shee repented not, therefore I will cast her upon the bed of sicknesse: Revel. 1. 21. 22. and as our Saviour saith to Ierusalem, Oh that thou hadst knowne in this thy day, things belonging to thy peace; but now they are hid from thy eyes, Luke. 19. 43. G O D had sealed up his mercy, and the day of salvation was past, and when the day is over, though Noah, Daniell, & Iob, should pray for a people they should save neither sonne nor daughter. Ezek. 14. 14. And if thy Father did pray for thee that art a childe, if mercy be past, the Lord will not spare that man, saith the text: as if the Lord had said, I have abundance of mercy, but thou shalt never taste of it; nay, for ought I know, the Lord may set a seale of condemnation upon thee, and so give thee over to all evill, to all sin, to all curses; and blot out thy name from under Heaven: Are you yet perswaded that this is Gods word? If you were but perswaded of the sorrow some have had, it would make you looke about you; The Wise man saith, Pro. 2. 28. *Thou wisdome professeth to possesse out abundance of mercy saying, Oh you simple ones, how long will you contemne and despise purity and holinesse?*

Now make, when a people hath had this mercy, and wisdome offered to them, and yet they will despise it; then shall they cry and call, but I will not answer (saith God) they shall seeke mee early, but shall not finde mee. The period of Gods patience is come to an end, and there is no expectation of mercy; Call, and call you may, but God will not heare you;

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you; you, whose consciences flie in your faces, and tell you, that you have despised mercy, and you would none of Gods Counsels, and you hate the knowledg of his wayes: Doe you thinke to get it now by crying, when the date of mercy is out? No, no, you would have none of Gods mercy before, and now he will none of you: Do you thinke it fit, that grace, and mercy, and the spirit, should still stand and wait upon you, & strive, and alwayes be despised? Is it not mervailous just, that that word which you have despised, should never worke more; and that mercy you have refused, should never bee offered to you any more? It is just, and you shall finde it so in the end, and therefore take heede the termes of mercy be not out.

4. Lastly, if wee cannot avoyde it, then wee are resolved to beare it as we may; if we be damned, wee shall undergoe it as wee are able. This is that wee poore Ministers find too ofren by woefull experience, that when wee have taken away all evils from wicked men, and then if we could weepe over them, and mourne for them, & beseech them to consider of it aright: Marke what they say, good sir, spare your paines, wee are sinners, and if wee be damned, then every tub must stand upon his owne bottome; wee will beare it as well as wee can: What, is the wind in that doore? Is that all you can say? O woe to thee that ever thou wert borne! O poore creature, I if I should cease speaking, and all of us joyne together in weeping, and lamenting thy condition, it were the best course; Is it impossible thou shouldest ever beare Gods Wrath; And let these three considerations be remembered and retained, which will make any man to tremble, even the vilest wretches who will blaspheme and swear, & if they be damned (they say)

(say) they have borne something, and they will also beare this as well as they can.

First, judge the Lyon by the pawe, judge the torments of hell by some little beginnings of it; and the dregs of Gods vengeance, by some little sips of it; And judge how unable thou art to beare the whole by thy inability to beare a little of it in this life, in the terrour of conscience (as the Wiseman saith) *A wounded spirit who can beare?* When God layes the flashes of hell fire upon thy soule, thou canst not endure it; whatsoever a man can inflict upon a poore wretch, may be borne but when the *Almighty* comes in *battails array* against a poore soule, how can he undergoe it? witness the *Saints* that have felt it, as also witness the wicked themselves, that have had some beginnings of hell in their consciences. When the Lord hath let in a little horror of heart into the soule of a poore sinfull creature; how is hee transported with an insupportable burthen? *When it is day, hee wisheth it were night, and when it is night, hee wisheth it were day.* All the friends in the world cannot comfort him; nay, many have sought to hang themselves, to doe any thing rather than to suffer a little vengeance of the *Almighty*: And one man is roaring and yelling, as if he were now in hell already, and admits of no comfort: If the drops be so heavie, what will the whole sea of Gods vengeance be? If hee cannot beare the one, how can he beare the other?

Secondly, consider thine owne strength, and compare it with all the strength of the creatures, and so if all the creatures be not able to beare the wrath of the *Almighty*, (as *Iob* saith chap. 6. 12.) *Is my strength the strength of stones, or is my flesh as brasse that must beare thy wrath?* As if hee had said, It must

bee a stone, or brasse, that must beare thy wrath: Though thou wert as strong as brasse or stones, thou couldst not beare it: when the mountaines tremble at the wrath of the LORD, shall a poore worme or bubble, and a shadow endure it?

Conceive thus much, if all the diseases in the world did seaze on one man, and if all the torments that all the tyrants in the world could devise, were cast upon him; and if all the creatures in heaven and earth did conspire the destruction of this man; and if all the devils in hell did labour to inflict punishments upon him; you would thinke this man to be in a miserable condition: And yet all this is but a beame of Gods indignation. If the beames of Gods wrath bee so hot, what is the full summe of his wrath, when it shall seaze upon the soule of a sinfull creature in full measure?

3. Nay, if yet thou thinkest to lift up thy selfe above all creatures, and to beare more than they all; then set before thine eyes the sufferings of the Lord Iesus Christ, hee that creates the Heavens, and upholds the whole frame thereof, when the wrath of God came upon him, onely as a surety, *hee* cries out with his eyes full of teares, and his heart full of sorrow, and the Heavens full of lamentation, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken mee?* Mat. 27. 46.

Oh thou poore creature, if thou hast the heart of a man, gird up the loynes of thy mind, and see what thou canst doe? Dost thou thinke to beare that which the Lord Iesus Christ could not beare without so much sorrow? Yet he did endure it without any sinne or weakenesse; hee had three sips of the Cup, and every one of them did sinke his soule; and art thou a poore sinfull wretch, able to beare the wrath of G O D for euer?

1. *Motive.* That I may the better prevaile with you,

you, consider these three motives; first, it is the onely old way to Heaven: for GOD never revealed any other but this way in the old Law; the onely way for the leaper to be cleansed, was to come out into the congregation, and to cry, *I am uncleane, I am uncleane*. This leaper was every sinner; this meane of curing was the sight of his sinne; and as he did, so must every sinner confesse his sinne, take shame to himselfe, and say, *It is my proud heart, and this my loose life, &c.* This true sight of sinne is the onely doore to life and salvation: vvhould not goe that way, which is the right and the ready way; if ever you receive mercy at the hands of the Lord; it must bee by this way, or not at all. I pray you take heed, and doe not finde a shorter cut to heaven; the further you goe the contrary way, the further you must returne back againe; this hath cozened many a man more then hee doth imagine.

As a travailer vvhhen hee is loath to goe through some filthy Lane, he vvill breake through the fence, and goe through the meadow, that hee may save the foule way, at last vvhhen hee hath gone up and downe, and cannot get out againe, hee is forced vvith much losse of time to goe backe againe, and goe through the Lane. So it is vvith many sinfull vvretches in the vvorld, and this hath cost them dear. They vvill not goe this way, by sorrow for sin to see the filthinesse thereof, and their cursed abominations; but they vvill have a new way to receive mercy and comfort from GOD, yet at last they are driven to a stand, and then they vvill heare the Minister of God, vvhhen he saith, *Christ came to see, and to save that which was lost*, Luk. 19. 10. that is, those poore sinners that savv themselves lost, and consider the plagues of their heart; And vvhhen

Christ vvorks savingly, hee opens the eye, and awakens the conscience, and a man must confesse before hee can finde mercy, then the soule saith, I never savv this vvork upon my ioule. I vvvas never lost. No? vvwhere broke you over then? you vvould needs to heaven a nev vvvay; you are like the shornie ground that vvould receive the Word vvith ioy: Nay, I'le assure you, you must come backe againe, and see all those abominations vvvhich have beene committed in secret by you and discover them, or else there is no meanes to come unto life; *Let us search and try our vvways*, saith the Church, *Lam. 3. 40.* you must not thinke that Christ vvill pardon all, and you doe nothing: No, first see your finnes, and then you shall receive mercie and pardon for them.

2. *Motive* Secondly, the vvorke by this meane vvill be much more easie then at another time. If thou once get thy conscience convicted, and thine eyes opened, the vvorke vvill goe on clearely and easily: Many of Gods people vvill strike in vvith you, and many good Christians vvill pittie you, and pray for you, and you shall have many helps this vvay, and therefore is it not better novv to have your conscience awakened vvhen you may have helpe, then aftervvard vvhen there is no remedy? When any of Gods people fast or pray, they vvill remember you; vvhat saith one, Doe you knowv such a man? yes very vvell: vvhat is hee? Oh he vvvas the most shamelesse drunkard that ever the sunne did see, or the earth beare. Was he so? Oh but novv GOD hath opened his eyes, and awakened his conscience, he vvvas never so frolike before, but novv hee is as much vvounded, novv his heart is broken, and his conscience flies in his face; It vvvere good to remember him, though hee  
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hath beene a wretch, and a profest opposer of Gods people, yet let us remember him; Yes that I vwill, I know his burthen is great, I haue found it; and I hope so long as I have a knee to kneele, and a tongue to speake, I shall remember him. And then they pray for him, and say, Good Lord, vwho can beare a vvounded soule? Good Lord thou hast humbled him, and made him see himselfe vile and miserable, let him see thy mercy in Christ. What a comfort is this to have a vvhole Countrey pray for him in this manner.

*Object.* But some vwill object, This is something dangerous, and drives men to a desperate stand, therefore is it not farre better to be as vvee are, and not to awake this severe Lyon? A man cannot conjure downe his conscience vwhen it is up once.

*Answer* I answer: you must see your finnes, that is the truth of it, doe not thinke to put it off; the Lyon will roare; and your conscience will be awakened one day; it is better to bee awakened now, then to have your eyes opened in hell when there is no remedy.

3. *Motive.* Thirdly, set upon this worke, the issue will bee very successfull: oh what a comfort will it be to a poore soule in the time of death, vwhen he shall come to render up his soule into the hands of God, that all his finnes are wiped out; And then to heare those glad tidings from Heaven; Be of good comfort poore soule, thou hast leane thy finnes, therefore I vwill not see them, thou hast remembered them and mourned for them, therefore I vwill never plague thee for them, vwho vwould not see his finnes that Christ may cover them in that day of accompts? there vvas never sinner broken hearted but GOD did bind him up: and there vvas never any truly vvounded for sinne but God did





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ever heale and comfort him, and therefore labour to looke your face in the glasse of Gods Law, and so see your ovne spots; I confesse this is tedious to your sinnes, and the plagues due to them; but looke thou on them, that God may not. If an aduersary offer meanes of agreement, vvee use to say, suffer it not to come to the publike triall, for the case is naught; I say it vwill bee so vwith every vvicked mans case, the Lord hath a controverfie vwith every vvicked man, and it must bee tryed in the publike day of judgement, or else you must make a private agreement betweene GOD and your ovne soules; If there be any drunkard, or adolterer, or unjust person, that is guilty of any sin, you had better take up the matter in private: Doe not feare to looke upon your sinnes, but bring them all out before the Lord, and see the ugly face of them, and intreate the Lord to seale up unto you the pardon of them, that you may never bee called to an accompt for them; I tell you, it is the most comfortable course in the vworld.

*Use.* The last use for instruction to all my fellow brethren: let mee speake a vvord to them and to my selfe too; let us all take that course in dealing vwith the people, & Gods ordinances, vvwhich God himselfe takes up; As the stevvard disposeth of every thing at his Masters vvill, and the Apothecary orders drugs as the Physitian appoints, so let it bee vwith us too: vvee are but stevwards and Apothecaries; let us take that course, and use those meanes that God hath appointed for his peoples good; God saith, you must see your sinnes, and bee humbled for them; and therefore let us labour to make men see them, (as the Apostle saith, *I hope wee were made manifest to your consciences.* 2<sup>d</sup> Cor. 3. 2.) Did not your consciences say so, that you could not gain - say

gain-say it & ) we must take up that course the Scripture hath revealed, and vvhich the faithfull servants of God have ever used, and vvhich God hath ever blessed: nay, it is our vvifedome so to doe. *Mashew* the seventh and the last, Christ taught the people vvith *authority*, not as the *Scribes*: there is a kind of commanding povver vvhich the vvord ought to have upon mens consciences, if a man bee a sinner. it vvill reprove him, and commaund reproofes to sease upon him. & if he be in distresse of conscience, it vvill command comfort to take place in his heart.

Give mee leave to speake my thoughts, and it is my judgement too: What doth it profit a man to scrape up a little Greeke and Latin together, and to leave the sense of the Scripture undiscovered, and the conscience no vvhit touched, nor the heart stirred? Hee that knowes any thing though hee vvere but an ordinary schoole-boy, that had but any skill in the tongues, if hee could not doe it, hee should bee scourged by my consent. But let it bee in case of conscience, a poore soule comes to anguish of spirit, the onely vvay to set this man on foote againe, is to ansvvere all his objections and questions; and resolve all his doubts, and to make the vvay good, & the case cleare: Alas this course is not knowne amongst us: And in the vvay of examination, if you come to examine a sinner, take away all his cavills, and all his carnall shifts, that hee hath to hinder the vvord, and force the soule to say, It is Gods vvord, though hee vvill not entertaine it.

[*Why mens hearts are not wrought upon in the ministerie.*]

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vailous difficulty; this is the reason why our ministry thrives not, and the hearts of men are not wrought upon; because we labour not the right way to shew men their finnes, and to convince their conscience, that they may not flinch out from the ordinances of God: Nay, I take it to be the speciall cause, why after all the pretious promises that God makes knowne, no man receives good by them: Wee offer salves to them that know not whether they have any sores or no; And wee offer Physicke to those, that know not whether they have any disease or no; wee speake of grace and Christ, but people thinke they have no need of them; suffer mee to speake my minde here in freely. That ministry which doth not ordinarily humble the soule, and breake the heart for sinne, doth not convert and dravv home to Christ,

Now wee come to shew the causes why, and the meanes how sinners come to see their sins. The *Apostle* speakes it to their faces, *You are they that have committed this sin, you have crucified the Lord of life, this is your sin.*

*Doct.* The Doctrine from hence is this: A speciall application of *particular sins*, is a chiefe meanes to bring people to a sight of their finnes, and a true sorrow for them. The *Apostle* doth not generally propound their finnes; but hee comes home to their hearts, and it is not onely done in this place; but it hath beene the practise of all Gods faithful Ministers heretofore. As *Iohn Baptist*, hee goes not cunningly to worke, secretly to intimate some truths; but hee deales roundly with them, & saith, *O generation of vipers, who forwarned you to flee from the wrath to come?* Luke 3. 11. 12. And hee shewes them their finnes in particular. And when the *Publicans* came to be baptised, he saith, *Receive no more*

more, then is appointed for you; and he saith to the souldiers, *Doe violence to no man, and bee content with your wages*; hee vvas the minister of humiliation and preparation; & therefor he deales thus plainly vwith them.

When *Ahab* had slaine *Naboth*, the *Trophet Elias* came to him and sayes, *In the place where dogs lick the blood of Naboth shall dogges lick thy blood*, 1 *Reg.* 20. 21. *Ahab* said, *Hast thou found mee out, O my enemy?* And he said, *I have found thee out, because thou hast sold thy selfe to worke wickednesse in the sight of the Lord*, and the text saith, *VVhen he heard this, hee put on sackcloth and went softly*: This vvas the povver of a particular reproofe, though hee vvere a miserable vvicked man. Thus did *Paul* deale vwith *Peter*, vwhen hee halted before the Ievves, hee did plainly reprove him to his face, and that not secretly, but because hee had sinned openly, therefore hee reproves him openly: so also our Saviour *Christ* shakes up the *Scribes* and *Pharises*. *Math.* 23. 13. 14. And this is the rule in generall, as the *Apostle* saith, *Reprove them sharply, that they may be found in the faith*. *Titus* 1. 20.

*Obiect.* Oh! but some vvill say, If I doe thus plainly deale vwith them, I shall discourage them altogether.

*Answer.* Nay it vvill make them sound Christians indeed; see vwhat the *Lord* saith, *plead with your mother*: *Hose.* 2. 2. the vvord in the Original is, *Call her into the Court*, call her by her name, & say, that shee is not my wife, and I am not her husband. And the *Lord* saith by *Ezekiell*, *Sonne of man, cause Ierusalem to know her abominations* *Ezek.* 16. 1. hee doth not say, cause the Country to know her abominations, or the Countrey to know the finnes of the Court, but make *Ierusalem* know her ovvn abominations.

1. *Reason.* The reasons are these: First, because the word thus applyed hits sooner than otherwise it would. A Master commands a servant to doe such a thing, and because he names him not, one thinkes it is not hee, and another it is not he, only because he is not named: So when a Minister saith, *In many things wee sinne all*, hee hits no man, and so none are affected vvith it; But now particular application brings every mans part and portion, and not onely sets the dish afore him, but cuts him meate, and carves for him, and wee doe in this case as the Nurse doth vvith the child, shee not onely sets the meate before it, but shee minceth it, and puts it into the childs mouth: the Stevvard doth not onely say, There is meate enough in the Market, but he buyes it, and brings it home, and sees it prepared, and gives direction what is for every one. The vvords of a faithfull Minister are like arrowves, vvich if they be shot cock height, they fall dovvne againe and doe nothing: but vvhen a man levels at a mark, then, if ever, hee will hit it. So, many Ministers cantell a grave faire tale, and speake of sins in general, but these common reproofes, these intimations of sinne, are like arrowves shot a cock height, they touch no man; but vvhen a Minister makes application of sinne in particular, and saith, O all you drunckards and adalterers, this is your portion, and let this be as venome in your hearts to purge out your lusts then, &c. When our Saviour Christ lapped up the *Pharises* all in one speech Math. 23. 45. it is said, that they heard the *parable*, and knew that he meant them.

Overly discourfes that men be great sinnes, and the like, are like the confused noise that was in the ship vvhen *Jonah* vvvas asleepe in it, vvich never troubled him, till at last the Master came and said,

*Arise*

*Arise; O Sleeper, and call upon thy God,* Ionah 1.6. And as a father observes, they came about him, and every man had a blow at him, and then he did awake. So because of generall reproofs of sin, and remies a far off, men come to Church, and sit and sleepe, and are not touched nor troubled at all, But when particular application cometh home to the heart, and a Minister saith; This is thy drunkenesse, and thy adultery and prophahenesse, and this will breake thy necke one day; what assurance hast thou got of Gods mercy? & what canst thou say for heaven? Then men begin to looke about them. There was never any convicting Ministry, nor any man that did in plainesse apply the word home, but their people would be reformed by it, or else their consciences would be troubled, and desperately provoked to oppose God and his ordinances, that they may be plagued by it. The word of God is like a sword; the explanation of the text is like the drawing out of this sword, and the flourishing of it, and so long it never hits: But when a man strikes a full blow at a man, it either wounds or puts him to his fence: So the application of the word is like the striking with the sword, it will worke one way or other, if a man can fence the blow, so it is: but if not, it wounds. I confesse it is beyond our power to awaken the heart, but ordinarily this way doth good.

2. Reason. Secondly, as the word of God particularly applyed hits soonest, so it sinkes deepest; the words of the wise are compared to nayles fastened by the Masters of assemblies; the Doctrine delivered is like the nayles pointed, but when it is cleare, & then particularly applyed, it is like the setting on the sailes fast upon the hearts and consciences of men; And this I take to bee the reason why many that have

have come many times to oppose the Ministers of the Gospel; yet God hath broken in upon them, and humbled their hearts, and made them see their miserable condition.

The first use is for instruction; Here wee find the reason why plaine teaching findes such opposition, why it is so cavilled at, by all Ministers and others; because thereby the eye of the soule comes to bee opened, and all a mans abominations are discovered, and his conscience is pinched by the same: Our Saviour saith, *Hee that doth evil, hates the light, lest his deedes should bee reprooved,* as a thiefe hateth the light and the lanthorne bearer, because they shew his villeny; so they that are guilty of many sinfull courses, and base practises, hate the Minister that brings the Word vwith any power to their soules. A malefactor at the Assisea can bee content to see an hundred men in the town, and is never troubled with them; but if hee sees one man that comes to give in evidence against him, and knowes his practises: Oh, how his heart riseth with desperat indignation against that man! Oh, saith hee; this is hee that seekes my life, he vwill make my neck crack; so it is vwith this soule-saving Ministry, it is that which brings in a bill of indictment against a man. Now a man can be content to come, and heare though it bee never so many Sermons; but if a Minister comes in for a witness against him, and begins to arraigne him, and to indite him for his pride, and malice, and covetousnesse, and to convince him of them, and to lay him flat before the Lord, and his conscience: Oh then he is not able to beare it. What is the reason of this? Hee can heare others quietly, and say, Oh they are sweet men, they deale kindly and comfortably. Why? The masse bites not; (as the proverbe



proverbe is ) such a kind of Ministry workes not at all, and this is the reason why they are not troubled, but goe away so vvell contented. I have sometime admired at this: why a company of Gentlemen, Yeomen, and poore women, that are scarcely able to know their A. B. C. yet they have a Minister to speak Latine, Greeke, and Hebrew, and rouse the Fathers, when it is certaine, they know nothing at all. The reason is, because all this stings not, they may sit and sleepe in their finnes, and goe to hell hood-wickr, never awakened, and that is the reason they will welcome such to their houses, and say, Oh, hee is an excellent man! I would give any thing I might liue under his Ministry. It is just *Ababs* old humour, hee could sute seasonably with *four hundred false Prophets*, and if there had beene five thousand more, they should all have beene accepted of him: but when *Zehosophas* said, Is there never another Prophet of the LORD: Oh yes (saith *Abab*) there is one *Michasab*; but I hate him, hee never spake good to mee that is, hee never soothes me up. So it was the temper of the people mentioned in the *Acts*, when the *Apostle* saw they were a rebellious people, hee deales plainly vvith them: but they cryed, *Away vvith such a fellow, hee is not worthy to live*, *Acts* 4. 22. What? said they, then it seemes wee shall bee cast off from the Lord, and be his people no more, they vvere not able to beare that: people in this case deale vvith Gods faithfull Ministers, as the widdow of *Serapta* did, vvhen the Prophet had told her, that the *meale in the barrell, and the oyle in the cruse should not decrease*; all this while hee was welcome: but when her child was dead, *Oh, what have I to do vvith thee, show man of God?* 1 Reg. 14. thinking indeed that the Prophet had killed her sonne: So all the while

while vvee set the doore vvide open , that al the drunkards and adulterers in the Countrey may goe to heaven, you like us well enough, and we are as welcome as may be, and wee are mervailous good Preachers, and you think us fit for the Pulpit ; but if we come once to lay sin to your charge , and to threaten condemnation for it, and to say, if God be in heaven, you shall never come there, if you continue in your sinnes, oh then they are up in armes ; and say as the widdow did , Are you come to slay our soules, and avvaken our consciences ? Beloved, this argues a spirit that never found the pover of the vword, But it is our duties, and vve must doe it, and howsoever it is not accepted of the vvicked , yet it shall find entertainement vvith God, and hee shall give us our revvard at that great Day.

2. *Vse.* Secondly, if particular application bee so poverfull, and so profitable, let mee speake a vword to my selfe, & to my fellowv brethren: It fals heavie on us that are not vvilling to practise the same, but rather oppose it in others that desire to doe it; this plaine and particular application , is accounted a matter sillinesse , and want of wisdom, and rashnesse , and a thing vvchich befits not a Pulpit, but a māns vvords must be sweet , and toothsome , and hee must have a tender hand over men whosoever they be, bee they never so prophane. Nay , I dare say, if the Devill himselfe vvere here, hee must not bee troubled , Ministers must lay bolsters under mens heads, and sow pillowes under their elbowes, that they may sit easily, and not trouble drunkards, and adulterers, but let them bee still in their sinnes, and so let them goe down to hell, this is that which the devill loves, and takes much content in. And it is certaine, if hee could prevaile, no other course should bee taken up ; if a great man bee present, or  
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a patron that vvee looke for a living from, ( if my eares had not heard it ) it is strange to thinke how they daube this over. If their sinnes bee so grosse that all the Congregation would cry shame, if hee did not reprove them, what vwill they say? reprove you, we vwill not, vve dare not, but beseech you and desire you as every man hath his infirmity, a word to the wise is sufficient, &c. I blame my selfe so farre as my base feare possesseth mee: but brethren. what vwill become of preaching in conc'usion, if this may take no place in the hearts of people; and yet notwithstanding all this, there is one thing to bee considered, if there bee but any upright hearted Minister, or sincere Christian that is more exact than ordinary, what vwill the carnall Ministers doe? though they have no reason in the text, no ground in the Word to warrant them; though they cannot condemne a poore Christian upon good grounds, yet they vwill invent new vwayes and wrest the Text to dishonour Gods name, and then in all bitterness they can, vent themselves against faithfull Christians, and conscientious Ministers: and hence the hands of the wicked are strengthened, and the hearts of Gods people are much daunted; and the Gospell of Iesus Christ prevailes not in the hearts of such as it is preached unto,

Marke the severe command that the Apostle gives his Scholer *Timothy*, ( 2. Tim. 4. 1. ) *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Iesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, preach the word, bee instant in season, and out of season, reprove, rebuke,* ( as if he had said ) the stubborn hearts of men neede this specially, *reproving*, and therefore doing this, is the maine thing that God requires, and the maine end for which the Word serves. *Sharp reproofes makes sound.*

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*found Christians.* Titus 1. 13. He that heales overly, hurts more than hee heales; Are there not many to bee humbled? and are there not many lusts rainging in the hearts of men and vvomen? Let us therefore throw away this shamefull hiding, and make our Ministry known to the soules of those to vvhom vve speake.

*Object.* But some vvill object against this preaching, that it is nothing but the rashnesse of mens spirits, a kind of rayling that fits not a Pulpit.

*Answ.* To this I ansvvere, the Prophets of God ever used and practised it; & the holy *Apostles* vvhich vvere inspired in an extraordinary measure of the spirit, did imitate Christ, and his Prophets: and God commanded *Esay* to *lift up his voice, as a trumpet and shew my people their transgressions, and the house of Iacob their sinnes.*

That is, tell the drunkard and adulterer of their sinne. Did Christ and his Apostles raile? Are these men onely vvise? Oh fearefull! that the soules of men should be so desperatly transported against the truth of God, you that have had any such thoughts against the povver of God, in the Ministry of the Word, repent, and pray, *that if it bee possible the vvords of your mouthes, and thoughts of your hearts may be forgiven.* The Apostles, and Christ himselfe used this kind of teaching: *VVoe unto you Scribes and Pharisees,* Acts 8. 22. seven times together, if Christ had novv lived, you vvould have said, hee had railed: Oh fearefull! I tell you this is the next sinne to the sinne against the holy Ghost.

*Object.* But secondly, they object, in this last age of the vvorld there is a difference to be put; it is true, if men vvere not taught, this vvere necessary, but novv in these times of knowldge vvhat needs all this adoe? all those troubles & reproofes?  
vvhat,

what, shall we make men to be chamlings, to mince their meat for them? no, set their meat, set the word before them, and they are wise enough to take their meat, and to apply the Word to themselves.

*Ans.* I confesse it is true, the Lord (blessed be his name) hath made his word more evidently knowne then formerly, and yet there is a great deale of knowledg vwanting in the most sort of men; nay, I can speake it by experience, that the meaner ordinary sort of people, it is incredible and unconceivable, what Ignorance is among them: Nay, I will be bold to iustifie it, that hee that thinkes himselfe the wisest in understanding, if we come home to him by way of examination, wee shall make it knowne to him, that he knowes little or nothing of which he should & ought to know: But imagine men had the knowledg of the Word, that is not the maine end of preaching, to instruct men: but to vvorke upon their hearts. When a man hath taught men what they should doe, hee is but come to the vvalls of the Castle: the fort is in the heart, the greatest vvorke of the Ministry is to pull downe the vvalls of men, that know the truth of God, and bold it *unrighteousnesse*: Nay, they that doe know it, how dull are they in the performances of these duties God calls for at their hands, so that we had not onely need to mince their meat for them; but even to put it into their mouthes; nay, they sleepe vvith meat in their mouthes: I appeale to you that are inlightned in the knowledg of the truth: doe you not find dullnesse of mind, and in disposednesse of spirit in the performances of those duties God calls for at your hands? It vvas spoken by a reverend Divine, that the swiftest horse needes somtimes a spur to prick him.

him forward: so I say, the best Christian needs a sharp reproofe, to prick him forward in a Christian course.

3. *Object.* But thirdly, if reason cannot prevaile, they dash this preaching out of countenance, and say, When men vvant matter, then they ransack mens consciences, and apply unto them their particular finnes, & so they make up their Sermons.

*Answ.* I ansvvere; then our Saviour *Iesus Christ* vvented matter, he presseth their faults to the *Scribes* and *Pharises* seven times together, nay in the *Sixt of Iohn* he presseth one truth nine times, his aime and end vvas, namely, that he vvas *the bread of life*. he follovveth it, and setleth it on them. Now in these mens judgements, Christ vvented matter, hee had not wherewith to spend the time, and therefore hee spake to the hearts of men, and came home to their consciences: but to say the truth, the ground of their cavills that are cast against this kind of preaching, is, because this troubles the hearts of those to vvhom vve *speake*, and brings vexation to the soules, Doe vve vvant matter for our preaching? no, but this I say, it is an easie matter for any man to observe truthe out of a text, and to lay forth a point; this is an easie thing for any one that hath a judgement inlightned in the Scripture; but for a Minister of God in the vvorke of examination, to drive the soule of a carnall man to a stand, that he cannot escape; to make him goe avway and hang the vvinges, in somuch that the soule shall be humbled, or elle goe avway and snarle at the truth, and reproofe delivered: Or for a man to uphold a soule in the time of trouble, to comfort it, and take avway all doubts, I say this is the hardest matter for a Minister to accomplish under the Sonne.

3. *Vse.* Thirdly, this should stirre up the hearts of all the people of God, to set an edge on their affections, to desire this manner of teaching, and vwhen God maketh his truth thus knowne to us, wee should submit to the pover therof; You have most need of this; and there is most profit in this; & therefore your hearts ought to be more enlarged to the coveting and submitting thereto.

[ *How to profit in hearing the Worde preached.* ]

And therefore you that are hearers, suffer me to provoke you to it; vwhen the time comes that you are to approach to the house of God, pray unto the Lord that hee vwill direct you, and that the Minister may come home to your hearts, bring your hearts to the Worde, as the people did their sacrifices in the olde Law; they brought them, and laid them on the Altar, that the Priest might kill them, and divide them. So bring your hearts under the pover of Iesus Christ, that they may be cut and divided, that you may bee let blood in the right veine, that your corruptions may bee subdued, that they may have their death-wound given them; take up that resolution of the Prophet David, *I will heare what the Lord saith to my soule.* Psal. 58. 8. I vwill not heare vwhat the Levit saith to the Courtier, or to the Commons; but I vwill see vwhat the Lord saith to *me*. Oh (say some) the Minister speaks home to such a one, he touched him to the quick: What is that to thee? Will another mans salve cure thee? therefore labour that the Lord may come home to thy particular, that the Lord may salve thee, and cut thee, and save thee, for thy everlasting comfort.

You are vwise for the things of this life, you will

bee content to part vvith any thing that may procure your comfort : if a father vvere novv on his deathbed making his vvill , every child vvould thinke , vvhat doth my Father give me ? And if a man bee bidden to a Feast, hee is not content onely to have the meat set before him , but if the Master of the feast vvill carve for him , he vvill take it kindly. Every faithfull Minister is the father of the people , and they are his children , they are the Stevards of the Lords house, and give to every one their portion , terrour, to vvhom terrour belongs , and comfort, to vvhom comfort belongs.

Therefore, vvhen you come into the congregation , and see the Minister giving and parting to every one his doale ; reproofe here, and instruction there; looke up to heaven , and labour to get something to thy ovvn particular, and say as *Esaie* did in another cause, *something for me, Lord, something for mee*, instruct mee, reprove mee, make knowvne my finnes, and discover my abominations.

When the dainties of salvation are distributing , you that are at the lover end of the Table , should thinke vvith your selves , vvill the dish never come to the lover end? Oh that the Lord would novv guide the Minister , to lay his hand on the fore of this cursed infidelity of minde? Oh, that the Lord vvould knocke dovvn that sinne of mine this day !

And if thy heart bee any vvhit inlightned and touched , thou vvilt be much contented and comforted , as *David* said to *Abigail* , vvhen shee came to dissvvade him from going against *Nabal* to destroy him , she said , *Vpon me, my Lord, be this iniquity* , 2 Sam. 24.25. Why ? *Blessed be God* ( saith *David* ) *that sent thee this day to meet mee, and blessed be thy counsell, which hath kept mee this day from*  
*concurring*



*comming to shed blood, and avenging my selfe.*

So, if thou hast a good heart, thou wilt not goe avway repining and fretting at the Word, and say, the Minister meant mee, and crosseth mee: Take heed of this temper of heart, and if God be pleased to carve out to any man those particular fruits that concerne his good: goe avway, & blesse the Lord, and say, *Blessed be his good word, and his poore servant that met this day vvith my finnes, I never observed that pride, I never observed that malice, I never discovered that carelesnesse. What became of Christ I cared not, vvhat became of his Ministers I respected not: vvhat became of his name I regarded not, but the Lord shevved me my finnes, & blessed bee God for that good vvorke vvhich hath bene communicated to my soule by his servant.*

[ *A naughty heart discovered.* ]

And observe this, so farre as the heart is fearefull that the Minister should meet vvith his sins, so farre the heart is naught: Nay, if it bee thus, if your consciences testifie againt you, that you are loath to have your finnes dealt roundly vvithall, you thinke the Minister should be milde, and not use such bitter reprehensions, and sharpe reproofes: I beseech you, thinke of it seriously, you deale vvith your finnes in this kind as *David* did vvith *Absalon*: when *Ioab* vvas to goe out, he gives him charge to use him kindly and gently, that is, doe not kill him, but take him prisoner, that vvas his speech, *Deale kindly for my sake vvith the young man Absalon.* 2 Sam. 18. 6.

Doest thou deale so vvith thy sins? thou vvouldest have the Minister deale kindly vvith drunckenesse and adultery, and malice, doe not kill drunken-

nesse but onely take him prisoner, keepe him in, reforme the outvard face of drunkennesse, that wee may not be drunken in the open streetes, but in a corner, and so that men may not sweare at every turne, but vwhen they come among gentlemen, that they doe it cunningly.

The case is cleare, thy soule, if it bee of this temper, it never hated sinne, it never sorrowed for sinne, it never found the vword of God vworking upon it for the subdaing of sinne.

[ *How to know whether wee hate sinne.* ]

Imagine there vvere a traytor or rebell come into the Towne, that sought to take away the Kings life, nay, suppose hee vvere thy enemy or the like, vwill any one say that man hates an enemy, that cannot endure to have an enemy discovered, attached, and brought to execution? No sure, but hee loves him, he covers him, hee hides him, and vwould not have him knowne, hee is a lover of a traytor, and a traytor himselfe: else vwhy doe you harbour a traytor; you cover him that hee cannot come to judgement, and therefore you are a friend unto him: so it is in this case; Canst thou say that thou hatest sin, thou hatest malice, and covetousnesse, and loosenesse, and prophitanesse; and in the meane time, thy soule saith, I cannot endure that the Minister should discover these, I cannot endure that hee should attach them, and arrest my soule for my covetousnesse, & adultery, and the like? My heart riseth, and I would cover it, and hide it; nay, I can beare it out sometimes, and say, the traytor is not here, I am not the drunkard, I am not the adulterer you talke of; but if the Minister will pursue thy soule, then thou shuttest the doore against him: If it bee thus with thee,

thee, I tell thee, thou art a friend to the traytor, thou never hatedst thy sinne, thou wert never yet brought to a true fight or sorrow for it.

Wee will now proceede: *when they had this*, saith the text, the Word in the Originall carrieth a continuall act, when they had heard, there was not an end, but the sting of the Word did still stick in their hearts. When they walked on the way, *that* sounded in their eares, *I have crucified the Lord of life*, and when they lay downe, *that* came into their mindes, *I have shed the blood of the Lord*, and when they arose, this was their first thought, *I have consented therunto*, and imbrewed my hands therein, this stuck upon the spirits of them, and the sting of the truth would not away, but after they had heard it, it remained still in their hearts.

*Doct.* The doctrine is this, That serious meditation of our finnes by the word of God, is a speciall meanes to breake our hearts for our finnes. *After they had heard*, (this notes a continuall action,) the truth of God still stuck in their stomackes, the arrowes of God would not out, the *Apostle* shot some secret shot into their soules, which came home to their hearts & consciences *when they heard this*: that is, the making and meditating, and pondering of this, when they could hold no longer, they could beare no more, but came to the *Apostles*, and said, *what shall wee doe?* Sometimes God brings a man into the Church to carpe at the Minister, and to see what hee may have against him: now if the Lord sting the conscience of that man, hee will heare you all the weeke after, and say, *Me thinkes I see the man still, hee aynded at me, hee intended mee, and me thinkes, I heare the word still sounding in mine eares,*

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eyes, hee is alwayes meditating on the word in this kinde.

A serious meditation of sinne discovered by the word, is a speciall meanes to pierce the soule for the same: when *David* (Psal. 37.) had considered the glory of wicked men, how their eyes stared our with fatnesse, and they had more than heart could wish, and who but they in the world? they were not troubled, they were not molested; then hee thought they were the onely men in the world, when hee had considered and mused of this, it pierced his soule, and hee was vexed with it, this went to the very intrailles of him, and therefore that place is mervailous pregnant. It was the meanes whereby *Lot* was so touched with the abominations of *Sodom*: that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soule from day to day with their unlawfull deeds. 2 Pet. 2. 8. Many saw and heard besides *Lot*, and yet were not vexed, but he vexed himselfe, that is, the meditation of those evils, and bringing them home to his soule, vexed him and troubled him, and the word is a fine word, implying two things.

[ *Two things in the word.* ]

First, the search, and examination of a thing.

Secondly, the racking and vexing, a man upon the triall: So it was with *Lot*, hee observed all the evils, he weighed them, and pondered them: and then hee racked his soule, and vexed himselfe with the consideration of them; the same word that is used here for *vexing*, is used in the matter of a storme, the text saith *The ship was tossed with the waves*: Mat. 14. 24. So meditation doth toss the soule with vexation. It was the practise of the Church,

Church, Remembring mine affliction, the wormewood and the Gall, my soule hath them in remembrance, and is humbled in me: Lamen. 3. 19. 20. In remembring I remembred, for so the originall hath it, I remembred all my miseries and afflictions, and my sinnes that were the cause thereof; that is, I still mused and meditated thereof. And what follows? the heart was buckled and bowed thereby, and was broken in the consideration thereof.

*Quest.* But you will say, what doe you mean by this musing and meditating;

*Asw.* I answere, meditation is nothing else, but a settled exercise of the mind for the further inquiry of a truth, for the affecting of the heart therewith.

[ *What meditation is.* ]

1. There are foure things to bee considered in it; First, it is an exercise of the mind: it doth not barely close with a truth, and apprehend it, and assent unto it, and there rest, but it lookes on every side of the truth. It is a fine phrase of *Dauids*, I thought upon my wayes, and turned my feet into thy testimonies. *Psal.* 119. 59. It is taken from curious words, which are the same on both sides; they that work them, must often turne them on every side, so it was with the Prophet *David*, I turned my wayes upside downe, and looked every way on them. And so againe, *Mary shall runne too and fro, and knowledge shall bee increased.* *Dan.* 12. 4. Runne too and fro, what is that? It is not the bodily removing of the man, so much as the busie stirring of the minde from one truth to another; it propounds one, and gathers another, so that it sees the whole silvage of the truth. I use to compare meditation to perambulation, when men goe the

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bounds of the Parish, they goe over every part of it, and see how farre it goes; so meditation is the perambulation of the soule; when the soule lookes how farre sinne goeth, & considers the punishment of it, and the plagues that are threatned against it, and the vileneffe of it.

Secondly, it is a settled exercise of the minde; it is not a sudden flash of a mans conceit upon the sudden; But it dwels and staies upon a truth, it settles againe & againe, upon that it hath bestowed it selfe: When a man is deepe in meditation upon a thing, hee neither seeth nor heareth any other thing, else the streame of the heart is not settled upon the truth conceived.

A man that hath beene offered an injury by another, when hee eates and walkes, still hee thinkes of his injury; his heart is settled on it: So your hearts ought to be on the truth. The *Apostle* to *Timothy* saith; *Continue in the things thou hast learned*: 2 Tim. 3, 14. the word in the originall is, Be in them; that is, let a mans minde bee moulded into the truth.

Thirdly, it is a settled exercise for two ends; first, to make a further inquiry of the truth: and secondly, to make the heart affected therewith; for this is the nature of meditation, not to settle it selfe upon a thing knowne; but it would either know more in those truths that are subjected to it, or else labours to gather something from them; It is with the truth, as it is with a man which goeth into the house, and pulls the latch, when hee was without, hee might see the out-side of the house, but hee could not see the roomes within, unlesse hee drawes the latch, and comes in, and goe about the house, meditation pulls the latch of the truth, and sees, this is my sinne, this is the cause,

cause, here is the misery, this is the plague: and thus meditation searcheth into every corner of the truth.

4. Lastly, meditation labours to affect the heart, not onely to know a thing, but to bring it home to the soule, *these things are so, know it for thy good*, Job 5. So when a man hath viewed all, and considered all, then meditation brings all to the heart, and labours to affect the heart therewith, this is that which brings sorrow and compunction for sinne, a settled exercise of the heart that meditates on sinnes that makes inquiry after them: and the grounds are two, and very remarkable.

### 1. Ground.

The first is, this meditation makes all a mans sinnes, and any truth belonging therunto more powerfully and plaine'y to bee brought home unto the heart. It is the action of the understanding when a man doth gather all reasons, and musters up force of arguments, and labours to presse the soule, and lay them heavy upon the heart, and bring it under the power of the truth. It is with meditation as it is with usurers that will grate upon men, and grinde the faces of the poore, and suck the blood of the needy, they will exact upon men, and take use upon use; they will not bee contented to take the principall, but they will have consideration for all the time, untill they have sucked the blood of a poore man that is under such a muckworme: A poore man could be content to pay the principall, but to exact use upon use, this kills him: So doth meditation, it exacts & slayeth the soule of a poore sinner, you have committed adultery in a corner, but you shall not so carry it away, This you did against the knowledge of

God revealed , against many mercies received , against many judgements threatned , against checkes of conscience , against many vowes and promises remembred : and, Item for this, and, Item for that , and thus meditation oppresseth the soule : But then the soule will say, happily it is but a trick of youth, or it is my infirmity : No , no , saith meditation , this hath beene your course from time to time continually , that hath been your haunt , it hath beene a riveted corruption that hath fastened upon your bones , and will goe to your grave with you, and it will bring you to hell. But then the soule saith, I will repent: No , no , saith meditation , your heart is hardened in this sinne , you have a heart that cannot repent nor yeeld , the word of God workes not , it prevailes not , the Minister hath flung hell fire in your face , and told you, that no drunkard , nor adukterer shall goe to heaven , and yet you goe away no more moved then the seate whereupon you sate , you have continued in sinne , and are hardened in sinne.

Thus marke how meditation exacts use upon use : But then the soule replies , I will goe to the Word , and waite upon the meanes , and it may bee the word will prevaile.

No , saith meditation , you have despised the Word , and God will takes away his Word from you , or you from his Word , or his blessing from both.

What , is it a matter of infirmity ? No, it is your continuall course.

And you repent , No you cannot , you cannot , you are hardened.

And you hope the Word will worke upon you. No , no , it is cursed unto you. Thus meditation exacts use upon use , untill the blood of the soule bee

bee



bee sucked up. Meditation breakes the soule, and layeth waight upon the soule, in this case. It is a passage remarkable of Peter, when our Saviour told him, that before the Cock crew twice, hee should deny him thrice, the text saith, *When the Cock crew the second time, Peter remembered the words of our Saviour, and went out, and wept bitterly*: the Word in the originall is this, the holy man heaped all the circumstances together, and reasoned thus, the Cock crows, now I remember the words of Christ: Oh what a wretch am I, that should deny such a Master that called me; such a Master as found me, such a Master as was mercifull unto mee! when I never saw my selfe, nor my finnes, hee plucked mee out from my finnes: It is that Master I have denied, hee came to doe me good, and to save me, and I have denied him: Nay, even at a dead lift: if ever I should have defended him. I should have defended him now; if ever I stood for him, I should have stood for him now, but to deny my Master, and forswear him, that I should doe it, an Apostle, beloved; an Apostle thus honoured, that I should doe it, when I professed the contrary, what? such a Master denied by mee, such an Apostle, at such a time, before such persons, and forced to it by such a silly mayden? All these sinfull circumstances, the manner of them, the nature of them, the haynousnesse of them, the holy Apostle laid all these to his heart, and his heart sunke under these circumstances thus gathered together, and hee went out and wept bitterly.

Looke as it is in warre, were there many scores that came against an Army, they might be conquered, or many hundreds might bee resisted, but if many thousands should com against a small army it would be in danger to be overcome. Meditation

leadeth as it were an army of arguments, an army of curses, and miseries, and judgements, against the soule, how ever one misery or plague will not downe, but a man may brooke it, and goe away with it, yet meditation brings an army of arguments, and tells the soule, God is against thee where-ever thou art, and what-ever thou doest. And then the heart begins to cry out as *Elisha's* servant did, *Master, what shall I doe? what? so many sinnes, and so many judgements denounced, and shall fall upon me for them? Lord, how, shall I doe? how shall I bee delivered from these, and pardoned for these? thus meditation brings home sin more powerfully to the heart.*

The second argument is this: as meditation brings in all bills of account, so it fastens sinne upon the consciences of those to whom the word of God is spoken, in so much that the soule cannot make escape from the truth delivered, and from the judgements of God denounced against him: Sometimes when men hear the Word and threatnings denounced, then their hearts are touched, and they goe away resolved, not to commit sinne as they have done: But when they are gone, it works not, but the heart recoyles again, and goeth to its former course. The reason is, because you meditate not on the Word.

It is with the Word as with a salve, if a man have never so good a salve, which will helpe a fore in foure and twenty houres, if a man shall doe nothing but lay this salve to the wound and take it off, it would never heale the wound, & no wonder: Why? he will not let it lie on: the best salve under heaven will not heale a fore, and eat out a corruption, unlesse it bee bound on, and let lie: So it is with the good word of God: many a soule  
heareth

heareth the word of God, and his heart is touched for his sinne, and his conscience begins to bee awakened; but when hee goeth out of the Church, all is gone, his affections die, and his heart dies, and his conscience is not touched: no wonder, you will not hold the word to your soules, you heare sinne, and not heare it: you will see sinne, and not apprehend it; and therefore it is, that the Word over-powers not your corruptions: Doe you thinke the salve will worke when you keepe it not on? The Word of God is the salve, conviction of Conscience is like the binding on of the salve, meditation is like the binding of it to the sore; remember the truth which touched thee first, and keepe that on, let nothing take it away from thy minde; hold that good word close to thy soule, and it will keepe thy heart in the very same temper, after the delivery thereof; as it was in the delivery. The Apostle James Cap. 1. 2. 3. compares a slight hearer, to a man that lookes his face in a glasse slightly, & has forgotten himselfe what visage hee had, but saith, Who so looketh into the law of liberty, and continueth therein, hee being not a forgetfull hearer, but a doer of the Word, this man shall be blessed in his deedes: the Law of Liberty is the Law of God, And this Law being a glasse, you must not onely heare, and bee gone, & slight and neglect it, but you must continue in looking, and then you shall see the complexion of your sinnes, and the vilenesse of your corruptions: when the drunkard heareth the basenesse of his sinnes, and the adulterer the basenesse of his abominations, they looke themselves slightly in the glasse of the Law; But they must carry away the glasse with them, and looke themselves still, and the adulterer must say, I am a prophane creature, & my heart is polluted,

polluted, my conscience defiled, and my soule hardened, and I shall bee damned: if a man should thus looke, and view his sinnes, and carry away the glasse with him continually, hee would see his life so ugly, and his heart so base, that hee could not be able to beare it. If the pills bee never so bitter, yet if a man swallow them suddenly, there is no great distaste, but if a man chew a pill, it will make a man deadly sick, because it is against the nature of it: so our sinnes are like these pills, they goe downe some what pleasently, because wee swallow downe our oathes and prophanesse, and our malice, and contempt of God and his ordinances, and wee make it nothing at the religion of God, and the professors of it: you swallow downe pills now, but God will make you chew those pills one day, and then they will be bitter: Though the swearer swallowes downe his oathes now, yet at last the Lord will make him remember, that he will not hold him guiltlesse, but arraingne him at the day of judgement: and make him cry guilty at the barre, and againe will make you chew over your malice: you hated the Lords Word, and the worke of his Spirit: and this will condemne you.

Again, meditation doth beset the heart of a man, that he cannot escape, wheresoever hee is, meditation brings those things to his mind, and the plagues due threunto, so that hee cannot escape the dint thereof. It is the nature of our owne hearts, that wee are loath to read our owne destiny, which will bee our bane and confusion: meditation calls over the thoughts of a man, tells him the reasons are good, the arguments sound, the Scripture plaine, thy sinnes evident. Conscience, you know it: therefore heert you must doe it, (saith meditation;) take heede of drunkenesse, saith meditation, you heard

heard what the Minister said; these things are against God, and the wrath of God is gone out against you for these finnes; these will be your bane, and will bring you to everlasting destruction. And when meditation doth thus yawle at the heart, the mind still musing, and the heart still pondering of sinne, at last it is weary, therefore unburdened therewith: the issue of the arguments is this, if meditation brings in sinne more powerfull, more plainly to the soule; if it be that, which binds and fasteneth it, and setleth it upon the soule; then the point is cleare, that serious meditation of sinne is a speciall meanes to bring a soule to the sight and sorrow for sinne.

*Vse.* The uses are three: If it bee so, that meditation is thus powerfull and profitable, for contrition of the heart, and so to bring in consolation to the heart; then what shall wee thinke of those men that are unwilling to practise this duty? nay, what shall wee thinke of that untowardnesse of heart which is in us against the command of this duty? It falls mervailous heavie upon us all more or lesse in this kinde: for wee are mervailous guilty in this kinde; a man had as good to bring a Beare to the stake, as a carnall heart to the consideration of his owne wayes; much more loath is hee to ponder seriously, and meditate continually upon his finnes; nay, men are so farre from musing of their finnes; that they disdain this practise, and scoffe at it. What, say they, if all were of your minde, what should become of us? shall wee alwayes bee poring on our corruptions? so wee may hap to runne mad, if wee were of your opinion: thus we slight and put it off, and trample on this duty, which is so profitable: the poore will not meditate on his finnes, he hath no time: the rich they

they need it not; the wicked dare not: and so no man will in this case. What, shall a man set his soule on a continuall racke? (say they) shall a man drive himselfe to a desperate stand, and trouble himselfe unprofitably? cannot men keepe themselves well when they are well? this is the course and frame of the world, and wee may complaine of this carelesse and heedelesse age, as *Jeremiah* did of his time, *No man repenteth him of his wickednesse, saying, What have I done?* Ier 8.6. There is no question, no searching, no musing: no man saith, these are my finnes, these are my wayes: no man lookes over his course and conversation, hee doth not apprehend his sinne; and that is the reason wee heare no humbling, of no repenting: but every man runneth into sinne, as the horse rusheth into the bartell, hence it is, that there are so many uncleane beasts in the Arke. In the old Law, if there were any beasts that chewed not the cud, hee was counted uncleane: the chewing of the cud is serious meditation of the mercies of God to comfort us, and of our finnes, to humble us: there are many ungodly persons in the bosome of the Church, that muse not of their sinfull wayes, the Prophet *Jeremiah* saith; *Were they ashamed when they had committed abominations?* Ier. 8. 12. nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush; hee adds reason in the eleventh verse, *They could not bee ashamed: why? because they cry, peace, peace.* let the Minister speake what he can, and denounce what judgement he will, they promise themselves peace, and quietnesse, they consider not their wayes, and therefore their hearts are not disquieted therewith, nor troubled at the consideration thereof; nay, there are many that count it an excellencie, a cunning skill, if they  
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can drive away, and shake off the sight of sinne, if they can put out the meditation of any thing the Word reveales, they make it a mervailous excellent piece of skill, and what they doe themselves, they would have others doe also: but they that now will not see, nor consider, nor meditate of their finnes, the truth is, they shall see them, as the Lord saith by *Esay 26. 11.* *When thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see and bee ashamed:* So I say, you that vwill not see your finnes, but say, *What needs all this stirre;* let the Minister say vwhat he vwill, shall vvee be madmen, to be troubled, & shall vvee be fooles, to be disquieted vwith the consideration of our finnes? well, you vwill not muse upon your finnes novv, but the time vwill come, that the Lord vwill set all your finnes in order before you, and you shall not be able to looke off them.

And hence it is, that vwhen man hath lived vvickedly all his dayes, and comes to lye on his death-bed, then all his finnes come to his remembrance, and then conscience flies in his face, and sayes, here is a cup for a drunkard, and for an adulterer: novv hee seeth nothing but sinne, and hell, and damnation, due to him for his sinne, and then he cries out, hee is damned. You might have seene something before then: if you had seene them to bee humbled for them, you should never have seene them to bee damned for them. If there bee but any occasion of basenesse offered to the view of the drunkard, vvhich vway doth hee not use to compasse his carnall delights? and shall the drunkard and prophane vvretch be so eager in lingering after sin, that hee may commit it, and be damned for it, and shall not a man so labour to see his iniquities, that hee may bee humbled for them before

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before God, and receive mercy from God in the pardon of the same? Shall the reprobate haile judgements on their soules, and bend all their meditations that vway, and shall not they that desire to see God in glory doe the same?

2. *Vse.* The second use is for instruction: from the former doctrine delivered, vve may collect, that loose, vaine, joviall company, is the greatest hinderance to preparation for Christ, and the greatest obstacle to the vvorke of grace that can bee possible: this is not forced, but follovveth clearly from the former truth in this manner: for thus I reason:

That course vvhich takes avay the mind from musing, and the understanding from meditating on his evill vway, that course is the greatest hinderance of the heart being humbled, and fitted for the Lord, for meditation brings in contrition, and that prepares the heart for Christ: but your joviall company, and ryotting persons, there is nothing under heaven that takes off the minde more from musing, and the understanding from vvaighing a mans evill throughly, therefore this must needs bee a mervailous impediment, and hinderance to those that endeavour to vvalke uprightly before God in any measure, *Amos 6. 5.* There are rules of their revaldry set dovne, they thrust and put avay the day of the Lord farre from them: that is the first lavv they make, the first statute they enact, thinke not of sinne novv, and meditate not of judgement novv, but come (say they) cast care avay, sling avay and casheere those melancholly imaginations: vvee have many fallings, let us not therefore bee pondering of them, and make our selves so much the more miserable, this day shall bee as yesterday, & to morrow as to day,

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no sorrow nor judgement, no sinne now considered. And this is remarkable, and if a poore soule in that drunken distemper should bee smirten by the hand of God, and should suggest these words to his drunken companions; Wee are all here merry and jolly, and let our hearts in delight, but for all this, God will bring us to judgement, the eyes of God seeth our now drinking and bezeling, and the care of God heareth our blasphemies and swearing; and for these wee shall one day bee plagued: why, this should spoyle all the sports and jollity, they could not bee able to beare him, but they would presently sling him out of doores: this is that which beneth many a soule, therefore take notice of it, if any of you have had a sight of sinne: If a drunkard goe aside, and hang the wing a little, marke what men doe, if they can but once get him into their company, and make him shake off those dumps, and run on in his former course, then this hinders him from meditating on his sinnes, and from being prepared for Christ; and hence it is, that many a poore soule that hath had the fire kindled, the terrour that the Lord hath let into his soule, would have humbled his proud stomack, and melted his stubborne heart, but partly drunkenesse on the one side, and merrinesse on another, rooke away all the amazement whereby the soule might have beene wrought upon, and hee have received everlasting salvation: Therefore thinke of it. It was the course the Scripture observed in the lamenting Church, *Zach. 12. 12.* The house of David apart, and their wives apart, the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; There is no casting up of account in a crowd; but if a man will cast up his account, if hee will see his sinnes, and consider his base practises, hee must

goe aside by himseife, loose occasions and vaine occasions withdraw the minde, and plucke off the soule from seeing the evill, and affecting the heart with it. Therefore the Apostle *Peter*, a little beyond my text, when hee saw the Jewes were affected with that hee had delivered, and that their hearts were touched, when they asked him what they should doe; hee saith, *Save your selves from this ungenerous generation* God hath now touched your hearts, suffer not Satan by these wicked Instruments of his, to steale the terror of God out of your hearts; for your drunken companions are like nothing else, but those ravening foules spoken of by Christ, that devoured the seede that fell by the way side; the fowle is the devill, the seed is the Word of God; now the devill doth not pluck this out of the soule himseife alone; but often by cursed companions. The Alehouse is the bush, that harbours those ravenous beasts, and drunken companions: By these the devill useth to pluck out his good seede out of the heart; and therefore as you love your soules, suffer not your selves to bee drawn away by these cursed wretches doe not suffer them to steale the worke of Gods spirit away, which hee hath wrought in your hearts: this I observe to checke that cursed practise of men, who, when a man is troubled, send him to play at cards, or dice, or the like, which is the greatest meanes to hinder the worke of God in their hearts.

3. *Vse.* Thirdly, seeing meditation brings marvellous comfort and profit to our soules; you are therefore to be exhorted, since you see what it is that God requires, that with speed you set upon it, and that with care and conscience you labour to persevere in the performance thereof, I beseech you

you thinke of it, what is more usuall in the world then this, that men should make sleight, and little account of their finnes? nay, to goe boult upright under those execrable abominations, whereof they stand guilty before God. Looke as it was with *Samson*, he went away with the gates of *Gaz*, and made nothing of them, so there are many, that carrie the gates of hell upon their backes, as drunkennesse and adultery, and yet they feare not, nor are affrighted therat, nay, Gods owne servants, that desire to looke towards *Zion*, Is not this your complaint many time? I cannot finde sinne heavy, I confesse the word discovers it, and reveales it, but I cannot bee troubled for it, I cannot finde my soule barbed with it: sinne is not heavie unto mee, but I carrie it away easily, and make no bones of the matter, though proud, and leud, and carelesse, and untoward, yet my heart is not apprehensive of the vveight of it: Let me speake unto you: Are you not therefore here hindered in the vway God requires of you, because you vveigh not and ponder not those evill vwayes you stand guilty of before God, but you are better content to see them and slight them, then to remember them? I beseech you to take notice of it.

Looke as it is vvith men in the vworld, if five hundred pound vveight be laid in the ground, if a man never plucke at it, hee shall not feele the vveight of it: your finnes are not many hundreds, but many thousand vveights, the leest vaine thought you ever imagined, the laest idle word that ever you uttered, are vveight enough to presse your soules downe into everlasting perdition, and therefore so many finnes, so great, and so constantly committed, against so much knowledg, against so

many comforts, and encouragements, against so many vowes and protestations, are much more heaue, and yet you feele them not: the reason is, you see them not, you vveigh not pride, you vveigh not malice, you vveigh not dead heartedness; if you vwould vveigh them seriously, and consider of them thoroughly, you vwould finde that they vvere heavier than the sand on the sea-shore.

*Object.* But you vwill say, how should vve come to meditate on our sins aright, that vve may have aright sight and sorrow for sinne.

*Answer.* For the opening of the point, I vwill discover three things: First, the ground on vvhich our meditation must bee raised: Secondly, the manner how to follow it home to the heart: Thirdly, how to put life and power to it, that it may preuaile, and vvorke this blessed end in our soules.

First, consider the grounds, vvhereupon meditation must bee raised, and them I referre to these foure heads.

## I. G R O U N D.

First, labour to see the mercy, goodnesse, and patience of God; that have beene abused and despised by that unkind dealing of ours, and that mer- vailous carelesnesse, in those duties God hath required of us; the height of Gods goodnesse to us, layes out the height of all our iniquities committed: The greater the kindnesse and mercy of God is, the greater are our sinnes, that esteeme not of this mercy, but abuse it, and despise it; This adds to our rebellions, this makes our sinnes vt of measure sinfull, because God hath beene our of measure mercifull.

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There are many finnes in one, vvhhen a man sinneth against many mercies, and vvalkes not vvorthy of them: vvee may observe, that this is the course that God takes to breake the hearts of the Israelites, vvhhen they had neglected his vvayes, and broken his commandements, vvhath vvvas his message, vvhhen the Lord humbled the people, and brake them kindly? Iude 2. The Lord, by the Angell, thus speakes, I made you to goe out of *Egypt*, and brought you to the land vvhich I swore to your fathers, and I said I vvould never breake my covenant vvith you, and yee shall make no league vvith the inhabitants of the land, But yee have not obeyed my voyce; vvhy have you done this vvorke?

Now the Lord presseth this his kindnesse upon them, and labours to melt their hearts in the apprehension of his goodnesse to them, and their unthankfulnesse to him; the text saith, *When they heard this, they lifted up their voice, and wept.* They considered Gods kindnesse to them, and their unkindnesse; how hee did all for them and they did all against him: how the Lord vvvas gracious to them for their comfort; but they did not vvalk vvvorthy of it. Why, have you done this, saith the Lord? Why was my mercy despised? Why was my goodnesse slighted? Why was my patience and long suffering abused? And *when they heard this*, they wept in the consideration of their unnaturall dealing; Nay, this is the thing remarkable in *Moses*, hee stabs the heart, and vvorkes effectually upon the Israelites by this meanes, *Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is not hee thy Father that hath bought thee? Hath not hee made thee, and established thee?* Deut. 32. 6.

& will you thus reward the Lord? Thus carelessly,

and thus proud, and disobedient? Why, *Remember*, saith hee, *the dayes of old*, and then hee reckons up Gods gracious dealing with them.

I apply this in particular: there is never a soule here present, there is never a man in the basest estate, and lowest condition, but hath had experience of Gods goodnesse, and mervailous lovingkindnesse this way. Were you ever in want, but God supplied you? Were you ever in weaknesse, but God strengthened you? In sicknesse, who cured you? in misery, who succoured you? In poverty, who relieved you?

Hath God beene a gracious God unto you? every poore soule can say; never a poore sinner hath had a more gracious God than my soule, all my bones can say, Lord, who is like unto thee? this heart hath beene heavie, and thou hast cheared it; this soule hath beene heavie, and thou hast relieved it; many troubles have befallen mee, and thou hast given a gracious issue out of them all.

And shall I thus reward the Lord? Shall I finde against his goodnesse and his kindnes? then what shall I say? Heare O heaven, and hearken O earth, the Oxe knowveth his owner, and the Ass his Masters crib, and *Israel* knowveth not Gods kindnesse, nor acknowvledgeth his goodnesse towards them: the consideration heereof (one would thinke) should breake the hardest heart under heaven: if men be but ingenious men, if they have received any great kindnesse from a friend, they were never in want, but hee relieved them, he tooke them into his house, and they might freely goe to his purse, or any thing he had. If a man should deale thus kindly with another, and this man should deny him an ordinary favour, hee will be ashamed to come into his presence, hee will say.

say, his house was mine, and his porse was mine, and to deale thus unkindly, nature would have taught mee otherwise: what are our hearts to God that hath beene gracious to us all, hee hath created us, and doth preserve and keepe, and afford many blessings unto us; hee gives us our houses that cover us: it is God that affords us all this, and shall we sin against such mercy? therefore goe to the beasts of the field, and they will tell you, and to the birds of the ayre, & they will discover Gods mercy unto you: goe to your beds and tables, who gives these, and continues these? doth not the Lord? and yet sin against this God? O foolish people and unwise! all love on Gods part, and all negligence on ours? God exceedes in goodnesse towards us, and we do exceede in unkindnesse, and unthankfullnesse towards him; This is the first ground upon which meditation must be raised.

## II. GROUNDS.

Secondly, if this will not work upon you, if you have no good nature in you, consider that God is just too, if mercy cannot prevaile with you, you shall have justice enough, and that without mercy; you must not thinke to slight Gods mercy, and carry it away in that fashion. But God is a just God, as hee is a gracious God; hee will be revenged of you; If any stubborne heart shall say, God is mercifull, and therefore we may live as we list, and bee as carelesse as wee please: Take heede, that just law that hath beene condemned, and those righteous statutes that have beene broken, and God that hath beene provoked by you, will be revenged of you; did ever any provoke the Lord and prosper, and shall you begin? Where is Nimrod and Nebuchadnezzar, and Pharaoh.

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and *Herod*, and those proud persons that set their mouths against God, and their hearts against heaven; what is now become of them? they are now in the lowermost pit of hell.

God sent *Pharaoh* into the red sea, and ought wee know, his soule may now be roaring in he'll; this is certaine, that vvhosoever resisteth him, shall finde him a swift iudge to condemne him. The *Apostle* saith, *Our God is in a consuming fire*, Heb. 12, *And if my fire bee kindled, it shall burne to the botome of hell*, Deu. 22. 32. That Iustice of God vvill not bee appeased vvithout satisfaction; that Iustice is vvise, and cannot bee deceived, that Iustice is poverfull; it cannot bee resisted, and not onely Iustice, but mercy & patience vvill come in, and plead for vengeance against the sinner, and that vvill be the sorest plague of all. When you appeare before God, what vvill you expect? you vvill call for mercy to save you, and for patience to beare vvith you. Not so, saith *Mercy*, Iustice Lord; I have bene despised, Iustice saith *Patience*, I have bene abused, Iustice saith *Goodnesse*, I have bene vvronged. And how vvill it be then, vvhen mercy it selfe shall condemne that soule, & Patience shall be an accuser of it, and Goodnesse shall call for vengeance against it.

## III. G. R. O. V. N. D.

Thirdly, consider the nature of your finnes, and the haynousnesse of them: finnes is not a tricke of youth, or a matter of merriment; but a breach of the Law of God; and therefore it is good for a man in this case to examine every commandement of God, and the breach thereof: You know not your finnes, therefore get you home to the Law, and looke into the glasse thereof, and there  
bundle



Bundle up all your finnes thus, So many finnes against God himselfe, in the first commandment; against his worship, in the second; against his name, in the third; against his Sabbath in the fourth commandment; nay, all our thoughts, words, and actions, all of them have beene finnes: able to sinke our soules to the bottome of hell: bundle up your finnes, and lay one upon the heart and another upon the conscience, and then it will breake your backes: those small infirmities you make nothing of, and those finnes you make slight of, and make a tricke of youth, if you will bestow your mindes a little seriously, you will see them to bee farre otherwise: every sinne deserves death. *The wages of sinne is death*, Rom. 6. 1. not hee onely that murders his neighbour, and takes away his life, but the malicious man, and the proud man deserves death. Nay, to come nearer to the text, what if I prove, you had a hand in the shedding of the blood of Christ; dwell here a little and consider it, and you shall see the point cleare.

If there bee any soule here present that hopes to have any part in Christ, as if I should goe from man to man and aske, have you a part in Christ? you will say yes, surely I hope so: marke what I say then, if thou hopest for any mercy from Christ, then Christ was thy surety and bare thy finnes, and those finnes of thine were the vvitneses against our Saviour, they were the Souldiers that took e him, the thornes that pierced him, the speare that gored him, the Crosse that rooke away his life: The truth is, the Souldiers, and *Pilate*, and the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, could have done nothing to our Saviour but for thy finnes: had it not beene for thy finnes, had it not beene for the finnes of the elect, the Souldiers could not have apprehended him.

him, the *Pharises* could not have witnessed against him, there could have beere no Iudge to condemne him; very vvell then, thy sinnes caused all this, thy vicked thoughts and vicked actions caused our Saviour to cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Hee sunke under the consideration of thy sinnes, and thou goest avway and makest a trick of youth of them, and a matter of merriment, of loose talke, and vicked doing. Therefore vwhen you are going home, thinke vwith your selves, *It vvas my sinnes that had a part in the shedding of the blood of Christ; and vwhen you are at meate, let that come into your minde, I have had a hand in the crucifying of the Lord Iesus Christ; and vwhen you goe to bed thinke of it. I am one of those that have embrevved their hands in the blood of the Lord Iesus, that Saviour that is nowv at the right hand of God, that hath done so much for his servants, that sweate dropps of blood, those sweates and dropps vvere for thy sinnes, and is this matter of merriment, and a trick of youth in the meane time? No, no, thy soule vwill finde it otherwise one day, unlesse the Lord remove those sinnes of thine, those sinnes vwill make thee hovvle in hell fire one day, unlesse you bee burthened with them heere: thinke of this, I am one of those that by vaine thoughts and prophane actions, have crucified the Lord of life; & if then you can make those sinnes a matter of merriment.*

#### IV. G R O U N D.

The fourth Ground, ariseth from the consideration of the punishment of sin, you must consider what sin vwill cost you; namely, those endlesse torments that cannot be conceived nor prevented.

I vwill

I will spare to speake of the paines of the vicked here, ( I should haue said much thereof ) and come to speake onely a little of the last judgement.

Mee thinks I see the Lord of heaven and earth, and the attributes of God appearing before him; the Mercy of God, the Goodnesse of God, the wisdom of God, the Power of God, the Patience and long suffering of God, and they come all to a sinner, a vicked hypocrite, or a carnall professor, and say; Bounty hath kept you, Patience hath borne with you, Long-sufferance hath endured you, Mercy hath relieved you, the Goodnesse of the Lord hath bin great unto you, All these comfortable attributes will bid you adoe, and say, Farewell damned soule, you must goe hence to hell, to haue fellowship with damned ghosts. Mercy shall never be enlarged towards you any more, you shall never have Patience any more to beare with you, never Goodnesse more to succour you, never compassion more to relieve you, never Power more to strengthen you.

Nay, you that have heretofore withdravvne your selves from Gods wisdom and Gospell, you shall never have Wisdom more to guide you, never Gospell more to comfort you, never Mercy more to cheare you: you shall then goe into endless and caselesse torments, which can never be ended, where you shall never be refreshed, never eased, never comforted, and then you shall remember your finnes. My covetousnesse and pride was the cause of this, I may thanke my finnes of this.

Thinke of these things ( I beseech you, ) seriously, and see, if sinne be good now, see, if you can take any sweetnesse in it: I end all with that of Job, *O that my griefe were well weighed, and my calamity laid in the balance: for now they would be heavier*

*heavier then the sand of the sea.* So say I, oh that our finnes were weighed, and our iniquities weighed in the ballance together, such mercy have we despised, such Iustice have we provoked, such a Lord of life have we crucified, such torments have we deserved, endlesse, caselesse, and remediesse. if these were weighed, they would be heavier then the sand, and linke our soules under the consideration of them.

But some may say, I can thinke of these things, and consider seriously of them, and yet for all this my heart is no whit wrought upon thereby: I say therefore, when your meditation is thus raised, you must have this skill to follow home the blow, and make it worke kindly on the heart; and that is done by these three things.

I. The first is this: when wee have conceived aright of sinne and the nature thereof, and the punishment due thereunto, doe not rest in the bare consideration of these things, but never leave the heart, bee still musing of these things, and bring these blessed trutthes home to the soules; and bind these things on the will and affections; hold them and fasten them there, force them upon the soule, that the heart may not make an escape: take notice of it, it is a rule I would have you consider of, never leave meditating till you finde your heart so affected with the evill, as your minde and judgement conceived of the evill before; namely, let the heart feele that evill it conceived, let the soule feele that gall to bee in sinne, which the mind apprehended to bee in it: you see these finnes loathsome and abominable, make the heart feele them, and bee affected with them; the heart will lie off now, and therefore it is the cunning of a Christian to lay at the heart, and presse it occasionally

firmly, and hold these truths to the soule, that at last it may bee under the dint of the blow, and the power of God make the soule feeble and finde, and bee apprehensive of the gall, and bitterneffe, and vileneffe of the evill, as before it conceived is so to bee; It is not enough for a man to exercise himselfe in the meditation of sinne, but a man must bring his soule in subjection under the power of that meditation, a man must not onely chew his meat, but hee must swallow it also, if he meane to have it nourish him: meditation is when the heart swalloweth downe these sinnes, that is, when he labours so to be affected with sinne, and the nature of it, as it doth require.

**MEDITATION** in this case, is like the beleaguering of a Citie, when a Citie is wisely and strongly beleagured, and be set round about, they doe two things: First, they batter it from without as much as they can; and secondly, they cut off all provision and reliefe from comming in, and so the Citie being partly battered from without, as much as they can, and being hindered from all reliefe of comming in: in conclusion, when they see the enemy is strong, and no provision can come to them, they are content to yeeld the Citie, and render up themselves; and if they send a parly to him that doth besiege it, and say, they are ready to perish, why, hee bids them deliver then, and they shall be provided for, hee bids them yeeld, and they shall bee succoured, and before that day, there is no supply shall bee brought into the Citie. So it is with Meditation, and here is the cunning of a Christian, Doe as wise Souldiers doe, cut off all provision, that is, by serious meditation bring thy heart to such a loathing of sinne, that it may never love it

more, besiege the heart with daily meditation, that so you may cut off any ease and refreshing, that the heart may seeme to have in any sinfull course; If the soule bee looking after any sinfull course; If the soule bee looking after any sinne, If the soule would goe out a little to occasions, and take delight in his corruptions, the drunkard in his company, and the worldly man in his wealth, then batter that: When you are thus affected, beleaguer the way, that you may finde no comfort, no ease; and when the soule is looking after occasions, and lingring after his abominations, then say to your hearts, You will have your finnes, though you have your shame with them, you will have your corruptions, though you have your confusion with them: when the soule would meddle with these, let meditation knocke of these. If you be still proud, and malicious, and quarrelling, take heed; you cannot have these, but you must have hell and all; you cannot have these, but you must have destruction and all: the mercy of God will not be abused; the justice of God will not be provoked, God will be revenged of you, and at last the heart by this meanes will be troubled: why, deliver up your finnes then, and your soules, if your hearts finde any sorrow and anguish; why, then yeeld up your soules unto Christ, that you may finde as much comfort in a good way, as you have done misery in an evill way.

II. Secondly, when you have made the heart thus affected with sin, take heede it doth not flie off and shake of the yoke. Meditation brings all those finnes, and miseries, and vileneffe home to the heart, and the soule is made sensible by this meanes: Hold the heart there then, labour to  
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keepe the heart in the same temper, that it is brought into, by the consideration of sinne, for this is our nature, when the stroke is troublesome that lieth upon us, and the finnes are haynous that lie upon us, and are committed by us, these finnes, these sorrowes, these judgements, when the heart fees this, it is weary, and would secretly have the wound healed quickly, and the sorrow removed, and the trouble calmed: Take heed of this, and labour to maintaine that heat of heart, which you finde in your selves by vertue of meditation, this is the pitch of the point: as there must bee subiection unto meditation, the heart must bee so affected with sinne, as it conceived it to bee, so there must bee attention; that is, the soule must hold it selfe to that frame and disposition so wrought as it should be.

Looke as it is with a Gold-smith that melteth the metall that hee is to make a vessell of, if after the melting thereof, there follow a cooling, it had bin as good it had never beene melted, it is as hard, haply harder, as unfit, haply unfitter than it was before to make a vessell of, but after hee hath melted it, hee must keep it in that frame till hee come to the moulding and fashioning of it: So Meditation is like fire, the heart is like a vessell, the heart is made for God, and it may bee made a vessell of grace heere, and of glory hereafter: Meditation is that which melts the soule, the drosse must bee taken away from the soule, and sinne must be loosened from the heart: Now, when you have your heart in some measure melted, keepe it there, doe not let it grow loose againe, and carelesse againe; for then you had as good never have beene melted: And that is the reason why many a poore sinner that hath sometimes  
I 2 been

been in a good way, and the Lord hath come kindly, and wrought powerfully on the heart, and yet at last it hath growne cold and dumpish, and as hard as ever hee was againe, and the worke as to begin againe. And take notice of it; looke as it is with the cure of the body, if a man have an old wound, and a deepe one, two things are observable; It is not enough to launce the wound, and draw out the corruption, but it must bee tented also, for if the wound bee deepe, it must not bee healed presently, but it must bee kept open with a tent, that it may bee healed soundly, and thoroughly: so it is here; meditation when it is set on, doth launce the soule, it lanceth the heart of a man, and it will goe downe to the bottome of the belly: When a man seeth his sinne, and weigheth his sinne, it will goe downe to the bottom sometimes, and when your heart is thus affected, doe not heale it too soone, but hold the soule in that blessed frame and disposition: For as meditation doth launce the soule, so attention doth tent the soule; keepe the soule therefore so troublesome and sorrowfull, that you may be healed soundly, thoroughly, and comfortably.

A Citie that is beleagured and wonne, hee that hath wonne it, sets a Garison over it, that hee may keepe it for ever under: So when the soule hath been wonne by the stroke of meditation, affecting the heart with sinne, then set a garison over the soule, and keepe it in awe, set a garison over the Conscience, and keepe all downe, keepe all under, that it may submit it selfe, and that kindly under the stroke of the truth, for it were a blessed frame, if wee could alwayes bee so in that temper that we are in, when we are first humbled for our sins.

III. Thirdly, the soule must bee so farre-kept



for CHRIST. FOR

to the consideration of sinne, that it may seek out for pardon for sinne.

This is a point of marvelous use, and you must give me leave to be enlarged; because there are many deceits this way, in the spirits of a man: for marke it, this is the cunning of the devill, if it bee possible, hee will keepe a man that hee shall never see, muse, nor bee troubled for sinne; and therefore hee doth plucke him off, and sends him to company on one side, and merriment on the other side, that by this meanes hee may keepe him from serious meditation of the evill: But if it bee so that God will make a man meditate of his finnes, and that the heart of a sinner is fully resolved to muse, and ponder, and consider of his corruptions; if hee will pore upon his finnes, then hee shall see nothing else but sinne: and thus the devill hath hindered many a poore soule from coming unto Christ, and from receiving comfort of him; he shall now be alwayes poring upon his corruptions, and therefore here lies the skill of a Christian, not to neglect meditation, of pardon by Christ, and here is the stint of meditation of our finnes, you shall thus discover it: So farre see thy finnes, so farre be affected with them, so farre hold thy minde to them, that they may make thee see an absolute necessity of a Christ, that they may drive thee to him for succour: here is the maine thing observable, and thus farre wee may goe, and must goe, if ever God intend to doe good to our soules: and therefore when thou settest thy selfe to muse and meditate upon thy corruptions, and lay them to thy heart; when thou findest thy soule to bee affected with them, and humbled under them, labour then to see an absolute necessity of a Lord Iesus Christ, and so farre see them, that they

they may drive thee, and compell thee to seeke unto Christ for mercy: and this is all God looke for, all the Lord requires and cares for in this preparative worke: Therefore take notice of it, see thy finnes so farre as they may make thee meerey looke for a Christ, and to fall upon the armes of Gods mercy in and through him. For it is not sorrow for sinne, nor humiliacion, nor faith it selfe, that can justifie us in it selfe, but onely as they make way for us to a Christ; and through him wee must receive comfort: for these two bee the speciall extreames, that the devill seekes to drive a man into. If a man presume of his owne sufficiency, and thinkes hee is well enough hee will not goe to Christ, because hee thinkes hee stands in no need of him; and if hee despaire of forgivenesse by Christ, hee will not goe to Christ neither: the ground why a sinner despaire, it is not by reason of any sinne, excepting onely the sinne against the holy Ghost; despaire is not grounded there, for *Cain* despaired, yet *Mansur* committed greater finnes then *Cain*, and despaired not; but the soule despaire out of stoutnesse of heart, because it hath not sufficiencie in it selfe, it will not looke out for helpe and comfort from another: presumption saith, I have sufficiencie in my selfe, and neede not goe unto Christ: and despaire saith, I have no sufficiencie, and therefore will not goe to Christ: heere is the property of despaire, to cast away hope, when a man hath no hope that God will helpe him; now all the while the soule lookes for sufficiencie from Christ, there is hope, for though our finnes bee never so haynous, that's nothing, wee can hope in Christ: For if all the finnes that ever were, are, or shall bee committed, ranne into one man, as all Rivers

runne

runne into one Sea, Christ could as easily pardon his finnes, as ever hee pardoned the finnes of any Saints in heaven: but here is the ground, when wee looke into our selves, wee can see there is no sufficiencie to comfort us, and wee will not goe to Christ, that wee may bee comforted, and so wee come to bee voide of hope, and to despaire: a despairing heart, is a proud stubborne heart; because hee cannot have what hee would of his owne, therefore hee will not goe to another to receive it, and so sinkes downe in his finnes.

And therefore let this bee the period and stint of meditation, when the soule so farre seeth sinne, and the punishment deserved by it, that the heart is resolved that none but Christ can take away these finnes and the punishments due to them, and is resolved to seeke to Christ, and bee beholden to him for all; when it is thus with you, then away to the Lord Iesus Christ, and let this meditation of a mans corruptions bee as a Bridge to carry him to Christ, that so hee may have salvation, which is promised through him, and shall bee bestowed upon all broken hearted sinners: and marke what I say, that soule that will not seeke out to Christ, and will not be beholden to Christ for what hee needes, that soule wants brokennesse of heart: and this stubbornnesse of his ariseth from these grounds.

First, the soule will not goe out, because the heart thinks and presumes it hath no need of Christ, and therefore will not goe, but wee will not meddle with that, for that is proper to carnall men.

I. First, because the heart is not content in good earnest to be ruled by Christ, that hee should come and take possession, and doe all in him; there-

therefore if the heart cling to corruption, it will bee content that Christ should ease it, but not that Christ should sanctifie it, and remove that corruption which prevailes over it; when a man is under the fight of sinne, hee would faine have God shew mercie unto him, and yet hee will not pray, nor read, nor use the meanes, but dwells upon the meditation of his sinns, and neglects many ordinances of God, whereby it may recieve comfort: this man would have a Christ to quiet him, but not to rule him; and this is the reason why in these cases the soule is never commonly kindly stricken; these would faine have quiet and comfort; and yet they will not be driven to holy duties, nor be content that Christ should governe them; they are content to commit the sinne daily, and would have a pardon presently.

II. Againe, here is another deceit of the soule of a poore sinner, hee would faine joyne something with Christ, for the helping of him in that great worke of salvation, and this I take to bee the complaint of sinners, and sometime broken hearted ones too; they dare not goe to expect mercy from the Lord Iesus. Why? why, because they are unworthy, so abominable their lives, so wretched their courses, that they dare not goe to Christ, that hee may shew mercy to them. I reason the point thus; Is it because of your unworthinesse that you dare not goe to Christ? so then, if you had worthinesse, this would encourage you for to goe: Why then, you thinke Christ is not able alone to helpe you, but you would have your worthinesse helpe Christ to save you, and so you would joyne with the Lord Iesus in this great price of Salvation and Redemption: If your sinnes were but small, and you had some worthinesse, that

that so Christ might doe something, and your worthinesse doe something, and so you might make up the price betweene you, then you could be content to goe to Christ, but otherwise you thinke you may not goe to Christ, without some worthinesse of your owne. Againe (belike) you will bee beholden to Christ for so much mercy, and so much grace, and so much forgiveness: one of these two must needs bee the ground of this complaint, either wee would have our owne worthinesse joyne something with Christ, or else wee are so unworthy that wee will not goe to Christ for so much mercy, but this unworthinesse indeed is nothing else but pride, a man will not bee beholden to Christ for so much mercy, but hee will share with Christ in the matter of salvation, or else he will not bee partaker of the great worke of redemption.

Imagine a debtor were in prison, and a friend sends to him, what ever the debt be, if hee will but come to him, he will pay all; the man returns this answer, If hee had not such a great debt to pay, he would be content to come to him, but the truth is, the debt is so great, that hee will not come to him, nor trouble him: now one of the two must needs follow, either hee thinks his friend is not able, or willing to pay his debt, or else in truth hee will not bee beholden to him for so much, but if the debt were a little one, then hee would make a shift to pay some, and his friend some, and so they would make up the debt betweene them: So it is in this case, this is that which keeps the heart from laying hold on the promise: they thinke they are unworthy to partake thereof, which is nothing but pride of spirit: for either they would bring something, and share

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with

vwith Christ in the vvorke of redemption, or else they vwill not bee be holden to Christ for so much mercy.

*Ob. 1st.* O! saith one, I never had my heart so broken and affected vwith sinne, as such a one hath; and therefore I dare not goe to Christ.

*Ans.* Ay! but is your soule content to goe to Christ, and yeeld to him? vwould you keepe any corruption? is there any sinne vvhich you vwould not have Christ come and remove? The soule answereth, I vwould bee content to resigne all to the Lord Iesus Christ, but I am not so humble as others are: the ground of this complaint is nothing else but selfe confidence in broken heartednesse, for the soule is not content to have so much broken heartednesse as is sufficient to bring a man to Christ, but it vwould have so much as that it might joyne vwith Christ to helpe him in the vvorke of redemption; they thinke it is not enough to have the soule so humbled, as to submit to the Lord Iesus Christ, but they vwould have so much as they would joyne with Christ in this great worke: which is nothing else but carnall confidence. Therefore the conclusion is this: So farre see thy sinnes, so farre meditate upon them, and so farre labour to have thy heart affected vwith thy sinnes, that three things may follow.

Frist, that you may see an absolute necessity of Christ, and that thou mayest use all meanes to seeke him, never being quiet till thou findest him; let him bee thy ayme in every ordinance thou takest in hand: *pray*, yet rest not in prayer, but in a Saviour that is obtained by it; *heare*, yet rest not in hearing, but convey into thy selfe who is revealed in hearing; receive the *Sacraments*, but rest not in them, but seeke a Saviour which  
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is there sign'd : this is the very kind and pitch of meditation : thus farre drawe your hearts to the consideration of your sins, that the soule may bee forced to goe to Christ, and use all meanes to find him ; pray for a Christ , heare for a Christ , see a need of Christ, to blesse all thy services , and pardon all thy sins, and then you take a right course.

*Obect.* But you will say, our thoughts are dull, & our meditation fraile , and our wants heavie , wee get little ground of our corruptions , but are ever and anon falling into sinne againe ; how shall we come to the life of meditation , that it may bee powerfull in us ?

*Answ.* There are two speciall helpes for this : First , labour to call in the helpe and assistance of *conscience* , that meditation may bee more fruitfull and powerfull ; *conscience* is a great commander, it is Gods vicegerent and chiefe officer ; God is the generall over-seer of the affaires of the world ; but *Conscience* hath authority to execute *Judgement* according to the sentence God hath revealed , and hath a greater command with the heart, then bare meditation hath ; *wisderstanding* and *reason* are but the underlings of the *will*, they are but servants and subjects to it , they onely advise the *will* what is good , as a servant may suggest to his Master what is good , and yet his Master may take what hee list and refuse what hee please in this kinde. But *Conscience* hath a greater command , it is said to *accuse* or *excuse* a man, Rom. 2. 15 it comes with a law & a command, as the *Apostle* saith, 1. Ioh 3. 20. *If our hearts condemn us ; conscience makes the heart to yeeld.*

Looke as it is happily with a person in debt, if a man have a Writ out for him , hee is not troubled greatly with that , hee will not goe to prison be-

cause of that; nay, though hee shew it him, yet hee will not goe, but if hee brings the Sergeant to arrest him, then hee must goe, and then hee must be imprisoned whether hee will, or no: So it is heere, meditation brings in the Wric, and sheweth a man his finnes, layeth open all his duties neglected, so many hundred duties omitted, so many thousand finnes committed, so many prophanations of Sabbaths, so many oathes, so many blasphemies; but the soule saith, What is to me? others have sinned as well as I, and I shall doe so well as they; but Conscience is a Sergeant, and Sergeant doe your office; these are your finnes; and as you will answer it at the day of judgement, take heede of those finnes upon paine of everlasting ruine. When conscience begin this to arrest a man, then the heart comes and gives way to the truth revealed, and conscience thus settles it upon the heart.

II. The second meanes whereby Meditation may get power upon the soule, is this, wee must cry and call for the spirit of humiliation and contrition, that God by that blessed spirit of his, which in Scripture is called the spirit of bondage, would set to his helping hand, and assist Conscience his officer, and take the matter into his owne hand; & because there are many rebellious corruptions that oppose Gods truth, we must call to heaven for help, that God would seise upon the heart, and breake it: A perverse heart will blind the Iudgement, and say, when Conscience comes, and saith, I will beare witnesse against you for your pride, and covetousnesse, and prophanesse; They resist conscience: Look as it is if a Sergeant arrest a man, he may escape his hands, or kill the Sergeant; but if the Sheriffe



riffe or the King himselfe come and take the prisoner in hand, then hee must goe to prison whether he will or no: so it is here, though a corrupt heart can stop Conscience, stay Conscience, yet there is a commanding power of Gods spirit; the spirit of humiliation: And when God comes from heaven to aide his officer, the heart must stoope and be governed. Looke as it is with a child that is under government, his father perhaps bids the servant correct him, now it is admirable to see how the child vvill taunt with the servant, & struggle with him mightily, now vvhen the father heareth this, hee saith, Give me the rod, & he tels the child, you would not bee whipped, but I vvill scourge you, and hee vvill set it home, and plague him so much the more, because he resisted the servant: so it is here, the Lord hath revealed his will, and sent his Ministers to discover your finnes, and terrifie your hearts, it is strange to see vvhat resistance we finde, one scornes to heare, and rebels against the Minister. Well, howver the voice of the Minister, or the blow fall heaui enough for the time, yet if the Lord take the rod into his owne hand, hee vvill make the stoutest stomack stoope, and the hardest heart come in: vvhen the Father takes the rod into his hand, and lets in hell fire, hee vvill set it home, take it off vvho vvill or can, the *Apostle* calls it the spirit of bondage: and observe the place, *VVhen the spirit of bondage cometh, then cometh feare*: Rom. 8. 15. The spirit of bondage is said to bee the spirit of feare, as vvho should say, The Lord sheveth a man his bondage by the Almighty power of his Spirit, and will make the soule feele it, and stoope unto it. In *Job* the Lord doth *show unto man their works, and then hee remoueth them to returne,* hee

*openeth their eare to discipline* (saith the text) *and commandeth that they returne from iniquity, hee openeth the eye, and maketh a man see his finnes, iob 36.6.10.* and then hee commands the heart to returne whether it will or no. When the Lord doth shew unto man his finnes, and hols him to his fins, that hee cannot looke off them, this is the worke of the spirit of bondage: when conscience hath done his duty, and yet his mouth is stopp'd, then the Lord himselfe comes: and how - ever the Word by the mouth of the Ministry could not prevaile, yet God will set the sunlight of his spirit to your soules, and then you shall see your fins, and stoope under them.

When a man would cut off the sense of sinne, yet where-ever hee is, and what-ever he doth, the Lord presents his finnes to him, when hee goeth in the way, hee reade his finnes in the pathes, when hee is at meat, his finnes are before him, when he goeth to lie down, he goeth to read his finnes on the teaster of his bed, This is thy covetousnesse, and thy pride, and for these thou shalt bee plagued; Looke upon these finnes, they are thine owne, and thou hast deserved punishments to bee inflicted upon thee for them: Thus we see the grounds how meditation must be raised: Wee see how wee may bring meditation home to the heart: wee see how alio wee may get the life and power of meditation.

I thought to have propounded an example, that you may see the practise of the truth delivered: as imagine it were the sin of the opposing of the Word, I would breake my soule withall; first, by meditation cast the compasse of this sinne, looke into the Word, and see whatsoever the Word hath revealed of this sinne: The text saith, by  
this

this meanes the anger of the Lord is mervailously provoked, in so much that *he will laugh at the destruction of such*, Pro. 1. 26. Nay, by this meanes Christ himselfe is despised; nay, our condemnation is hereby sealed irrecoverably. 2. Chron. 36. 16. the text saith, *They despised Gods word, till the wrath of the Lord arose, and there was no remedy* : Nay, hereby we aggravate our condemnation, For Christ saith, *Matt. 11. 22. VVoe be to thee Bethsaida: VVoe be to thee Choraſin, for if the mighty workes which have bene done in thee, had bin done in Tyre & Sidon, they would have repented in dust and ashes. But it shall bee easier for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgement, then for thee*: Nay, the Author to the Hebrewes saith, Cap. 2. 3. *How shall wee escape if wee neglect so great salvation?* The case of such a man is desperate: how shall we escape? Thus you see the reach how farre this sin goeth, gather up all then, & tell your hearts of this, when they rebell and oppose the word of God; How dare I doe this? what? provoke God so farre as to laugh at my destruction? what, despise Christ and his Spirit; nay, make my case irrecoverable, and aggravate my condemnation? but if the heart will not stoope under this, then call for Conscience to your charge, and then Conscience comes, and chargeth the soule on paine of everlasting condemnation to heare and to bee humbled; And if this will not doe, intreat the Lord to take the rod into his owne hand; and bring these truths home unto the soule, that it may never be quieted till it be humbled: this is the course I would have you take, to bring the truth home to your soules. When the Minister hath done his Sermon, then your work begins, you must heare all the weeke long: hee that never meditates of his sins.

is never like to be broken hearted for his sins ; take notice of this , The text saith of these converts , *They were pricked in their hearts.*

This clause of the verse discovers unto us , that which brings in this shiverednesse and contrition of spirit , which the Lord calls for at the hands of his servants : Now give mee leave to make way for my selfe , by opening of the words , that having taken a way all the vaile from them , you may more clearly see the truth delivered.

First , let mee shew you vvhhat this *piercing* or *pricking* of heart is.

Secondly , What is meant by *heart* ? You must know , that sound sorrow , or sorrow soundly set on , is here meant by *pricking* , and this word *pricking* resembles sorrow in three degrees : For the vvhord in the originall imports not onely a bare *pricking* , but a *searching quite through* ; and vve have no vvorde in our English tongue to answer the same vvhord , but onely a shiverednesse of the soule all to pieces . I say there are three things vvherein *pricking* resembles sorrow . First , the body cannot bee pricked , but there must bee some paine , some griefe , some trouble wrought by it , and accompanying of it . Secondly , it is the separation of one part from another , as the naturall Philosophers conceive , and as the Physitian gives us to understand , it is the sundering of two parts .

Thirdly , the parts being thus pricked , there is the letting of blood or vvater if any bee in that part thus pricked , so answerably in this sound sorrow in heart , there are three things ; I meane in that sorrow vvhich is set home by the Almighty :

First , there is a great griefe and vexation of soule .

Seco<sup>n</sup>

Secondly, by reason of the burthen that lieth upon the heart; that cursed knot, and union, and combination betwene sin and the soule, comes in some measure to bee severed and parted; the soule being thus grieved vvith the sinne, is content to bee severed from it: this is the thing vvee aime at.

Thirdly, this knot of corruption being loosened; and this closure being broken, and the souldring betwene sinne and the soule being removed, there is novv a passage for the letting out of all these corruptions, that the heart may bee taken from under the pover of sinne, and bee subiect to the pover and guidance of God. This is the nature of sorrow. And by the vvay, consider this, unlesse the Lord should thus vvound and vex the soule, the heart that prized corruption as a God (as every naturall man doth) vvould never bee severed from it; did the soule see onely the delight in sinne, it vvould never part from it; and therefore God is forced to make us feele this, that vvee may bee severed from our finnes, and be subiect to him in all obedience.

Secondly, vvhat is meant by *heart*; not to tyre you vvith any matter of signification, this Word implieth tvvo things specially, vvich concernes our purpose, the first is mainly intended; it is not the natural part of a man vvich is in the midst of the body, that is, a fleshy heart; but it is the vvill it selfe, and that ability of soule, vvhereby the heart saith, I vvill have this, and I vvill not have that. As the understanding is settled in the head, and keeps his sentinell there, so the vvill is seated in the heart, vvhen it comes to taking or refusing. this is the office of the vvill, & it discovers his act there; As our Saviour saith, *Vvhere*

*your treasure is, there will your hearts bee also; And (as the Apostle saith) a man confesseth with his mouth, and believeth with his heart, Mat. 6. 21: So then they were not onely pricked as with a pin, but this sorrow seiseth upon the soule, and pierceth unto the very vwill: it was not outward overly sorrow, but that which went to the very root, and entred into the very heart.*

By all which, wee may see that finnes unpardoned, are of a pierching nature, they gasp and wound the soule and conscience of transgressours.

*Use* And this mee thikes should take off the imagination of those that thinke there is no delight, but in sinfull courses, they are much deceived. There is no gall but in sinne, and there is no sorrow but from sinne, and siene one'y impated made our Saviour to buckle under it, *David's* heart was crushed with it. *Psal. 22. Psal. 40.* And the Apostle saith, *All the creatures groane under us, Rom. 8. 19.* the earth groanes under sinners, and is willing to vomit them up, it is a burden to the Sunne, to give light to the adulterer to see his *be-lee*, and it is a burden to the ayre to give breathing to a blasphemour, that belcheth out his *oathes* against the God of heaven; nay, it is that which sinkes the damned into the bottomlesse pit, it is such as *Judas* had rather hang himselfe, than endure the horror of Conscience for it: let this therefore dash the foolish conceit of them which thinke there is no pastime but in finnes how-ever men glory in sinne, and take delight in sucking the pleasure of sinne, yet the end will bee bitterness. Their sweet meat will have a sovre sauce, and those sins which are so sweet, will eat out all comfort from their soules, from everlasting to everlasting. *They were pricked in their hearts.*

So that the maine point vvhich fits our time, is this sound sorrow, piercing of the soule of those that are affected with it, they vvere not onely pricked in their eyes to vveepe for their finnes, and to say; they vwould doe sa no more: The adulterer is not onely pricked in his eye, that hee should see his adulterous queane, but it goeth further, and sinketh into his very soule, and pierceth through his very heart: It is vwith sorrow that hath any substance in it, as it vvas vwith the repentance of *Nisibis*, not onely the ordinary and refuse sort of people forsooke their finnes, but even the King himselfe came from his throne, and sat in dust and ashes; yea, the Nobles and other subjects, and the very beasts of the field did fast. So it is comparatively vwith this sorrow, it is not onely for the tongue to talke of finnes, and the eye to vveepe for his finnes; but even the Queene of the soule, *the will it selfe*, puts on sack-cloth, and the heart, and all the affections, as so many subjects follow after: It breakes out into the eye, and the frame of the heart shakes with it, and the knees knock together, and the hands grow feeble; it is not, O Lord be mercifull unto us, and so be gone: But it must goe to your hearts; and you may vveepe out your eyes, and cry your sins at the market crosse, if you have not put off the vwill and affection of sinning, as vwell as the tongue of sinning: the nature of this sorrow is marvellous strange: *David saith, Make mee to heare of joy and gladnesse, that the bones which thou hast broken may reioyce, Psal. 51. 5 8.* This sorrow that did scise upon *David*, vvas not flight, but it breakes all the bones, vvhich are the maine pillars and props of nature, the burthen was so heauey and so great that it made all the strength that vvas in him

to shake. And in Psalme 34 20. *My moyſture is turned into the drough of ſummer.* This ſorrow went ſo deepe into his ſoule, that it did not onely take away his outvard reſreſhing, but it took away all the moiſt humors, the inward iuyce, the very oyle of life. It is admirable which the Prophet *Hoſea* ſaith, Chap. 13. 8. *I will meet them as a Beare bereaved of her whelps, and will rend the kyll of their hearts.* You muſt not thinke to have a whip and away, but the Lord will break the very kyll of thoſe proud hearts of yours, rather then hee will ſuffer ſinne to dwell in you, where his throne ſhould bee: And hence it is, that this ſorrow ſinckes many. Did you never ſee a ſoule in diſtreſſe of Conſcience? hee is all turned to duſt and aſhes, this ſorrow goeth to the quick, it is not a little touch & away, but it breaketh the heart inwardly.

For the opening of this point, let me diſcover theſe particulars: Firſt, how the Lord workes this ſorrow, and how it is brought into the ſoule. Secondly, I will ſhev you the behaviour of the ſoule when it is thus pierced, and this will ſhev the ſoundneſſe. Thirdly, I will ſhev ſome reaſon why it muſt be ſo. Fourthly, I will anſwer ſome queſtions. Fifthly, make ſome uſes, and therein lay downe ſome means how we may helpe forward this worke when it is begun.

For the firſt, I know God deales ſometimes openly, and ſometimes more ſecretly: But for the firſt, how this prick ing comes into the ſoule, and how the Lords ſtabs the ſoule, and makes as a man to thruſt him through. This diſcovers it ſelfe in three particulars.

I. Firſt, the Lord commonly and uſually lets in a kinde of amazement into the mind of a ſinner,



ser, and a kind of gastering: As it is vvith a sudden blow upon the head, if it comes with some violence, it dazells a man, that hee knowes not where he is; Iust so it is generally vvith the soule, the Lord lets in some flashes of his wrath, and darts in some evidences of his truth into the heart of a man, the hammer of Gods Law layeth a sudden blow upon the heart, and this discovers the vile nature of sinne; as when a drunkard is drunke to day, and will be so to morrov; and the Minister preacheth against that sin, and yet hee will bee drunke still; and the blasphemers saith, Come let's svwear the Minister out of the Pulpit; now it may bee the Lord lets in some sudden truth, that unmaskes the soule, and drives him to a sudden amaze, that novv he sees his corruptions to bee otherwise then ever hee did; commonly hee doth not yet see the evill of sinne, but hee is driven to a stand and a pavor, and hee doth not know what to say of himselfe, nor vvhat to think of his sinne; there is a kind of tumult in his thoughts, and a confused cumber, hee knowes not what to make of himselfe, and he goeth away in a kind of confused distemper: Thus it was vvith Paul vvhen he vvvas running a-long to *Damascus*; and had gotten a lusty Steed to make haste, suddenly there did shine a light from heaven, and hee heard a voice from heaven, saying unto him, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou mee?* Hee mervailed at the matter, and yet hee did not know vvhat the matter vvvas, and therefore he saith, *VVho art thou Lord? VVhat wouldest thou have mee doe?*

As it was vvith *Saul*, so it is most commonly vvith us all; it may be a poore man drops into the Church, and the Lord lets in a light, & the Lord doth compasse him about vvith some threat-

rings of the Law, and shewes him the nature of sinne, and the damnation that comes by it, and thereupon his thoughts beginne to hurry in one upon another, and hee retires home, and thinkes thus with him-selfe, Surely the Preacher spake very strange things to day, if all bee true that hee spake, then certainly my condition is naught, surely there is more in sinne then ever I thought of; I did alwayes thinke that such finnes as were grosse, and punishable by the Law of man, were abominable, and God vvas incensed against them: but vvhath? vwill every wicked thought sinke the soule into hell unlesse God pardon it? and is God so just, and so severe, and vwill hee punish all sinners? and must I answer for all my petty oathes? If I shall bee condemned for my vvords, and thoughts, it is a strange thing: well, I will enquire further of the matter, it is mervailous hard if it be true. Many a man hath beene thus, and goeth no further for the present.

II. Well then; Secondly, hee resolves to heare the Minister againe, and hee falls to reading and conferring vvith others, to try if it bee so as the Minister before revealed unto him, and commonly hee goeth to heare the same Minister againe, and by this meanes, vvhath vvith hearing, and reading, and conferring, hee seeth the thing hee doubted of is too certaine, and that the thing hee questioned before, is vvithout all doubt: the Law is just, the Word is plaine, if God bee true, this is true; *The wages of sinne is death*; Yea of every sinfull thought: and *Hee that beleeveth not is condemned already*: so that novv the sinner begins to confider, that the condemnation threatned sleepees not, and that God hath him in chafe, and that punishment that God threatens, shall be executed upon

upon him sooner or later : thus the soule from a generall amazement, comes to see that it is so, and by this meanes hee is surpris'd vvith a sudden feare of spirit in expectation and suspicion of vvhat is discovered, lest God should lay it upon him, in so much that the soule saith, What if God should damne me, God may doe it; and if God should execute his vengeance upon mee, the soule feareth that the evill discovered will fall upon him, the nature of his feare is this, hee knoweth there is cause of feare, and hee cannot beare the evils when it is come. He saith, I am a sinfull wretch, and God may damne mee for ought I know, and what if God should damne mee : this is the reason of those phrasēs of Scripture, *VVe have not received the spirit of bondage to feare againe* : the spirit sheeves our bondage, and thence comes this feare.

Hence it is that the *Apostle* saith, *God hath us given us the spirit of feare* : That is, the spirit of bondage that vvorkes feare; and therefore the Lord saith by *Moses*, *Thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt feare day and night, thou shalt have no assurance of thy life*. It is vvith a soule in this feare, as it vvvas vvith *Bolshazzer* vvhen hee commanded the cups to bee brought out of the house of the Lord, that hee and his Nobles, and concubines might quaffe in them, and brave against the God of Israel: then came a hand vvriting against him on the vvall, and vvhen hee savv it, his thoughts troubled him, and his face began to gather paleness, and his knees knocked one against another, as if hee should say, Surely there is some strange evill appointed for mee, and vvith that, his heart began to tremble and shake; Just so it is vvith this feare, hee that runnes vvot in the vvay of vvickednesse, &c. thinkes to despise Gods Spirit,

Spirit, & to hate the Lord Almighty, and resist the worke of his grace, & saith vvithin himselfe, Let us goe & heare the Minister, that vvee vvay cavill at him, and persecute him.

Nowv it may bee there comes this feare & hand-  
vvriting against him, and vvho knowves but that  
it may bee thus vvith thee, vvhosoever thou art :  
for this is a note of the child of the devil, to hate  
Gods servants and Ministers. Nowv vvhen a vvick-  
ked man heares this, hee saith, The vvorde of  
God vvvas profesly spoken against me, these are my  
sinnes, and these are the Iudgements and plagues  
threatned against them, & therefore vvhy may  
not I be damned? and vvhy may not I bee pla-  
gued? and thus his heart is full of feare, and hee  
begins to reason vvith himselfe; Is this the nature  
of sinne? and are the Iudgements of God denou-  
ced against sinfull creatures? vvhy then, vvhat if  
God should lay these Iudgements upon my soule?  
and vvho knowveth but God vvill doe so to some  
this day; hee may plack mee out of the land of  
the living? I am sure my sinnes are such, and  
Gods Iudgements are such threatned against them,  
and therefore vvhy may not this bee? and vvhen  
hee goeth to bed, hee reasoneth thus; vvhat if  
I never rise more? and vvhen hee goeth home,  
vvhat if I never retorne more? & God may take  
me vvith my meat in my mouth, and cast mee  
dovvne into hell fire for ever. The soule being in  
this estate, and the heart being thus pestered and  
plagued vvith the feare of Gods vvrauth that follo-  
vveth a man like a Tailor, hee is hindred still that  
hee cannot sinne so freely, but still the vvrauth of  
God pursueth him, and saith, Doe you not feare  
that God may take you avvay in the act of sinning,  
and in the midst of your chambering and vvau-  
sonnesse?

The

The heart being thus pestered with this feare, it is not able to endure it, hee labours to drive away this trouble and dread from his minde, and still hee thinkes God is against him, and hee heares some behind him saying, Thou must come to Iudgement and be plagued. Now the soule labours to drinke away, and play away this Sorrow. Another man haply that was a prodigall before, riseth now early, and will bee exceedingly busied about his occasions all the day long, that these things may take up his minde, and the reason is, there lyeth something at the heart, and hee cannot tell vvhich way to drive away his feare, but hee labours all in vaine: For this is to make up walls with untempered mortar, vvhich vwill presently fall downe: it is as much as a man should labour to ease himselfe of sin by sinning, to give a man cold drinke in a hot burning Feaver.

III. Thirdly, the Lord pursueth the soule, and when the heart cannot bee rid of this feare, the Lord begins to let fly against the soule of a sinner, and discharges that evill upon him which was formerly feared, and affliction enters into the heart. The nature of feare, is to feare an evill to come: now the Lord makes the soule to see that it is not onely great drunkards and adulterers that are threatned, but every sinfull thought, and idle word.

The soule would faine have driven away this feare, but the Lord will not let him, but saith, These curses shall kindle upon thee, and shall continue for ever to thy perdition. And hence comes this sorrow, the Lord lets in some vein of his vengeance, & some secret displeasure of his, and makes sin to stab the soule, & then the curse lyeth upon him, & the Lord, as it were, kindles the fire

of his wrath upon him really, & makes him see this is that which hee feared. Now his conscience is all on a flame within him, and hee saith to himselfe, Thou hast sinned and offended a just God, and therefore thou must be damned, and to hell thou must goe: This is the particular seising of the curse upon a sinfull soule; for this is the nature of true sorrow, if evill bee to come, wee feare it, if evill bee upon us, wee grieve and sorrow for it, herein is the greatest vvorke of all, and the Lord deales diversly, as hee seeth fit; specially these three wayes.

1. First, if God have a purpose to civilize a man, hee will lay his sorrow as a fetter upon him; hee onely meanes to civilize him, and knocke off his fingers from base courses, as we have knowne some in our dayes; many desperate persecutors of Gods people, God casts this sorrow into their hearts, & they say, they will persecute Gods people no more, haply they are naught still, but God confines them: first, God onely rips the skinne a little, and layeth some small blow upon him: but if a man have beene rude and a great ryoter, the Lord begins to serve a Writ upon him, and saith, Thou art the man, so thee be it spoken, thy sinnes are weighed, and thou art found too light, heaven and salvation is departed from thee, thy sorrow is begun here, never to have end hereafter, but thou must continue in endlesse torments: thou hast continued in sin, and therefore expect the fierce anger of the Lord to bee upon thee for ever; so that now the soule seeth the flashes of hell, and Gods vvrath upon the soule, and the terrours of hell lay hold upon the heart, and hee confesseth he is so, and he hath done so, & therefore hee is a poore damned creature, and then the soule labours

to welter it, and it may bee his conscience vwill bee deluded by some carnall Minister that makes the way broader than it is, and bids him goe and drinke, and play, and worke avway his sorrow; or else it may bee, hee stops the mouth of conscience with some outward performances; it may bee his conscience saith, Thou hast committed these and these finnes, & thou vwill be damned for them; And then hee entreates conscience to bee quiet and hold his peace, and hee will pray in his family, and heare sermons, and take up some good courses, and thus hee takes up a quiet civill course, and stayeth here a vvhile, and at last comes to nothing.

I I. Secondly, if God intends to doe good to a man, hee will not let him goe thus, and fall to a civill course: When a man begins to colour over his old sins, and God hath broken his teeth, that hee cannot worry as formerly, but yet there is no power in him; if the Lord love that soule, hee will much the more clearly reveale his sins unto him; God will pluck away all his chambering and wantonnesse, all his pride and peevishnesse, and pull off his vizard, and shew him all his finnes, and pursue him, therefore as before, God entred the blow, so now he followes it home.

And hence it is that Iob saith, *The arrows of the Almighty sticke fast in mee, and the venome thereof drinckes up my spirits, and the terrors of the Almighty encamp themselves against mee every way.*

And as David saith, *Thou keepest my eyes walking, & my sins are ever before mee.* If God love a sinner, and meane to doe good to him; he will not let him looke off his sinne; the Lord will ferret him from his denne, and from his base courses and practises: Hee will be with you in all your stea-

ling and pilfering, and in all your cursed devices, if you belong to him hee will not give you over.

And in another place *Iob* saith, *How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let mee alone till I swallow downe my spittle?* *Iob. 7. 19.* You had better a great deale now have your hearts humbled and broken, and see your finnes, than to see them when there is no remedy.

And in another place the holy man *Iob* saith, *Thou wilt not suffer mee to take in my breath, but fillest mee with bitterness,* *Iob 9. 18.* Your eyes have beholden vanity, and therefore now you shall see the Lords wrath against you for your finnes; and you have breathed out your venome against the Lord of heaven, therefore now hee will fill your soules with indignation, in so much that ye shall breath in his wrath, as yee have breathed out your oathes against him: you have filled the Lords eyes & eares with your abominations; and the Lord of heaven shall fill you answerably with his wrath.

And in another place *Iob* saith, *Wilt thou brake a dry leafe tossed to and fro?* And yet the Lord brake him: Now the soule teeth all the evill, and the Lord pursueth him, and sets conscience a worke to the full. Consider that of the *Apostle*, *That all those might bee damned which believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousnesse;* Even all of them. What, shall no great ones bee saved? No, nor you little ones neither; all that lay not hold upon Christ, but have pleasure in unrighteousnesse, not onely great ones, and such as are abominably prophane, but even all that had pleasure in wickednesse. Now Conscience saith, *Doest not thou know that thou art one of them that have had pleasure in unrighteousnesse, therefore*  
away



away thou must goe, and thou shalt bee damned. Now the soule shakes, and is driven beyond it selfe, and would utterly faint, but that the Lord upholds it with one hand, as hee beats it downe with the other; he thinks, that every thing is against him, and the fire burnes to consume him, and hee thinks the ayre will poyson him, Conscience flies in his face, and hee thinks heil mouth is open to receive him, and the wrath of God hangs over his head, and if God should take away his life, hee should tumble head-long downe to hell.

Now the soule is beyond all shift; when it is day, hee wisheth it were night, and when it is night, hee wisheth it were day; the wrath of God followeth him whereloever hee goeth, and the soule would faine bee rid of this, but hee cannot; and yet all the while the soule is not heavy and sorrowfull for sinne; hee is burdened, & could bee content to throw away the punishment and horror of sinne, but not the sweet of sinne: as it is with a childe that takes a live coate in his hand, thinking to play with it, when hee feels fire in it, hee throwes it away; hee doth not throw it away, because it is black, but because it burnes him: So it is here: A sinfull wretch will throw away his sinne, because of the wrath of God that is due to him for it, and the drunkard will bee drunke no more; but if hee might have his queanes and his pots without any punishment or trouble, hee would have them with all his heart, hee loves the black and sweet of sin well enough, but hee loves not the plague of sinne.

*Foolish people* (saith the Prophet) *are plagued for their sins.* If thou roarest for disquiet of heart, and thy bones are broken; it is because of thy sinne:

thy pride, and drunkenesse, and uncleaneffe, brought this upon thee; if thou wilt bee eased of the plague, throw away thy corruptions, if you would have the effect removed, then take away the cause.

There are two things in sinne which make a man sorrowfull; First, sinne it selfe, that doth defile a man, and separate him from God: Secondly, the punishment of sinne. Now the sinner lookes either so farre at sinne as it causeth punishment, or as it seperates from God.

Haply a sinner will come to this, hee will be content to carry his heart, and that furiously against sinne, because it brings Iudgements & plagues; But thus far a hypocrite may goe, a *Judas a Carne, a Saul; Carne* would say his sins were greater then could bee forgiven: because he had killed his brother; but he could never see his sin so vile, because it did separate him from God.

Now in the third place, if the Lord purpose to doe good to the soule, hee will not suffer him to be quiet here, but hee openeth the eye of the soule further; and makes him sorrow, not because it is a great and shamefull sinne, but the Lord saith to the soule, Even the least sinne makes a separation betweene mee and thee; and the heart begins to reason thus: Lord, is this true? is this the smart of sinne? and is this the vile nature of sinne? O Lord! how odious are these abominations that cause this evill, and though they had not caused this evill, yet this is worse then the evill; that they make a seperation betweene God and my soule; Good Lord, why was I borne? and why came I into this world? why did God continue mee heere, and all the meanes of grace for my good, and all the comforts of this life  
why.

whereby my course might be maintained and made lesse tedious? vvhhat if I did want this horrour of heart, and had all the ease in the vworld? and what if I might bee free from all misery on earth? vvhhat vvere this, so long as I had sinne in my soule, that makes a separation betweene God and my soule? I vvas made to bee one vwith God, and to have communion vwith God, and to obey his commandements, but I have departed from God by sinne, and departed from his commandements.

A godlesse and a gracelesse man, is a miserable man, though hee vvere never plagued at all; I was made to honour God, and I have done nothing else but dishonoured him: I vvas made to subject my selfe to the good vvill of God, but I have vvithdrawne my selfe from his vvill, and this is my misery and my plague; If I had beene in hell, and had not had finnes, I had beene a happy man, and though I had beene in heaven, and had had sinne, I had beene a miserable man; because it makes a separation betweene me and my God.

Nay, the sinner still thus pleads vwith himselfe, What is this to mee that I am rich and miserable, honourable and damned, to have quiet, and ease here, and a benumbed conscience, and so in the end to be throwne among the devills?

If I had all the ease, vwealth, honors, & friends in the world, so long as I have this vile heart I could not be a happy man.

If you were never pierced for your finnes, your condition is wofull, you shall have enough of it one day: you that are never troubled for your finnes but goe on smoothly, know this, I charge you in the name of the Lord Iesus Christ, though you had all the ease and pleasures in the world, so

long as you have these proud, sturdy, unfaithfull hearts, you are as miserable creatures as eyer breathed upon the face of the earth.

Thus the heart complaines, as sometimes the lamenting Church did, *Woe to us that wee have sinned*, not because wee have deserved plagues, but because wee have sinned. Woe to us; for the God of grace is gone from us, and the God of mercy is gone from us, because wee have sinned, and the God of blessednesse is gone from us, because wee have walked in cursed wayes.

Hold here, and then your sorrow goeth right; if the soule can say, though I have no horrour of heart, yet if I have this sinfull heart, I am a miserable man.

Sometimes God deales thus punctually with a man: First, hee drives him to an amazement; Secondly, hee workes in him mervailou, feare of evill that is to come; Thirdly, hee possesseth the soule with the feeling of the evill, and so forth, as in the former particulars, but yet is bound to no time, and therefore wee must not limit the holy One of Israel: it is true, the Lord may presse in upon the soule, and worke all this on the soulden, but yet experience hath proved, and reason will confirme it, when God workes never so suddenly, hee affecteth the soule thus: when a poore soule commeth into the congregation, hee layeth some truth upon him, that is new and terrible, so that the soule dare not deny it, nor yet fully resist it, but is in a maze, and by it may be the Lord opens his eyes, and awakens his conscience, & makes that more evident to the soule, and so immediately arrefts the soule, and then sorrow fall's in amaine upon it; and the heart thinkes God meant his courses, and the Minister spake against him.

him ; and hee must goe down to hell suddenly ; so that somerimes the sinner cries out in the congregation, and though hee containe himselfe for a time, yet hee buckles under the burthen ; all this may bee done at one Sermon, in one doctrine, or in one part of an use ; but usually this I have spoken of, is Gods manner of working.

*Object.* How doth the soule behave it selfe under this sorrow ?

I. *Answ.* I answere, the heart is most of all weary of the burthen of sinne, as it is sinne, and thinkes it the greatest burthen in the world : as a man that hath a great burthen on his backe wrincketh this way and that away, and if hee cannot remove it, yet he vwill ease it ; so the heart useth all meanes, and taketh all courses, that if it were possible, it may cast off and ease it selfe of the vilenesse of sinne, and plague of sinne. This wearisomnesse of the soule, which followeth the weight of sinne, makes it selfe knowne in these three particulars.

First, his eye is ever upon it, his mouth is ever speaking of it, and hee is alwayes complaining against it, and hee is readily content to take shame to himselfe for it. If a man have a sore place in his body, his eye, and his finger will ever bee upon it : so it is with the soule ; As the people when they apprehend the hideous wrath of God against them, they entreated *Samuel* to pray for them, for ( say they ) *Woe have added to all our finnes this specially, in asking us a King,* 1 Sam. 12. 19.

As it is with a man that hath the stone in the reines, or some stich in his side, or where ever his paine or trouble is ; there hee complains most ; and when the Physitian comes to feele on his body, hee saith, Is it here ? No saith hee : It

is here: and when hee commeth to the right place, hee saith, There it is, cut there, and launce there: So it is with a man that is stung with the vile nature of sinne, when hee comes to complaine of sinne, hee doth not altogether complaine of his horreur, nor of death; but he saith, Oh! that chambring and wantonnesse, that pride, and stubbornnesse, and rebellion of heart! Oh! that rioting, and malice against the Saints of God! The soule seeth this, and complains of it, and takes shame to himselfe for it; as *Paul* deales with himself: which argues a heart truly weary of corruption. I was a persecutor, and a blasphemer, and the like; and I was received to mercy; hee doth not say, I was in horreur, or in trouble, but I was a persecutor: hee doth not say, I was thus, and thus plained, but I was an injurious person to Gods Church, there hee was weary, and there hee would bee eased, if it were possible. Let all vile wretches tremble at it, for God hath enough for all *Pharaohes* and *Nimrods*.

Away therefore with all these Lapwing cries and complaints; it is the nature of that bird to cry and flutter most when shee is farthest from her nest, because by this meanes shee would cozen passengers, & save her young ones: So it is with an hypocrite, hee will complaine a great way off his sinne, and have some secret turning.

It is admirable to see how hard it is for a man to lay open his finnes before God; it is a signe that hee is never weary of sin, that hee is not willing truly to confesse his sin, when he is lawfully called to it, & when he pretends it; it is true sometimes God will accept of a confession made to him in secret, if it be in truth; but when God will have a man unbowell himselfe, and all his s-  
bomi-

bominations, and when a man commeth and desi-  
 res comfort in this kinde, then for a man to cover  
 his sinne, and to complaine a farre off, of some or-  
 dinary corruption, which every poore childe of  
 God is troubled with, and that particular lust  
 whereof hee is guilty, for shame he is not willing  
 to acknowledge; this argueth that the heart is  
 naught, and never found this wearisomnesse of  
 sinne: I know, that the best heart under heaven  
 will have many windings and turnings; but the  
 Lord will never leave the heart in this case, till  
 hee come to deale plainely; and say, These are my  
 sinnes, and this is my uncleannesse, and this is  
 my secret theft, and thus he openeth himselfe at  
 large, to that man whom God hath appointed for  
 that end; but some are content to confesse and  
 complain of their sins when God hath them upon  
 the rack, as *Judas* did; but marke, his punish-  
 ment is the greatest cause of his complaint, and  
 hell is his greatest feare, hee is weary of sinne, be-  
 cause of the plague and punishment due to it, but  
 hee never regards the vilenesse of sinne in this re-  
 spect, because it makes a seperation betweene God  
 and his soule. Secondly, as the soule complains  
 of the vile nature of sinne, and desires to have his  
 face covered with shame, so in the second place, it  
 will never meddle with, not give way to any  
 thing that is sinfull, so farre as it is revealed so to  
 bee, setting aside suddaine passions, and violent  
 temptations; but when a man is come to himselfe  
 againe, his conscience is awakened; this is sure,  
 the soule will not dare to tamper with any thing  
 that is sinfull: why? because it hath bene wea-  
 ried with the burthen of it before. It is the pra-  
 ctice of the lamenting Church in *Hosea*, *Ashur*  
*shall not save us, we will not ride on horses, neither will*  
*wee*

*wee say to the workes of our hands, Te are our Gods: for  
with thee the fatherlesse finde mercy, Hosea 15. 3.*  
That is, we will meddle no more with any thing  
that is sinfull, whereby wee have dishonoured God  
heretofore; for they had trusted in their hortes,  
and made Idols, and relied upon them, but now  
they cast them cleane off.

The reason is, because when the soule seeth  
sinne, as it is sin, and that it is a burthen to the  
soule, and the heart is now weary of it, it will lay  
no more weight upon it, because novv the heart  
is weary enough already. The blasphemer feares  
an oath, and the adulterer shakes to see his queane,  
and hee trembles to see the place where his abo-  
minations have beene committed, and now his  
heart loathes all these. If a man hath bin once at  
deaths doore by drinking deadly poyson, he will  
never taste of it more; Nay, he will not endure the  
sight of that cup, hee vvill rather fare hardly, and  
rather starve then eate and drinke that vvhich  
shall kill him: so (saith the soule) it is sinne that  
hath made a seperation betveene me and my God,  
this pride, or this uncleanesse had bin the death of  
me, if God had not been mercifull unto mee, and  
therefore I vvill rather sinke and die then meddle  
vvith these sins any more.

And hence it is, that if any thing come under  
the colour of corruption, the soule that is truly  
vveary of sinne, saith, Omitting of this duty is  
evill, and therefore I vvill not omit it, the doing  
of this action is sinfull, and therefore I vvill not  
doe it: because the sinne is vvorse then the plague,  
he vvill take the lesse evill of the tvvo, as vvee  
use to doe in other matters: if a man hate his  
sinne for the plague, then so soone as that is re-  
moved, he returns to his sinne againe, the blowv

was



was but weake. This vvas the fault in *Judas* his sorrow, hee did see, and confesse his sinnes, and bewaile them, and did more than many will doe novv a dayes, and tooke shame to himselfe; but though hee confessed and complained of his sinne, yet hee vwould rather commit murder upon himselfe, then under-goe the horrour of sin; if hee had bene vweary of sin because of the loathsomnesse of it, hee vwould not have laid violent hands upon himselfe: These two passages are every vvhere, vvhere true saving grace is.

III. Novv in the third place, If God should deprive a sinner of his judgement, and horrour of conscience, yet if his heart bee truly apprehensive of sinne as it is sinne, hee cannot lay aside his sorrow; so long as sin prevails, and gets head against him, and dogges him up and dovvn, nothing vvill content him, but the removall of his sinne: That soule vvchich vvas cured by any other meane save onely by CHRIST, vvas never truly vvounded for sin: if ease cures him, then horrour vvas his vexation: If honour cure him, then shame vvas his burthen: If riches cure him, then poverty did most of all pinch him: but if the soule vvere truly vvounded for sinne, then nothing can cure him but a Saviour to pardon him, and grace to purge him: for vvhat is that to the soule, to have ease and liberry, nay to be in heaven, if he have a naughty rebellious heart? nay, if it vvere possible for him, to bee in heaven vvith his sinfull heart, it vwould tyre him and burthen him there: Therefore those soules that are cured by any thing saving by Christ, those soules vvere never truly vvounded for sinne as sinne: It may be, horrour and vexation lay heavy upon them, but it vvas not the stroke of sinne that did trouble them.

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Then

Then gather up all; Hee that out of the vilenesse which hee seeth in sinne, is content to take shame to himselfe, and vwill not meddle vwith his sinne, neyther carelesly nor vvillingly, and is not cured by any thing saving Christ, this man behaveth himselfe truly in the first place. Thus much of the tryall.

Secondly: againe, the soule is restlesse in importuning the Lord for mercy, and vwill not be quieted till it get some evidence of Gods favour, the soule vwill take no nay, it vwill not be contented unlesse it can finde some glimpse of acceptance through the goodnesse of God in Christ. This is plaine, if a man be burthened vwith a vweight or some heavie load that is laid upon him, if that hee be fallen under his burthen, hee lyeth here like to dye, and if there be none neere to saccour him, all his care is to cry out for helpe, though hee seeth no man, yet hee cryeth out, O helpe, help, for the Lords sake. *Saul* vvas vwithout fight three dayes, & no doubt he prayed to God all that vwhile, *Acts.* 9. 17. as if he had resolved to give him no rest till he had found mercie: this is the nature of true sorrow, it ever drives a man to God, vvhereas reprobate sorrow drives a man from God: Nay, it may be, though the heart thinks it shall never find mercy, yet the Lord carrieth on the soule in an earnest desire, and using the meanes, and vwill not off from God, and from his vvord, and Sacraments, and ordinances; Nay, though he sometime concludes, that he shall never get mercy, nor get pover against his corruptions; and then one saith, You had best leave off all; Nay, (saith the soule) I cannot be vvorse than I am, if I go to hell, I will goe this vvay,

There is a kinde of sorrow in the heart, vvwhich

is heavenly and godly, but reprobate sorrow ever drives a man from God, and makes him say, If I am damned, I am damned, if I be a reprobate I am so. O thou wretch! is this all? If a poore creature that is pressed under his burthen crieth for helpe, vwhen almost nature and strength doth faile, hee cryeth still for helpe, and that is all hee can say, and so hee dyes, and this is the last vword that he speakes vwith a soft still voyce, O helpe, helpe: So it is vwith the soule of a poore languishing sinner, vwhen the heart is burthened vwith the vilenesse of the nature of sin, and the separation from God by the same, he doth not novv cry ease, and liberty, and riches Lord: No, he cries mercy, mercy Lord on this vile heart of mine, and give me pover against these mighty lusts: and after many meanes using vwhen he is going the vway of all flesh, his last vword is, Mercy.

Mee thinkes I see this poore soule sliding awy, & saying, How many sinnes have I committed? Oh mercy, mercy, Christ. And this is the last word he speaketh, & so he dyes, and no question but mercy shall be given. It is not a *Lord have mercy upon mee*, & *God forgive mee* will serve the turne: No, it is otherwise, if ever God set home this worke, hee will make you restlesse in seeking mercy, & nothing shall content you but mercy to pardon your sinnes, and grace to subdue them, and the soule thinkes, if mercy would but shine upon him, and if his sinnes were taken away, that they might never hinder him in a Christian course, hee were a happy man: this is the frame of the soule that is truly weary of sinne.

When the young man came to Christ, & played faire and a farre off, and said, he could doe any thing. Well (said Christ) if thou canst doe any thing

thing, then *goe and sell all that thou hast, and give it to the poore, but hee went away sorrowfull*, (Matth. 19. 22.) from Christ (the text saith) hee did not come to Christ sorrowfull, but went away sorrowfull from CHRIST, whereas if hee had bene burthened with sinne as sinne, hee would have come to Christ sorrowfull, and say; Now I see Lord, the world is a heavy burthen; O Lord helpe me against it, give mercy to pardon me, and grace to remove it: but our Saviour heard no more of the young man, and as it is in the text, this pricking of heart made the Iewes come to Peter, saying, *Men and brethren, VVhat shall we doe?* They did not as a great many say now a dayes, if the Minister were farre enough off from me, and I from him, I were happy, I cannot bee quiet for him: these are rebroate speeches: but the sinner that is truly humbled and burthened with sin as sinne, he comes home, and is resolved to wait for mercy, till the Lord sheweth mercy to him. Carnall sorrow sent *Judas* and *Achitophel* to the gallowes, but godly sorrow, ever drives a man to God.

When *Iona* was in the Whales belly, hee sayd, Lord, though I cannot come to thy temple, I will looke towards it: so a sorrowfull soule that is truly burthened with sinne, will say, though I cannot come to heaven, yet I will looke up to heaven: and though I never finde mercy, yet for mercy will I wait: thy mercy onely Lord shall content me.

But how is it possible my sins should wound and pierce my soule in this manner, when as of all things in the world *sinne* is most pleasing to mee, and nothing so grievous as Gods commandments?

I. REA-

## I. REASON.

First, the Soule must be pierced vwith sinne, because that is the greatest evill of the Soule, vvhich if the heart doe truely apprehend, it cannot but be most of all burthened vwith it: If a man beare tvvo vweights on his backe, that is most grievous vvhich is most heavie, if the one be thirty, and the other forty pound vweight, nature vwill be most burthened and pressed downe vwith the greatest vweight: so there is no evill so properly and directly evill to the Soule, as the evill of sinne: Punishment deprives the Soule of ease and quiet, but sinne deprives the soule of God, and the maine end for vvhich it vvas created, through vvhich the soule must be happy, or for the vvant of vvhich it must be accursed. Nowv sinne is as it vvere ten thousand vweight, vvhens as sorrow, and shame, and punishment, they are but a hundred vweight: if it vwere possible for a man to have all the ease and quiet in the vworld, and to be in heaven; yet if he had a soule heart and a sinfull soule, hee vwere a miserable cursed creature, and if it vwere possible to be in hell, free from sinne, he vwere a happy man.

There is nothing that can doe properly good to the Soule but God, and nothing can properly doe any hurt to the Soule, but sin, vvhich estrangeth the heart from God, vvhich is the chiefest good. If a man had all the pleasures and contents the vworld could afford, nothing vwill satishe the Soule but God: and if the soule vwere in horror, and had the presence of God vwith it, it vwould not but be comforted and quieted therewith. It is possible; nay, God doth it also, hee makes the Soule of a man feele the burthen of sinne, because

of the vilenesse of it, as well as of the plague and punishment of it. When soever the Lord will fasten a mans sinne to his Conscience, he is able to force the Soule to apprehend the evill of sinne, as well as the torment and plague of sinne.

And the ground is this: take the soule as it is polluted with corruption and all abominations, sinne is very crosse to the nature of it, the Soule hath it's being from God, and was made for him: howsoever the power of sinne prevailed with it, and made it fall short of God; yet the nature of the Soule still, considering it as it is a creature, it is made for God, and desires to have fellowship and union with him: therefore marke how I dispute: If sin be the worst evill to the Soule, as crossing the end of it, and depriving the soule of it's chiefest good, then the Lord is able to make the Soule see sinne as the greatest evill to the soule; But sinne crosseth the end of the creature (for the end of the creature is God-ward; and to have union & fellowship with the Almighty;): Therefore the Lord is able to make the soule see the evill of sinne as well as the evill of punishment: no wonder then that the heart be most of all pierced with sinne.

## I I. REASON.

The second reason, is, because by sound sorrow the soule is truly prepared and fitted for the Lord Iesus Christ, and no other way then this: For when the soule comes to feele sinne in the proper colours of it, and to be affected with the loathsomnes, that is, that sinne which hath formerly over-ruled it: now the soule begins to renounce the power of that sinne, and to withdraw himselfe from the dominion of his corruptions, so that

that the union betweene sinne and the soule is now broken, and roome is prepared, and way made for the Lord Iesus to come into the soule; when sorrow hath wearied the heart, and loosened it from the love of sinne, then the heart is fitted for Christ. As it is with a vessell that hath beene for dishonour, if a man vwill turne the nature of it, and make it a vessell of honour, he must not onely heat it a little, but he must melt it throughly, and then it is fit to be a vessell of honour. So the soule of every sinfull man & woman is a vessell of dishonour, and sinne hath mervailously polluted them. Nowv if you will have your hearts fitted for Christ, you must not onely have your hearts warmed a little by *humiliation*, but you must have them melted all to pieces, and the heart must bee content to part with all abominations whatsoever, that so the Lord may take place in it, and rule over it, even for ever. First, cast out the *strong man*, and then the Lord Christ will come in and *take possession* of the heart; Sinne and Sathan are the strong man, and the Lord Christ *bindes* this *strong man*, and casts him out, when hee sheweth the vilenesse of Sinne, and tryeth the heart with the burthen of it; and binds the soule to good behaviour; that now the heart is readily content that Christ should come and doe all in the soule.

Many have gone a great way in the worke of humiliation, & yet because it never went through to the quicke, they have gone backe againe, and become as vile, as ever they were. I have knowne men, that the Lord hath layed a heavie burthen upon them, and awakened their consciences, and driven them to a desperate extremity, and yet after much anguish, and many resolutions, and the praising of Christ, as they conceived, & after the re-

nouncing of all, to take Christ upon his owne termes, as they imagined; and even these, when they have bin eased and refreshed, & God hath taken off the trouble, they have come to be as croffe to God and all goodnesse, and as full of hatred to Gods Children as ever, and worse too.

Now, why did these fall avay? Why were they never justified and Sanctified? and why did they never come to beleve in the Lord Iesus? The reason is, because theyr hearts were never pierced for their sinne, they were never kindly loosened from it, this is the meaning of the place in *Ierem. Chap. 4. 3. Plow up the fallow grounds of your hearts, and sow not among thornes*, is nothing else, but with sound saving sorrow to have the heart pierced with the terrors of the Law seising upon it, and the vilenesse of sinne wounding the Conscience for it. The heart of a man is compared to fallow ground that is unfruitfull; you must not sow amongst thornes and thistles, first plow it, and lay it bare and naked, and then cast in your seed. If a man plow here a furrow, and there a furrow, and leave here and there a bayke, he is never like to have a good crop, there will grow so many thistles, and so much grasse, that it will choake the seed: our hearts are this ground, and our corruptions are these thornes and thistles: Now if a man bee content to finde some sinne hatefull, because it is shamefull; but will keepe here a lutt and there a lutt, hee will never make any good husbandry of his heart: though a faithfull Minister should sow all the grace of the promises in his Soule, he would never get any good by them, but the corruptions that remaine in the heart will hinder the saving worke the reof.

There-



Therefore plow up all, and by sound sowing sorrow labour to have thy heart burthened for sinne, and estranged from it, and this is good husbandry indeed; the want of this was the wound of the *thornie ground*, as you may see in the *Parable*, Mark. 13. those *hearers* had much of the World in them, much ease, and profit, and pleasure, and these choaked the Word and made it utterly unfruitfull, and so they never received comfort nor mercy afterwards. This is that which the *Prophet David* sayth, *A contrite and broken heart; O God, thou wilt not despise* Psal. 51.17. If you would have your hearts such as God may take delight in and accept; you must have them broken and contrite: *David* saith, *The Lords voyce breaketh the Cedars of Libanus*. So the voyce of the Lord like *Lightning*, must thunder into the corrupt heart of sinfull Creatures.

A *Contrite heart* is that which is powdered all to dust, as the *Prophet* sayth, Psal. 90. *Thou bringest us to dust, and then thou sayest, Returne againe yee sonnes of Men*: So the heart must be broken all in pieces to powder, and the union of sinne must bee broken, and it must be content to be weaned from all sinne. As you may make any thing of the hardest flint that is broken all to dust, so it is with the heart that is thus fitted and fashioned; If there be any corruption that the heart lingers after, it will hinder the worke of preparation: If a man cut off all from a branch, save one sliver; that will make it grow still, that it cannot bee ingrafted into another stocke; So though a mans corrupt heart depart from many sinnes and scandalous abominations: yet if hee keepe the love of any one sinne, it will bee his destruction: as many a man after horrour of heart hath had a love

love after some base lust or other, and is held by it so fast, that he can never be ingrafted into the Lord Iesus. This one lust may breake his neck and send him downe to hell. So then, if the soule onely can bee fitted for Christ by sound sorrow, then this must needs pierce the heart before Christ can come there; but the heart cannot be fitted for Christ without this, and therefore of necessity, the heart must be truly wounded with sorrow for sinne.

### III. REASON.

*[Sorrow for sinne makes us set a high price upon Christ.]*

The last reason is this, because by this meanes the heart comes to set a high price upon Christ and grace, eyther the Grace of God offered in the Gospell, or that good way which God hath commanded us to walke in. If the heart finde the greatest evil to bee in horreur and vexation, then ease and quietnesse from these will be the greatest good; but now the soule seeth Grace to bee truly precious; because it seeth sinne to be truly vile: and this is the end why the Lord makes the soule see the vilenesse of sin; that the heart may be brought to see the excellencie in Christ, and prize him above all.

1. *Quest.* Now there are two questions to be answered: First, whether this sound sorrow be a worke of saving grace, and such a worke as cannot be in a Rebrogate?

2. *Quest.* Secondly, whether God doth worke this in all men that are truly converted and brought home to Christ, and whether he workes this in all alike or no?

*Answ.*

*Ans.* For the first, whether is this a worke of saving grace yea or no, and such as cannot be in a Reprobate: for answer to this:

First, I will shew the order that this worke hath to the other Workes.

Secondly, I will shew the difference of this from sanctifying sorrow, and yet it comes to bee sanctifying sorrow.

For the order: First, the heart in this worke is not yet conceived to be in Christ, but onely to bee fitted and prepared for Christ.

If you stop heere in your consideration, and dispute not of any worke to come, it is onely in the way to bee ingrafted into Christ; but so, that undoubtedly that Soule which hath this worke upon it, shall have faith povvred into it: for this is the meaning of that place, *The Lord Iesus came to seeke and save that which was lost*, Luke 19. 10. Now to bee *lost*, is not becaute a man is sinfull and miserable in himselfe, but hee is *lost* that seeth the evill of sinne, and the punishment that comes thereby, and comes to-bee lost in his own apprehension, in regard of his owne estate: and hee that is thus lost, shall be sure to have Christ and salvation by him. It was the end why Christ came, and therefore it shall bee fulfilled.

But he that is truly sensible of his sinne and the vilenesse of it, and abhorres himselfe for it, hee is truly lost, he is not yet settled on Christ, for then he were safe enough, but he is truly sensible of his lost estate, and therefore shall have faith & Christ; though yet he partake not of them, yet hee shall be everlastingly saved and redeemed by Iesus Christ.

*Quest.* And therefore this is an idle question, What if a man dye in this work of preparation before he come to have Faith? *Ans.*

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*Ans.* I say, it is an idle question; because it is impossible that hee which is thus prepared for Christ and grace, but hee shall have them before he dye: As the *Prophet* sayth, *Behold, I will send my Messenger before mee to prepare my wayes*, Mal. 3. 1. 2. When the heart is fitted and prepared, the Lord Christ comes immediately into it; The Temple is the Soule, and the way is the preparation for Christ; so as the Soule is yet to be conceived as in the way of preparation for Christ; not to have any formall worke of grace, whereby he is able to doe any thing for himselfe.

The next thing, is the difference of the sound saving Sorrow, from sanctifying Sorrow; and you must know there is a double sorrow. First, there is a sorrow in Preparation; Secondly, there is a sorrow in Sanctification.

[ *Two-fold Sorrow.* ]

The sorrow of the Soule in this preparative worke of it, is thus to be conceived; when the word of God leaves an impression upon the heart of a man, so that the heart of it selfe is as it were a patient, and onely beares the blow of the Spirit; the spirit of the Lord, and the over-povring force of the same, forceth the Soule to beare the Word: and hence come all those phrases of Scripture, as *Wounded, Pierced, Pricked*, and the like, onely in the Passive voyce; Because the Soule is a patient, and the Lord by the almighty hand of his Spirit, breakes in upon the soule, so that this Sorrow in preparation is rather a Sorrow wrought upon mee, then any worke comming from any Spirituall ability in my selfe.

*VVhs*

[ *What preparative sorrow is.* ]

This is Sorrow in preparation vwhen I am a patient, and vwherein I receive the worke of the Spirit, and am forced and framed by the spirit to doe that vvhich I doe in this kind.

[ *What sorrow in sanctification is.* ]

But then secondly, there is a sorrow in Sanctification, and that is this, that sorrow that doth flow from a Spirituall principle of Grace and from that power vvhich the heart hath formerly received from Gods Spirit: For sanctification comes after justification, and after the soule hath received faith and grace, then the heart hath a new povver given unto it, vvhereby it is able to set forth it selfe into any holy action, so that in this a man is a free vvorker, vvhereas sorrow in preparation is a vvorke vvrought on mee, and I am a patient and doe onely endure it: but I have not any spirituall povver to doe any thing of my selfe.

Nowv marke vvhath I say: both these are saving sorrowes, but they differ mervailously: many thinke that every saving vvorke is a sanctifying vvorke, vvhich is false, for every saving vvorke is not a sanctifying vvork, as the *Apostle* sayth, Rom. 8.30. *Those whom hee calleth, them he also justifies, and whom hee justifies, hee glorifies.*

[ *Every saving worke is not a sanctifying worke.* ]

Glorification implies sanctification here in part, and glory for ever hereafter: there is a saving vvorke & calling, but yet not a sanctifying worke:  
 N for,

for, *vocation* is when God so farre enlightens the minde, as to buckle the heart, and to turne it away from corruption to him, and then afterwards God brings the heart to be justified, and then sanctified: they are first *called*, and then *justified*, and then *glorified*.

## S I M I L E.

The difference of these two *works* is thus to be conceived in this similitude, as it is with the wheelles of a clocke, that runs quite wrong; what must a man doe to set this clocke right againe? he must first stop it that it runne no longer wrong, and then turne it, and set the wheelles right; Now all this while the clock is a patient, & the workman doth all.

Secondly, when it is thus set right, then the workeman puts the plummetts and vveights on it, and now the vvhheelles can runne of themselves by vertue of that poise and vveight they have gotten: so that these two are plaine different actions.

Iust so it is vwith the frame of the Soule, the vwill and the affections vvhich are as the vvhheelles of this great and curious clocke (for the soule goes hell-ward and sin-ward, the minde knowes nothing, and the vwill & the affections embrace nothing but Hell and Sinne) now to bring these into an holy order, the Lord must stop the soule, and that is done by the discovery of sinne, and by his humiliation of heart; vwhen the Lord lets a man see his sinne, and sayth to him; If thou wilt have sinne, thou must have hell and all together; and then the soule sayth; If it bee so, I will meddle no more with sinne: the Adulterer vwill be uncleane no more; and the Drunkard vwill be drunke no more.

Now,

**Now**, when the soule is thus turned, it looketh to Heavenward, and Godward, and is content Christ should rule over it: All this while the soule is a meere patient, this is a saving worke, and a worke of Gods Spirit where ever it is soundly wrought, and vwill in the end be faith and grace.

But now vwhen the Soule is set Heaven-ward, and God justifies a poore sinner, and pluckes him to himselfe by faith, & adopts him to be his childe; then the L O R D gives him of his Spirit, and this is as the vweight of the soule; then by the povver of that Spirit the soule is able to runne right, and hath a principle of grace in it, and the poise of the Spirit of grace which doth possesse the soule, makes it able freely to mourne for sinne, and to have the heart enlarged in the service of God: this is mainly the sanctifying worke.

**Quest.** The second question is this, whether doth the Lord worke this in all, and whether doth he worke it in all alike or no? For I perceive the hearts of many poore Christians are gasping for this, the Lord never wrought upon mee in this manner, and my heart vvas never thus battered and bruised.

**Ans.** For the ansvere of this question, I will handle three things: First, that the vwork is the same in all: Secondly, that the manner is different in the most: Thirdly, that many have it in them, and yet perceive it not how or when it vvas wrought.

First, this worke of Contrition of heart is wrought in every one for the substance of it, before he is, or can be planted into Christ: for the truth of this Scripture is plaine, and reason is pregnant; Scriptures are many, I will onely name three, as that in Luke, Our Lord Iesus Christ

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*came to seeke and to save that which was lost, Luke*  
19. 10.

[ *The qualification of those whom*  
*Christ will save.* ]

We may observe two things: First, the qualification of that party whom Christ will *seeke* and *save*: hee must be a *lost* man in his ovvne apprehension: Secondly, see the certainty of salvation of such a one, Christ came for this end; hee came to *seeke* up, and *save* that which was lost. Now Christ will not misse of his end; hee came for the *lost* *Sheepe*, then the lost sheepe hee will have; and though the lost sheepe cannot *seeke* nor *save* themselves, yet Christ will *save* them.

Thus you see, all men must be thus disposed before they can be saved: and if thus fitted and disposed, they shall be certainly saved; It is not enough for a man to be in a miserable estate and damnable condition, but hee must also see it, and his heart must be truly affected with it, & *finde* and *fee*le the burthen of it; not so much for the punishment, but for sinne whereby his heart is estranged from God, and also God from his soule.

Now that the sensibleness of his lost condition is there spoken of, and this man that hath it shall be saved, may appeare, because the sensibleness of a mans condition in regard of the punishment of sinne is such, as a man may have, and yet never have grace and salvation: *Cain* had the feeling of Gods vvrath, and felt the punishment of it, and so did *Judas* also, and yet they were never sought up nor saved.

The second place of Scripture, is out of *Iohn*, *No man cometh to me except the Father draweth him*, *Ioh. 6. 44.* by *comin*g you must conceive belee-



believing (as in that famous place of Iohn, *He that comes to mee shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me, shall never thirst*: Iohn. 6. 35. Now this text implies two things, and they are professedly granted by the inuodement of the *Apostle*, for the people murmured vvhhy the *Pharisees* and the *great ones* beleued not, and followed not *Christ*, to vvhom *Christ* answers, *Vnlesse my Father from Heauen draw them they cannot come*: so that these two things are cleare: First, a man must be drawne: Secondly, if he be drawne, he shall surely come.

This drawing is this much: When God opens the eye of a man, and makes knowne his sinne, and lets downe the heart in the acknowledgement of sinne, so that he feels the vilenesse and the burthen of it, and is content to part vvvith the same.

When the Lord shall lay all a mans abominations upon him, all his Adulteries, and all his thefts, and now hee sees what it is to depart from a blessed and a pure God; Or then, he will bee drunke, and uncleane, and malicious no more, because the heart is weary of it, and is content to part vvvith it.

From hence I reason thus: true drawing is ever accompanied with true believing; but this sense of sinne in regard of the punishment of it, is not alwayes accompanied with true believing, but a man must see his sinne further, in the vilenesse of it, and in the abomination of it; and then he shall undoubtedly beleue.

The streame of the whole Scripture runnes this way, and that in *Matth. 23*: *Come to me all ye that are weary and heauie laden, and I will ease you*: *Matth. 12. 28.* and this is that which *Esay* sayth, *Chap. 62. 12.* *The spirit of the Lord is upon me: because he*

*He* hath accepted mee to preach glad tidings to the mecke, *he* hath sent mee to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the Prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable day of the Lord, and to comfort them that mourne: Nay, the garment of Gladnesse is fitted onely for the broken-hearted, as in the third verse of that Chapter, *To appoint unto them that mourne in Sion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, and the oyle of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise, for the spirit of heavinesse*: Nay, the promises of largett extent in Scripture, doe eyther expressly belong unto such as are broken in heart, or else they do imply so much, that a man must bee so, before ever God can or will accept of him.

As in the Revelations, Chap. 22. 17. *Hee saye one that will, let him come freely, and take of the water of the Well of life, and live for ever.*

*Object.* So then, some may say, though a man were not broken hearted, yet if he will take this water of life, he shall live for ever.

*Ans.* Nay but except hee be broken hearted and humbled, he will never take it; as a man must have grace, soo he must will the water of life: now, to will the water of life, is this & to choose grace as the chiefest good, and to prize grace more than any thing else in the world, and to esteeme the Lord Iesus and his grace truly precious.

A man is sayd to chuse a woman, when hee is content to part with all for her, and to have her for her grace sake; so a man must part with sinne and himselfe, and whatsoever is deare to him, that he may have grace: now he will not part with sinne, unlesse he be weary and burthened with it: and therefore this wearying implieth the burthening of the heart with sinne & thus much for the prooffe of Scripture.

I. REA-

## I. REASON.

Now to adde some Reasons that may compell our Iudgements to yeeld to this truth; And they are taken; First, from the qualification of mans heart naturally; and secondly, from what he must be, before he can receyve Christ.

I will discover my thoughts in foure conclusions; and thus I reason,

## I. CONCLUSION.

It is a confest case (I conceive) that every man by nature doth entertaine sinne as his God; and seekes and loves that most of all; himselfe, and his sinne, is his God; In this case it is his chiefest good, and the heart will not, nay, it cannot be content to part with it: What is the cause that we propound Christ, and grace, and salvation, to a company of poore simple creatures, and yet the counsels, the promises, and commandements of God prevaile not with the heart of them, nor awe them, but still they will have theyr sinnes, and the offer of Christ and grace lyes in the dust? the adulterer will have his queanes, and the drunkard will have his cups, and they will not suffer the word to plucke away theyr corruptions, but they will have them though they be damned for them; what doth this argue, but that sinne is theyr God? Nay, it is cleare, not onely in palpable reason, but the Scripture is evident this way; It is the match Christ offers to the young man, if hee would *sell all and follow him, hee should have treasure in heaven*, Math. 19. 22. hee was covetous, and this was a faire offer for a little trash, hee should have everlasting life, now the text saith, *He went away sorrowfull*, hee would rather have

his covetousnes and his wealth, than heaven.

## II. CONCLUSION.

There cannot be two Gods in one heart, two Kings in one throne, nor two Sunnes in one firmament; you cannot have Christ, and yet bee an underling to sinne; will Christ be a Phyfician to heale you, that you may have your finnes still? No, our Saviour is plaine to the contrary, *you cannot serve God and Mammon*; If the adulterer will have his queanes, then he must forsake the Lord, and if he will not part with his lust, nor have his heart circumcised, nor broken, then he must goe downe whole to Hell; as the Prophet said, *VVhy halt you betweene two opinions, if God be God, serve him*, God will be chiefe in the Soule.

It is not possible to have heaven and hell together; it is impossible for a man to looke up to heaven stedfastly with both his eyes and down to the earth, both at one time.

## III. CONCLUSION.

Thirdly, you must of necessity cast off the yolk of corruption, and rebell against that; you must have your first God, pride, and malice, and the like, to be untroned; before the Lord Christ will set up his Scepter, and before he can be welcome to your Soules; you must have your hearts divorced from your first husbands, from sinne, and all those abominations vvhich you have loved and hugged as your life, if ever you would have Christ make a match with you, and take possession of your Soules; the Lord sayth, *Thou shalt be as a widow and fit for mee*, Hosea 13. and as the original hath it, *Thou shalt be separate from all, and fit thy selfe*

*selfe for mee, and then I will marry thee to my selfe in righteousness.*

#### IV. CONCLUSION.

Lastly, the soule will not part with his corruption and lust, which are his God, unlesse hee be wearied with them, and find the gall and bitterness of their evill nature; I say, till then, it is impossible that ever the Soule should bee separate from that sin wherein it hath found such contentment; therefore it is of necessity that they be parted; but before the soule seeth the venome of sin, it wil not part with it, & so he cannot come to receive the Lord Iesus Christ; and hence it is, that the Lord in his infinite wisdom is thus not only willing to doe for a poore sinner, but to force him to it; for there is such love and liking to sinne, that if you pull away the adulterers queanes, and the drunkards pottes, you had as good kill them, and they begin to say, It vvas vvel with the towne before the Minister came there; the reason is, because they would live in sinne.

Now the Lord is pleased to lay a heavy weight upon the soule, and to force the burthen of sinne upon it, that whereas before, the heart did find much sweetnesse in these base courses; the Lord makes them as bitter as gall, or vwormewood; And then the soule begins to reason thus with it selfe; and saith, Is it such a thing to be drunke, and is it murder to envie my brother? and can none such enter into the Kingdome of Heaven? and when the soule seeth God taken away, and Heaven separated from him, he saith, Is this the pleasing sinne that I have loved? and is this the nature of my pride to have God resist me? this lyes heavy upon the heart, and at last the soule is resolved to

part with his sinne, & never to love it more: Good Lord, doe what thou wilt with me, onely take my soule, and save me, and take away my lusts and corruptions: The heart is content at length that Christ should doe all; and now the match is made: the sight of sin from the punishment of it, will never separate the soule from sinne, nor break that union that is betweene them.

*Judas* had it in a great measure, and God pluckt his sweet morsels from his mouth, and made him confesse his finnes, and take shame to himselfe; and so God doth with many, and makes them say, I have beene a Drunkard and an Adulterer, and a desperate opposer of God and his ordinances: But though *Judas* loathed the horrour and punishment of sin, yet hee had a murtherous disposition still, hee that killed Christ, went and murthered himselfe also.

Now, from these former conclusions, I reason thus; If a mans finnes be his God, and if there cannot bee two Gods in one heart, and if those corruptions of the heart must of necessity be cast out, and if the heart will not part with sinne till it be wearied with it, and that is done by godly sorrow; then it is a matter of necessity, that the heart must be pierced; and there must bee a separation betweene sinne and the soule, before Christ will marry the soule, and rule in it, or else there shall be two Gods in one heart, which cannot be.

The second thing in this answer, is this, some may say; Oh I never found this worke in mee. Therefore you must know, how ever this worke is wrought in all for the substance of it, yet in a different manner in the mos.

[All

[ *All are not alike wounded for sinne.* ]

For the fashion that God useth in framing the heart is different ; two men are *pricked*, the one with a Pinne, the other with a Speare : two men are cut, the one with a Pen-knife, the other with a Sword : So the Lord deales kindly and gently with one soule , and roughly with another , and handles it mervailous sharply , and breakes it all to pieces. There is the melting of a thing , and the breaking of it with hammers ; this I say the rather to checke the imagination that harbours in the heart of some men otherwise holy and wise, (and yet mistaken in this point) they thinke the Lord never workes grace , but in this extraordinary manner.

It is true , God sometime must use this affrighting of Spirit, and when proud spirits come to grapple with the Lord, hee will make theyr sturdy hearts to buckle : And it is true ; there must bee a cleare fight of sinne , and the heart must be wearied with the vilenesse of it ; and be content to part with sin : This is wrought in all : but that it must bee in all in this extraordinary fearefull manner as it is in some ; the word sayth it not, neyther is God bound to any manner , there is a difference among persons.

As for example; First, if the person be a scandalous liver, and an opposer of God, and his grace and sees himselfe against the Lord Iesus Christ, if he set his mouth against heaven , and professe himselfe an enemy to God, and to his truth.

Secondly, if a man have harboured a filthy heart, and continued long in sin , and hath beene a close Adulterer, and continued long in it.

Thirdly , if a man have beene confident in a civill course.

Lastly ,

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Lastly, if G O D purpose to doe some great workes by him.

In all these foure cases hee layes a heauey blow upon the heart, and commonly the nature of these persons requires it.

First, when any one hath been an opposer of God and his grace, if the Lord should deale gently with him, other vile wretches would be ready to say, Such a man is gone to heaven, though hee be thus and thus, yet the Lord dealt lovingly with him: and therefore though I continue in these courses, I shall do we'll enough; Nay, (deade not thy selfe, for) the Lord will bruiſe him, and rend the kail of his heart, and make him seeke to a faithfull Minister for direction, and to a poore Christian for counsell, whom before he despised; the world shall know what it is to oppose God, and to persecute his children; as he broke *Pauls* heart, and made him say, *I am he that have persecuted the Saints.*

Commonly the Lord will not shew mercy to such as these are, in hugger-mugger, but will make the world see their humiliation, as they have seene their rebellion and opposition.

Thus the Lord deales with the secret thiefe and close adulterer; the Lord pluckes away their corruptions, and makes them vomit up their sweet morsels, and then they will say, These are my finnes, and this heart of mine is hardened by the continuance in them: And therefore it is that the Lord workes in this manner.

But if the soule be otherwise trained up among godly parents, and live under a soule-saving Ministry, that sayth: You cannot goe to heaven by a ciuill course, and you cannot have any dispensation for your prophannion of the Sabbath;  
I say,



I say, if a man live under such a Ministry and keeke good company, the Lord may reforme this man and cut him off from his corruptions kindly, and breake his heart secretly in the apprehension of his sinnes, and yet the world never see it.

In both these wee have an example, in *Lydia* and the *Taylor*; *Act. 16.* *Lydia* was a sinfull woman, and God opening her eyes, & melted her heart kindly, and brought her to a taste of his goodnesse here and glory hereafter. But the *Taylor*, was an outrageous rebellious wretch, for when the *Apostles* were committed to prison, hee layd them up in stocks and whipped them sore; O, sayes he, now I have gotten these precise followes into my hands, I will have my pennevorths of them.

Now there was much work to bring this man home; when the *Apostles* were singing *Psalmes*, there came an earthquake which made the *Prison doores to fly open*, and the prisoners *fettors fall off*, but yet the *Taylor's* heart would not shake; at last the Lord did shake his heart too, and he came trembling, and was ready to lay violent hands upon himselfe, because hee thought the prisoners had beene fled; but the *Apostles* cryed to him, *Doe they selfe no harme: for we are here; with that he fell downe* before them, and said; *Men and brethren, what shall I doe to be saved?*

I conclude thus; naturally all men are locked up under infidelity, now the Lord opens theyr hearts severally, you know some locks are new and fresh, and therefore a key may easily open them, but some lockes are old and rusty, and therefore must be broken open by force of hand; so it is with some mens hearts, howsoever sinne prevailes over them, and they are full of pride, and the like; yet their hearts are kept cleare from  
 rusting.

rusting, by restraining grace : now the Lord will draw that man by the key of his spirit, and kindly withdraw him from his sinne : But if a man have beene an old rusty drunkard or adulterer, no key can open his heart; alas, it is not a little matter will doe the deed, it is not now and then a gracious promise that will breake his heart : But the Lord must come downe from heaven and breake open the doore by strong hand, by awaking his conscience, that all the Country rings of him.

[ *Mans heart is like a stone.* ]

You know all mens hearts are cōpared to stones; some stones are soft, you may crush thē to pieces with your hands, and some are flints which must have many blowes before they will breake: so it is with some hearts, the Lord must breake them by maine force: and as it is with a Tree, some branches are young and smooth without knots; and some are old ones, and full of knots: now if a man come every day, and give a little cut at the tender branch, at last it will off easily; but it is no cutting of an old tree with a Pen-knife, but a man must take an axe, and give many a fore cut, that all the people in the towne may heare it.

All men grow upon the root of sinne, vvhich is *Adams* rebellion: some are young, and have not growne knotty in a rebellious course; every Sabbath day the Lord gives a cut at him by his counsels, and by his threatnings, and by his promises; at last it falls off kindly, and they are content to part with their finnes, and to rest upon Christ for mercy.

Another man is an old sturdy vile wretch, an over-growne adulterer and drunkard, and his heart is blinded in sinne: I tell you, if ever the Lord  
cut

cut off this man from this base course, he must come with a mighty hand, and with his booke of the Law: God is ever laying at his soule blow after blow, and so at last he begins to forsake his wicked courses; What (saith one) is such a man turned? he was as heaueie a persecutor as ever the Sun saw: his father was an enemy to all goodnesse, and hee was as bad; Like father like sonne: Hath the Lord brought him home? Yes, now he sends to the faithfull Ministers, and to Gods people for comfort and direction.

The third and last part of the answer is this, That when God workes gently with Christians, they hardly perceiue the worke, though wise Christians may aproue that which is done: for this is certaine, whersoever Christ is, there preparation was; if ever man be saved, Christ hath made him see his lost estate.

Sometime the worke is secret, and the soule apprehends it not, because it is so, and though he doe, yet it is an unknowne worke to him, he knowes not what to make of it, hee can finde in his heart to hate those and those sinfull courses, yet he cannot see how this was wrought in him: Mans spirit is such, that he mis-judgeth the worke; but give me a Christian that God doth please to worke upon in such a manner, as to breake his heart soundly, and to throw him downe to some purpose, though it cost him deare: this man walkes vvith more care and conscience, and hath more comfort comming to himselfe, and gives more glory to God, whereas the other doth but little good in his place, and hath little comfort comming to him.

Therefore labour for soundnesse in this worke, and then be for ever sound: but if once deluded

to heaven for that they cannot doe themselves.

And as it vvith a man that is svounding avvay, they runne for strong cordiall vvater, and for this man and that friend, to succour him; and they cry all, Help, help, for the Lords sake, he is cleave gone! this is all vvell, it is a vvork of mercy and pittie.

But men, brethren, and fathers, you knowv not the heartbreaking sorrowes that are in the soules of these poore creatures; hee lies as it vvere in child-bed, and is in the very pangs of conversion, and his heart is even novv at a Ha, even novv to be converted, and loosened from sinne, and to have Christ brought into his soule: O that G O D vvould send some amongst you that you might see some experience of it! Oh saith the poore soule, Will these and these sinnes never be pardoned and vvill this proude heart never bee humbled? thus the Soule sighes, mournes, and saith, Lord I see this, and feele the burthen of it, and yet I have not a heart to be humbled for it, nor to be freed from it; Oh vvhen vvill it once be? did you but knowv this, it vvould make your hearts bleed to heare him, it is not the svounding avvay of a man in a qualme, No, no, the svord of the Almighty hath pierced through his heart and he is breathing out his sorrow, as though he vvere going dovne to hell, and he saith; if there be any mercy, any love, any fellowvship of the spirit, have mercy upon me a poore creature, that am under the burthen of the Almighty: O pray and pity these vvounds and vexations of spirit, vvich no man findes nor feeles, but hee that hath beene thus vvounded.

It is the signe of a soule vvholly denoted to destruction, that hath a desperate dildaine against  
 goore

poore wounded creatures, O faith one, I hope you have hearing enough, have you not; it may be you will tumble down into a well, or hang your selfe, will you not? Oh fearefull, is it possible there should harbour such a spirit in any man? there is not a greater brand of a man denoted to destruction than this: I doe not say onely he is starke naught for the present, but it is a fearefull brand of a man denoted to eternall destruction; if the devill himselfe were upon earth, I cannot conceive what he could doe worse.

When the woman vvas about to bee delivered, Rev. 14. 4. the Red Dragon vvas there ready to destroy the child, see vvhat the Prophet David saith of such, *Lord powre out thy wrath upon the heathen that know not thee, and the Kingdomes that have not knowne thy name: let thy wrathfull displeasure take hold of them that adde iniquity unto iniquity, and let them not come into thy righteousnesse, let them be blotted out of thy booke*, Pl. 79. 24. 25. 26. What's the reason of this? why did David make this imprecation, & say: Lord set open the gates of hell, that thy wrath may fall upon the soules of such as these are; the text saith, *They persecute him whom thou hast smitten*: the Lord smites a poore sinner, and thou art ready to persecute him too; the Lord hath vvounded him, & wilt thou stab him to the heart; Good Lord! adde iniquity to iniquity! The sinne is mervailous, and the curse unconceivable.

When Amaleck met Israel, and tooke them at advantage, because they were weake and vveary, Remember (saith the text) *what he did to thee in the way, how hee feared not God*, and the Lord saith, *I remember what Amaleck did to the people of Israel: goe therefore and blot out his name from under heaven,*

*and kill all both young and old.* This is a true type of such as are enemies to the poore Saints of God, that are thus desolate & wounded in theyr consciences; then being in the wildernes was a type of the Saints conversion; and their comming to Canaan, was a type of the Saints arriving at the heavenly City Ierusalem.

Now, canst thou jeere at the Saints, that are thus wounded? and canst thou wound them further? and pierce them to the heart, and discourage them? The Lord will remember thee in the day of thy death, & as thou hast shewed no mercy, so shalt thou receive no mercy in that day. I have knowne many such opposers of God & his Grace, that have beene forced to lay violent hands upon themselves, and vvhcn the LORD hath gotten some of them upon their sicke bed, they lye roaring there; and the Lord layes his full wrath upon them; If there be any such in this congregation, I pray God let them see some sudden veine of his vengeance, that if it be possible they may find and feele the vveight of this trouble of conscience; that they themselves also may finde mercy from the Lord.

The second part of the Vse is this; as wee must pity those thus vvhounded; so hereby wee see the best way to send helpe to such as are vvhounded in their hearts, the vvhound is in the heart, therefore let the salve be applied to the heart. It is in vaine to tell a poore vvhounded soule of Hawkes or Hounds, or the like; hee is not wounded in his body, but in his heart: the Physick must be applied to the part diseased, if the head be sicke you must not imply salve to the arme; and if the brest bee ill, you must not apply a salve to the foot: so it is a vaine thing to offer riches, or pleasures,

ca.

or profits, to a man that is wounded in his conscience for sinne, the wound is not there: if the wound were in disquietnes, then pleasure would cure it; if the wound were in poverty, then riches would cure him; if the wound were in baseness, and contempt, then honours would cure him. No, the heart is wounded, and the conscience is terrified in the apprehension of Gods wrath; And therefore apply the spirituall *Balm of Gilead*, even the blood of Christ; the case is cleare, all the *Crosses*, and *Crucifixes*, and *Agnus dei* in the world, and all the Popish pardons can doe no good to a wounded Conscience. There is never a Popish shaveling under Heaven can cure a wounded soule, hee cannot apply that spirituall salve that should comfort him: hee may delude him, and leade him into the commission of sinne, but hee cannot minister any true comfort unto him: thus they cure a poore Christian by searing of his conscience, and make him sinne so much the more, and never be troubled for sinne, as if a man should kill a sicke person, and say now he fees no hurt, so it often falls out, that a man fees no sinne, but yet he is not cured, because his sinne is not removed, and his heart unpacified in the blood of Christ.

2. *Vse*. Secondly is it so, that the wound of a sinner is in his heart? then vvee have here a matter of complaint, that vvee may justly take up against the secure generation wherein we live, there is but little saving grace, if there be no preparation for Christ, there can be no true evidence of grace, nor of Gods love in Christ; if there be no preparation for a building, there can be no building set up. The Lord be mercifull to a world of men that live in the bosome of the Church, if

we had a fountaine of teares with *Jeremy* to bewaile this age in this respect, it were worth the while, and if the Lord should send some *Eze'ial*, and say to him, Goe to such a Country, or such a Shire, and see if there be any that doe mourne for their sinnes, and comfort such: Alas! what would become of a world of persons?

This is a bill of inditement against three sorts of people; it arraignes and condemnes such, as never yet shared in this worke of Preparation, and of saving sorrow, and therefore were never in Christ: these swarme in out-streets. And first it falls mervailous heavy upon such as take contentment in theyr base courses, those loose Epicures and boone Gallants of our time, that goe staggering in our streets, they are so farre from grieving for their sinnes, that it is their greatest vexation that they cannot commit sinne, and have elbowv roome to sinne freely; O what a griefe it is to them, to have a Minister checke them, and that there is a law to punish them for sinne; and whereas a sinne should be poison in their soules and wound them, it becomes as meate to nourish them! *They sleepe not except they have done mischief,* (saith the *Wise man*) *and their sleepe is taken away unlesse they cause some to fall; they eat the bread of wickednesse, and drinke the wine of violence.* So farre it is from being poyson unto them, and so farre are they from being troubled with sinne, that it is their meate and pastime to sin; Iust *Esau* like: What did he? *When he had eate and dranke, hee rose up to play.* Gen. 25. and this was all he looked after: When he had passed away his title to heaven, and happinesse, and esteemed of Christ and Heaven no more than of a messe of pottage, he ate & dranke; his heart was never touched for what he



he had done, he did not smite upon his thigh, as *Ephraim* did, and say, *What have I done?* Have I sold away my birth-right for nothing? You that know the world, you know there are many that sit upon the Ale-bench, and sweare, and drink, and raile againsts Gods servants, and are never troubled for it; Nay, the world is come to this passe, that it is their greatest vexation, that they are hindred in their sinfull courses,

It was the guise of the old world: *Haman* went home sicke, because he wanted the Cap and knee from *Mordeca*: *Amnon* was sicke of incest, and *Abab* was sicke of covetousnesse, and *Achitophel* was sicke because his counsell was not followed; The Lord of heaven knowes, the adulterer is sick because he cannot get the heart & company of his queane; many a man is sicke of envie, it is rottennesse to his bones; yea, many a man goeth up and downe sicke of it, and is not quiet, because he cannot vent his rage against a faithfull Minister that checks him: you sweaers, doe not your hearts rise against the King and state, for making a law against that sinne: Do you not hate the Constable and vvitnes that come in against you? you account these the greatest plague to you in all the world; I appeale to the hearts of you all, that heare mee this day: can you say you are troubled for sinne, and yet grieve, because you cannot commit sinne still? Woe, woe to your soules that thus delight in sinne.

There are many that despight the spirit of grace, and stick not to say; I did sweare such a man out of the house, and I did drinke such a man under the table dead: Reade that place of the *Apostle*, and there you shall see your doome, and if there be any such in your families, or amongst your  
neigh-

neighbours, throw this in their faces, and if they will goe downe to hell, let them goe with paine, *that all they might be damned* (saith the text 2. Theſ. 2. 13.) *which beleevd not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousnesse.* God is not partiall, but saith, *That all they might be damned*, it would almost shake a mans heart to thinke of it.

How many notorious vile wretches may say, Good Lord, what will become of our families, and villages? we are opposers of God and his grace, shall *all be damned*? I dare not say what God will doe to thee, the text saith so; This, mee thinkes, might lye as poyson and Rats-bane upon the heart of a sinfull creature: The Lord in mercy looke upon you, and make sinne as loathsome and bitter unto you, as ever it hath been sweet & pleasant. You see how the matter will goe with you: you that thus jyre and jeast at the Saints, and sport your selves in sinne, the time may come that it vwill be a dry feast, as it was vwith *Dives* that vvas drunke, and *fared deliciously every day*, Luk. 16. 15. hee had a dry feast in hell, and could not have a *drop of water to cool his tongue*. So it will be with you, you must eyther buckle and mourne for sinne, or else burne for ever.

Secondly, it condemnes such as are in a faire straine; such are they that have a slight sense of sinne, but it never goes downe to the heart, the skinne is ripped a little, but the kall of theyr heart was never broken for theyr abominations. *Naaman* was to wash seven times in *Jordan*, so this water of godly sorrow is of a healing nature, but these men doe not rub and rinse theyr soules in it, they onely dip theyr soules in a little sorrow; but you must vwash it throughly and fully, if ever you desire to have the leprosie of sinne purged out:

**Men**

Men bathe their finnes with teares, but they doe not drowne them; they doe as parents doe with their Children, they will correct them a little, and presently cocker them againe; so the Hypocrite useth to trouble his corruptions, and complaine of them, and vexe them a little with sorrow; but in the meane time cocker them and dandle them againe. But sinne will not be so killed, and the heart will not bee so easily broken: this kind of sorrow is too slight and overly.

As it is with a debter, that hath borrowed money, he will complaine he had an ill bargaine, and desires that either he might have the debt abated, or the day put off, hee puts it off with meere talking; such a generation there are of whining hypocrites, that will outwardly complaine of their corruptions still; as *Ahab* did, he hated *Micaiah*, 1. Reg. 21. and afterwards hee fasted and prayed, that he might sinne more freely without suspicion: So there is many a cursed hypocrite that lives in a faire course, and yet will cheat and lye, and deale mervailous unjustly; and then hee will complaine of his sinne, and confesse, onely to bathe his finnes, and subdue them he will not, and this he doth that he may sinne more freely againe; it is but fasting and praying, &c.

O brethren! it is a desperate hypocrisie, that, sorrow which God hath appoynted as a meane to purge our sinne, should be a meane to cover our sinne: will a few vvaubling teares doe the deed, and breake the heart? is this acceptable sorrow? you your selves are ashamed of this worke and doe you think God will accept of it? No, no, It is not the rending of the garments, nor the weeping of the eyes, that will doe the deed; but you must breake your hearts: If you onely cut off

the legs or wings of a fowle, it vvill live for all that : so, you cut off the armes or hands of sin, but so long as the heart is not wounded, and driven to any amazement for sinne, it will live with you here, and in hell too.

Oh, doe not cozen your owne soules; it is not the teares of the eye, but the blood of the heart that your sinnes must cost, and if you come not to this, never thinke that your sorrow is good; and therefore you that finde your selves guilty, lay your hands upon your hearts, & say, Good Lord, this is my portion, the Lord knows I have confessed my sinnes, and yet have taken liberty to sinne; but my heart was never burthened vvith this evill and vilenesse of sinne; and therefore to this day I never had this true sorrow.

There is a third sort of sorrow vvhich is the vvorst of all, they are such as heretofore have drunke deepe of this sorrow, and have beene extraordinarily stricken, and yet they are growne so much the more hardened in their sinnes, by all these blowes, that God hath layed upon them: these are in a desperate condition, even such as God hath made howle in the congregation, yet after vvards fall into the same courses againe, and returne to theyr old byas, and novv they can outface God and his Ministers, and all; and thinke it a matter of basenesse to be disquieted in heart, as they have beene: such novices & children they were once, that they could not sleepe nor be quieted, but novv they care not vvhat all the Ministers under heaven say against them; nay, they can stare in our faces, and be drunke and vile, and be never troubled for it, they have gotten the skill of of it: This is the most fearefull condition that almost a poore creature can fall into,

**Then**

Thou accountest it thy glory and credit that thou canst beare all, and art mettall of prooffe, and no bullets can pierce thee, thou wast troubled before, but now thou hast shaken it off; This I say is thy shame, and vwill aggravate thy condemnation: nay, I take it to be one of the forest tokens under heaven, of a gracelesse heart. If thou hast had thy conscience awakened, and hast beene troubled for sinne, and now dost flye off, It is a signe of Gods hig<sup>h</sup> displeasure tovvards thee, thou takest the right course, as if God had invented a vway to destroy thy soule, as you may see in *Esay*, *Goe thy wayes*, saith the Lord, *speake to this people. But they shall not heare; make the heart of this people fat. Isa. 6. 7. 8. 9.* as though he had said, there are a company of people in such a place; Goe thy vwayes to them, open theyr eyes, and touch their hearts, and awaken theyr consciences, and vwhen thou hast done, then let their consciences be seared and fatted, then they will goe the right vway to destruction; for if they vwould awaken, and sorrow kindly, and repent, I must needs save them.

Let these men remember that it is a heauey signe God hath forsaken them; mee thinkes this should trouble theyr soules exceedingly, and force them to cry out, I am the man that have my heart fatted, and vwould not be touched and converted.

Now, if all be true that I have said, there are but fevv sorrowers for sinne, therefore fevv saved; here vwee see the ground and reason, vwhy many flye off from Godlinesse and Christianity: This is the cause; their soules vv ere onely troubled vvith a little hellish sorrow, but theyr hearts vv ere never kindly grieved for theyr sinnes. If a mans arme be broken and dis-joynted a little, it

may grow together againe; But if it be quite broken off, it cannot grow together: so the terror of the Law affrighted his conscience, & a poverfull Minister unjoynted his soule, and the Judgments of God were rending of him; but he was never cut off altogether: therefore he returns a vile, and as base, if not worse, then before, and he grows more firmly to his corruptions.

It is with a mans conversion, as in some mens ditching: they do not pull up all the trees by the rootes, but plash them, so when you come to have your corruptions cut off, you plash them, and doe not wound your hearts kindly, and you doe not make your soules feele the burthen of sinne truly: this will make a man grow and flourish still, howsoever more cunningly and subtilly. This lopping professour grows more subtile in his wickednesse: the soule that hath bene terrified for his lusts, he is now growne a plashed Adulterer, an Alehouse haunter, he will be drunk more cunningly and secretly, and so he that hath bene an open opposer of Gods children, will now jibe and jeast at them in a corner, and when he comes amongst his old companions, then he can vent out all his malice.

This is the reason, why all wicked men that were in some good way of preparation of soule, they turne theyr backs upon Christ; even because they were never cut off kindly from theyr sins, but onely unjoynted, and that is the reason why they fall to theyr old corruptions againe. This is the maine cause of all the hypocrisie under heaven: there was never any soule that made profession, and falls againe, but the ground of it is here.

3 Use. The 3. Use is for exhortation: If every sorrow will not doe it, and if slight sorrow will not

not do it, what then remains to be done? Then if ever thou wouldest be comforted, and receive mercy from the great God, labour to take the right way, and never be quieted, till you doe bring your hearts to a right pitch of sorrow: let it never be said of you as it was of them in *Hosea*, *They have not cryed unto me with their hearts when they howled upon their beds, they assembled themselves for corne and wine, but they rebell against me*, *Hosea 7. 14.* Thou hast a little slight sorrow, but oh, labour to have thy heart truly touched, that at last it may breake in regard of thy many distempers; the longer seed-time, the greater harvest; and so howsoever this sorrow is troublesome now, it will be very comfortable in the end; and though it be tedious to lay all these cursed abominations upon thy heart; yet it will not be harsh when the Lord remembers you in his Kingdome; it will never repent you, that you have had your hearts humbled and broken, when the Lord comes to heale you; it will never repent you that you have wept, when the Lord comes to wipe away all teares from your eyes. *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted* sayth our Saviour; *Math. 5.* but *Woe to you that are at ease in Sion*, *Amos. 6. 1.* There is a time of mourning for sinne; you cannot have ease and quietnesse alwayes, you had better now be wounded, than everlastingly tormented. And therefore, if you desire to see the face of God with comfort, and to have Christ speake for you, and say, *Come you poore heavie-hearted sinners, I will ease you*; if ever you desire this, labour to lay load on your hearts with sorrow for your finnes. Oh what comfort shall a poore broken heart finde in that day! *David saith, A broken and contrite heart (O Lord) thou wilt not despise*, *Psal. 51.*

When men goe into a farre Countrey for Merchandize, they will not take rattles and toys for theyr money; but such commodities as they may get something by: so when the Lord comes for broken hearts, you must not thinke to put the Lord off with a little painted sorrow; No, no, it is a broken heart that the Lord will not despise. Would you know what kinde of heart the Lord will accept and never cast off? *It is a broken heart:* tell your friends and neighbours of it, mee thinks you looke as if you would faine finde acceptance with God, and goe to heaven; O then, get a humble, lowly, broken heart; the Lord regards not all the rivers of oyle in the world; nor an hundred thousand fasts; but it is a broken heart that God will blesse and glorifie.

Looke as it is with a womans conception, those birthes that are hasty, the children are either still borne, or the woman most commonly dyes; so doe not thou thinke to fall upon the promise presently. Indeed you cannot fall upon it *too soone* upon good grounds; but it is impossible that ever a full soule or a haughty heart should beleere, thou mayest be deceived, but thou canst not be ingrafted into Christ: therefore when God begins to work, never rest till you come to a full measure of this brokennesse of heart. Oh follow the blow, and labour to make this worke sound and good unto the bottome, and then you shall bee sure to receive comfort, as the *Prophet David* saith, *Our eyes are up unto thee, till thou have mercy on us.* Psal. 3. 2. Let your consciences bee wounded throughly and kindly, and resolve not to heare the cursed counsell of carnall friends, that say, What neede you mourne: O poore fooles, there is not any, even the civillest professor in the Kingdome; but



but if God discharge his finnes at his heart as hee could doe, it were enough to make him goe howling with sorrow to his grave : therefore, humble your selves before God, and never be at rest till the Lord shew mercy to your soules, never unburthen your soules before God ease you, and doe not breake prison. For if you doe, God will send after you with a witnesse. No, no, When God hath put thee into prison, breake not out till God send to deliver you; and then your hearts will be filled with comfort : soundly humbled, soundly comforted : if a man be lost, Christ will seeke him up, and save him.

*Ques.* Now, it may bee some poore soule will say, How shall I bring my heart to this sound worke of sorrowing for sinne?

1. *Ans.* I answer, when the Lord begins to worke upon you, and you begin to see your corruptions, then possesse your soules with the apprehension of the ticklishnesse of your condition wherein you are : this worke is great and marvellous inward, and you may easily be deceived : and the danger is great if you be deceived ; it is in this case with the soule, as it is with a ship on the sea, when the Marriners passe by and see the Rockes where such and such ships have bene split, and the men and all lost ; they are very wary to steere aright, to direct their compasse aright ; but nere sands and rocks they will not come : So it is with this humbling of the heart, many have bene cozened and deceived therein : therefore now hold this rule. Let that soule whose eyes God hath opened, and brought under his blowes (let such I say) rather feare he is not sound in the worke, than feare that he shall not have ease ; for every man saith, I pray you Sir, comfort and

refresh me; and will God never give me comfort? But herein they goe wrong; many perish because they goe off from this worke so soone; never did any perish because he received the work soundly. Therefore reason thus with thy owne heart; and say, Good Lord, be mercifull to me, my condition is very tickle; If now I be deceived, then farewell comfort.

Was not *Cain* and *Indas* vexed and disquieted, and yet damned?

This is a great point of wisdom, and sinks many a Christian; ( I know what I say, ) as it is with child-bearing, a woman when her throwes comes often and strong, there is some hope of deliverance; but when her throwes goe away, commonly the child dyes, and her life too. So it is in this great worke of contrition, which is nothing else, but the child-birth of the Soule; when your throwes goe away, take heed that your salvation goes not too; Once you could say, the Minister spake home to my heart, I remember the time full well; Why then, what becomes of all your sorrow? You can be as carnall and as secure as ever? It is certaine you are in child-bearing, but your throwes have left you, and your brokenesse of heart is gone, and therefore you are in an ill case, surely at some low ebbe of grace.

Againe, if a mans heart bee soundly broken, though he fall into some sinne, he may be recalled; but if hee have not his heart soundly broken, hee is undone. If the foundation bee naught, the building must needs fall; So it is in this preparation of the soule for Christ, if this be naught, all comes to naught; therefore be so much the more fearefull of your soules, because your condition is so much the more tickle in this, than in any thing else.

else, and rather desire soundnesse than quietnesse.

2. Secondly, when God stirres, doe you stirre your hearts too, be you stabbed further, and make the blow goe deeper; therefore wheresoever any truethe goeth neere to the heart, & awakens thee, looke up to heaven, and blesse God for it, and labour to drive the naile home to the head, and make the salve worke to the bottome; And let me advise you to this, when your soules are wrought upon by any reproofes or admonitions, take that truethe, and labour to maintaine the power of it upon your hearts all the weeke after, and let your soules be awed by it.

3. Thirdly, consider what thy soule findes to bee most evill and detestable, whether it be poverty or disgrace, or losse of liberty; and then if it be sinne (marke what I say) get up thy heart higher in the very apprehension of sinne as it is sinne: and let thy soule be more affected with the vilenesse of sinne, than of any other hardship whatsoever; As thus, suppose thy heart bee very proud, if shame and disgrace befall thee; Oh how doth thy heart shake in the apprehension of it, thou canst live no longer, except some honour come: Now sin is worse then shame, therefore looke up to heaven, and say, Oh, my heart did shake with shame, but sinne is farre worse, for, what if the Lord take away my honour, that hee hath promised to such as feare his name? and what if he blot my name out of the booke of life, therefore sinne is worst of all; This is certaine, there is no evill the soule feares or findes, but sinne is the cause of it, but the separation of the soule from the Lord is the greatest evill, therefore sinne is the cause of it: and therefore rest not till thy soule shake in the apprehension of it. This is the

next way to be above punishment or anything else.

Now I come to the fruits of godly sorrow, which are from these words, *They said to Peter and the other Apostles, Men and Brethren, what shall wee doe?* In these words there are three things presumed; and three things plainly expressed.

1. First, there are three things presumed; they did see themselves in a miserable and damnable condition, as if they had said; Hell is now gaping; it is but turning of the ladder, and wee goe to hell for ever, *Men and brethren, what shall wee doe?*

2. Secondly, they themselves were ignorant, and could not direct themselves what to doe to come out of this estate, and therefore they said, *Men and brethren, advise us what to do: if there be any helpe, yee know it.*

3. Yet still there is a secret kind of hope, and the heart suspects that it may and will bee otherwise with them, they doe not say there is nothing to be done; no, they say; *What shall wee doe?* surely there is some way to finde helpe, if wee could tell it.

Againe, There are three things plainly expressed in these words; they make an open and plaine confession of their finnes, when they were sicke at the heart, they could make open confession, and lay the hand upon the sore; and say, *If there be any vile wretches under heaven, we are they.*

2. Secondly, a thorough resolution against their finnes, and a hatred of the same, as if they had said, *We are resolved to doe any thing whatsoever it is, we care not, so wee may thwart our finnes.*

3. The last thing expressed, is a sequestration of

of the soule from this sinne, the soule falls off from them, and bids farewell to all cursed courses.

First, I come to the three things presumed; and because I shall have occasion afterward to handle the two former, I will begin with the last of the three, which is this, *Men and brethren, what shall wee doe?* Surely there is some course to be taken; is there not? you that are *Gods Prophets*, tell us if there be any hope for such poore distressed sinners as wee are.

*Doctrine.* So the Doctrine is this, there is a secret hope of mercy, wherewith God supports the hearts of those that are truly broken hearted for their sinnes; howsoever these men did see themselves miserable, yet they did not throw off all, and say, *Men and brethren* there is no hope for us, therefore we will heare no more; but, seeing we must goe to hell, we will take our pleasure while we live here in the world, while we may, and if we must be damned, wee will be damned for something: No, these people had some hope that they should finde mercy, the Lord will not quench the smoking flaxe, but kindles it further, and the Lord drawes the soule, and plucks it to himselfe, and makes it looke up to him, and wayt upon him for helpe and mercy.

I confesse, it is true, that sometimes the Soule in some desperate fit, (and in some horrour of heart, when temptation growes violent and long, and the distempers of a mans heart stirre exceedingly) may seeme to cast off all, and resolve with *David* when hee had beene long pursued by *Saul*, *I shall one day fall by the hand of Saul*; So the Soule saith, God will one day leave mee, and I shall perish; And as *David* saith in another place, *Psal. 77. 13. All men are liars*; that is, they sayd, I shall be

be King of Israel, but they are all deceived; *They are all liers*: but it was in his haste, in a proud, impatient, haughty humour.

This is our Nature, if God buckle not to our bow, and heare us not even when wee will: then (in a proud humor) wee are apt to say: Oh my sinnes will never be pardoned, and I shall never get ground against my corruptions. A man that is in a swoone, leyes as if he were dead, but yet hee comes to himselfe againe, and lookes up and speakes: So how-ever the soule in some unruly humour is driven to a swoone, and thinkes it impossible to finde mercy, or overcome his corruptions; yet still hee recovers againe, and the Soule that is truly broken for sinne, is upheld: as *Iona* sayd, *I am cast out of thy presence, I am even sinking, yet will I look towards thy holy Temple.* Iona. 2. 4. So howsoever the soule may be overwhelmed in a drunken fit of pride, or impatience; yet after the Soule hath prayed, it sayth: *I will vvaire upon God for mercy.*

God deales vvith poore sinners in this case, as men doe that pound precious Povvder, as Bezar-stone or the like, to make some potion vvithall, they vvill breake it, and pound it all to peeces, yet they cover it up close, and vvill not loose the least sand of it: as they breake it, so they keepe it close that none bee lost: So vvhen God doth purpose to doe good to your soules, hee vvill breake you, and melt you; and then you thinke hee hath cast you off in his anger: No, no, he is pounding of you, but he vvill preserve those soules notwithstanding, and vvill not lose such poore sinners vvhom he purposeth to doe good unto.

[ *The*

[ *The soule hath many shakings.* ]

As it is vvith pocket Dyals, a man may shake them this vway and that vway, but they are still Northvvard by vertue of the Loadstone; so there are many shakings in the Soule, sometime it feareth God vvill not be mercifull, sometimes it hopes that hee vvill: thus it is tossed to and fro, but still it is Heaven-vvard, and there is a hope that it may bee othervvise: For the Lord holds the Soule by a secret vertue to himselfe, and drawes the heart to seeke for mercy.

When the *Prodigall* child vvvas brought to a desperate strait, he began to consider vvhat hee had done. vvhereas before he said, Shall I ever bee a slave in my fathers family? But at last vvhen all vvvas spent, What doth hee doe? he saith, It is true, I can looke for no helpe and favour, and I cannot tell vvwhether my *Father* vvill receive me or no, yet *my Fathers servants have bread enough, and shall I starve for hunger?* O wreth that I am! I have left a kinde fathers house, yet come what will, I *will home againe, and say, Father, I have sinned,* Luk. 15. 18. Thus the soule thinkes vvith it selfe, Oh the many sweet and gracious calls that I have had! I hovv often hath Christ come home to my heart, and desired entrance, and yet I shut the doore upon him: shall I novv goe home to the Lord Iesus Christ? Hovv justly may he reject me, that have rejected him? he may damne me, and yet hee may save me, & therefore I vvill vvaite upon him for mercy: thus the soule vvil not off from God, but it hath a secret hope vvherevvith the Lord keeps the heart to himselfe.

## I R E A S O N.

The reason is, because unlesse the Lord should  
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leave this hope in the heart, it vould utterly bee overthrowne vwith despaire: you that make nothing of your loose thoughts, & vaine speeches, I tell you, if God did set but one sinfull thought upon thy heart, thy soule vould sinke under it, and the Lords vvrath vould drive thee to desperation: vvere it not that the Lord doth uphold thee vwith one hand, as he beates thee downe vwith the other, it vvere impossible but the soule should despaire (as the proverbe is): But for hope the heart vould breake. Who can stand under the Almighty hand of God, unlesse hee doth uphold him? God hath broken off the finner by this sorrow, but he vwill not throw him to hell: As the Gardiner cuts off a graft to plant it into a nevv stocke, not to burne it: So the Lord cuts off a finner from all abomination, but he vwill not cast him into hell, the Lord melts the heart of a poore finner but consumes him not, but as the Goldsmith melts his gold, not to consume it all avway, but to make it a better vessell: So the Lord melts a poore finner to make him a vessell of glory: the Lord vwill fire those proud hearts of yours, and clip off those knotty lusts, but if you belong to him, hee vwill leave a little remainder of hope, that you may be formed and fashioned, not consumed.

It is the argument of the Lord by the *Prophet*, *Hee will come and dwell with, and refresh the broken soule, and hee will not contend for ever, lest the Spirit should faile before him*, Isa. 57. 16. If the Lord should let in but one scattering shot of his vengeance into the heart, it vvere enough to drive the soule to despaire, but God vwill lay no more upon us then vwill doe good to us.

## II. R E A S O N.

Secondly, if the Lord did not leave this hope in the heart, a mans indeavours in the use of the



meanes, vould be altogether killed: if there bee no hope of good, then there is no care of using the meanes, vvherby any good may be obtained. Good is the loadstone of all our endeavours, a man vvill not labour for nothing: *Despaire* kills a mans labours, and plucks up the roote of all his endeavours, if there be any good present, hope makes us labour to increase it, if any good bee to come, hope labours to attaine it: But good there must be.

So hope provokes the soule to use the meanes, and say, I am a damned man, but if there be any hope I vvill *pray*, and *heare*, and *fast*, vvho knowes but God may thevv mercy to my poore soule?

1. *Vsa.* We may here take notice of the merveilous tendernesle, and the loving nature of God in dealing vvith poore sinners, that in all his courses of justice remembers some mercy, and in all the potions of his vvraath still he drops in some cordials of comfort: hee deales not vvith us as he might, but so, as might be most comfortable every vvay, and usefull to vvorke upon our hearts, and to dravv our soules home unto himselfe. Should the Lord come out against a poore sinner, and in his vvraath let fly against him, his soule vould sinke dovvne under him, but blessed be God, that hee doth not deale vvith our hearts as vvee deserve, if hee vvere as rigorous against us, as vve have beene rebellious against him, vvee should sinke in sorrow, and fall into despaire, never to be recovered any more.

But as the Lord battens us, so he relieves us, as vve may see in *Saul*, Acts. 9. hee had gotten letters to *Damascus*, and novv hee hoped, being Generall of the field, to bind and to imprison all: and he vould not spare the poore Christians a jot, but Christ meets him in the field, and threvv him

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dovvne, and might have killed him too : but the Lord desired rather that he might be humbled then confounded: I cannot reade that ever he shewed his letters, but layed all flat dovvn before the Lord, and so vvas accepted, the Lord shewed him his misery, yet hee lets him not perish there, but gives him a little crevise of comfort.

When the Lord dealt vvith the children of *Israell*, he said, *I will abuse her, and bring her into the wildernesse, and there I will give her the valley of Achor for the doore of hope*, Hosea: 2. when *Achan* was stoned for stealing the wedge of gold, the *Israellites* called it the valley of *Achor*, and so it is called to this day.

The valley of *Achor* is the valley of trouble, of stoning. So the Lord doth here, hee draweth the soule into the wildernesse of sorrow for sinne, but doth he leave the soule there & no, there is the doore of hope also, and there the soule shall sing as in former times. And hereupon the soule saith. There is some hope that God will doe good unto me for all this, there is hope the Lord is melting me, to make me a vessell of glory: that's a gloomy night when there is neither Moone nor Candle to be seene: so though the soule bee mervallous gloomy and heavie, yet there is some crevise of light and consolation let into the heart, still chearing and refreshing it: the Lord knowes what metall we are made of, & remembers that we are but dust: Psal. 103, therefore he so corrects us, that hee may leave an inkling of mercy and favour in our hearts.

O therefore, let us continually admire and blesse this good God; and not quarrell vvith his Ministers nor providence, and say; Other men have comfort, and therefore why am I so troubled  
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and disquieted? how now? it is endlesse mercy that thou livest, therefore downe with thy proud heart, and stifle those distempers of Spirit, and say; The Lord hath broken and wounded me, but blessed be his name, that I may come to Church, and that he hath not dealt with me as I have deserved, but in goodnesse and mercy; I hope God in his season will doe good to my soule.

2. *Vse.* Secondly, let us be wise to nourish this same blessed work in our hearts for ever; let us have our hearts more and more strengthened, because thereby our hearts will bee more & more inabled to beare and undergoe any thing; if you have but a little glimpse of hope, cover it; and labour to maintaine it, and if ever God let in any glimpse of mercy into your hearts, let it not goe out: it is ever good to take that way that God takes; the Lord sustaines our hearts with hope: hope is the finewes of the soule, therefore strengthen it.

As a Marriner that is tost with a tempest in a darke night, when he sees no starres, hee casts Anchor, and that cheares him; this hope is the anchor of the soule, whereby it looks out, and expects mercy from God: the poore soule seeth no light nor comfort, nothing but the wrath of an angry God; and hee saith, God is a just God, and a jealous God; even that God whose trueth I have opposed, is displeas'd with me, then the soule is tossed and troubled, and runnes upon the rocks of despaire; how shall the soule be supported in this condition? You will find this true one day, therefore looke to it before: you vile drunkards are now sailing in a faire gale of pleasure, and carnall delight, but when the Lords wrath shall seaze upon you, when he shall let in the flashes of hell fire,

then you are tossed, sometimes up to heaven, now downe to hell: therefore cast anchor now, and this hope will upholde you, for this *hope is called the anchor of the Soule*, Heb. 6. 19. Thou dost not yet see the Lord refreshing of thee, but it may be otherwise. The people of *Ninivie* said, *VVho knows but God may repent*, this upheld their hearts, & made them seeke to the Lord in the use of the meanes, and the Lord had mercy on them. If you belong unto the Lord, he will come against those drunken proud hearts, and rebellious hearts of yours, and drag them downe to hell, and make them sorrow for their sinnes. And remember this against that day. *VVho knows but the Lord may shew mercy?* and therefore yet heare, and pray, and fast, and seeke unto him for mercy. Wee fence those parts of our bodies most, that are most pretious, and the hurt whereof is most dangerous. Hope is called the *helmet of Salvation*, 1. Thel. 5. and the assurance of Gods love is the head of a Christian: now take away a Christians head, and he is cleane gone: the devill ever labours for that, and saith; You come to heaven? prove it: Loe, think you God hath neede of Drunkards and Adulterers in heaven? and will God provide a Crowne of Glory for his professed enemies? Hath God made heaven a hogstie for such uncleane wretches as you are? No, no, there is no such expectation of mercy: this wounds the head of the soule, but *hope* is the *helmet* that covers the head of a Christian, makes him say, I confesse, I am as bad as any man can say of me: heaven is a holy place, and I have no goodnesse at all in me, yet there is hope the Lord may break this proud heart of mine, and take away these distempers of Spirit. Now by this  
meanes

meanes the head of a Christian is kept sure.

*Object.* But some will say, how shall wee maintaine and cherish this hope in our hearts ?

[ *Meanes how to maintaine our hope, when God seemes to walke contrary to us. ]*

*Answ.* The meanes are especially three. First, take notice of the *All-sufficiencie* of God, as hee hath revealed himselfe in his Word; say not as many doe, I cannot conceive it, or I cannot find it, but what doth the Word say? Is not God able to pardon thy sinnes? (away then with those, I cannot conceive it, and the like: ) Is there any thing hard for me, saith God? Whatsoever thy estate is, there is nothing hard to him that hath hardnesse at command? when our Saviour said, *It is as easie for a Camell to goe through the eye of a needle, as for a rich man to goe in a heaven.* Math. 25. 24. Good Lord, said they, *VVho can be saved?* But Christ said, *VVith God all things are possible* If you looke unto man how he is glued to the world, so that all the Ministers under heaven cannot pull him away, but still hee will lie, and cozen; Reason and Iudgement cannot conceive how this man should be saved, but with God all things are possible: See what the *Apostle* saith, *Abraham above hope beleevved under hope, that hee should be the Father of many Nations*, Rom. 4. 18. 21. This he did, becaute he knew, he which had promised was able to performe it: and this did feede his hope, hee did beleevve above hope in regard of the creature, under hope in regard of God. As if he had said, I have a dead body, but God is a living God; and *Sarah* hath a barren womb, but God is a fruitfull God.

*Object.* It may be thou sayest, if any exhortation

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would

would have wrought upon me, then my heart might have been brought to a better passe; but can this stubborne heart of mine be made to yeeld? And can these strong corruptions of mine be suddned?

*Answer.* Howsoever thou canst not doe it, yet God can quicken thee, and although thou art a damned man, yet he is a mercifull God, this All-sufficiencie of God is a hooke, whereon our soules hang: when the *Apostles* had prayed that the minds of the *Ephesians* might be opened, and that they might be able to know the love of Christ; because some one might say; How shall wee know that which is above knowledge, the text saith, *Now to him that is able to doe abundantly above all that we can thinke or aske, according to his mighty power that worketh in us, to him be glory, Ephel. 3. 19. 20.* As though he had said, Though you cannot think or aske as you should, yet God is able to doe exceeding abundantly more than wee can thinke or aske; so then no more but this, wee are not able of our selves to thinke a good thought, yet there is sufficient power in God, and though wee are dead hearted, and damned wretches, yet there is sufficient salvation in God. Let us hang the hand of hope on this hooke.

## II. M E A N E S,

Secondly, the freeness of Gods promise mercifully lifts up the head above water; as the begger saith, The doale is free, why may not I get it as well as another? This sometimes dasheth our hopes: when the soule begins to thinke what mercy is offered, hee saith;

*Object.* Oh! many are they that have it, could I feare God as I should, and seeke for mercy as I ought.

I ought, then there were some hope; but I have no heart to endeavour or desire after any mercy, and I cannot bring my soule, nor submit my will to yeeld, and therefore shall I ever have mercy?

*Ans.* Why not thou too? Doth God sell his mercy? No, he gives it freely, God keeps open house: Oh the freeness of that mercy and goodnesse that is in God! he requires nothing of thee to procure it, but hee shewes mercy because he will shew mercy: thou hast no will, but God hath a will: and his shewing of mercy depends not on thy will, but upon his owne free-will. It is true, God will make a man will, and breake his heart, because no man otherwise can bee saved; but it is as true, that Christ will give you brokennesse of heart as well as heaven and salvation. *I will take away the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh, and cause you to walke in my wayes,* Ezech. 36. 26. saith the Lord: hold this truth in thy soule: As there is no worth in the soule that can deserve any thing at Gods hands: so there is no sinne (the sinne against the holy Ghost onely excepted) that can hinder the freeness of Gods grace from saving us: if thou belong to him, hee will hale thee to heaven, and pull thee from hell, he will make thee lie in the dust, and wait for mercy, and come groveling for his grace, and that freely, without any thing on thy part: *Who is a God like to thee (saith Micah) who pardoneth iniquity, because mercy doth please thee?* Mich. 7. 18.

The LORD sheweth mercy, not because thou canst please him, but because mercy pleaseth him. And in *Esay* hee saith, *I am he that blotteth out thy offences, for my owne names sake,* Esa. 34. 24. 25.

*Object.* But the soule may say, they were Gods people

people that did humble themselves, and they had hearts to feare him.

*Ans.* See that in the twenty fourth verse, *Thou hast brought me no Corne, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifice: but thou hast wearied mee with thy transgressions*, yet the Lord saith, *I see that pardoneth thy sinnes*: Thou sayest, if thou couldest pray, and humble thy selfe, there were hope of mercy; the text doth not say, *It is a finner*, but it is I, a God, that must doe it, this is the freeness of his Grace.

*Object.* But some may object, Is it possible that a man should receive any mercy, and yet bee so stubborne and rebellious? This makes way for Drunkards to live as they list, and yet thinke to goe to Heaven.

*Ans.* I answere, It is true, the Lord will pardon them if they belong to him, but hee will doe it with a witness: the Lord will dowze that soule of thine in the veine of his vengeance, but hee will pardon thee too: God will pardon thy sinne in Christ, but hee will make thee feele the bitterness of sinne first.

### III. M E A N E S.

Lastly, consider the abundance of mercy and goodnesse that is in God, whereby hee not onely strives with us in the midst of all rebellions, but he is more mercifull then we are or can be rebellious: this helps the heart of another thing that cuts it. For when the soule seeth all his sinnes for number, for nature, so many, and so abominable, he saith;

*Object.* Can mercy be shewed to such a wretch as I am?

*Ans.* Yes: for as God is *All-sufficient*, and his promise



promise free, so he hath plenty of mercy for the worst, he exceeds in mercy all the sinnes that can be; (except that against the holy Ghost) and therefore the soule throwes it selfe upon this; the *Apostle* saith, *VVhere sin abounds, grace abounds much more*: least any man should say, *Let us sin that grace may abound*: the text saith in another place, *VVhose damnation is just*: This knocks off the fingers; though a sinfull wretch abuse God and Grace, yet mercy will overcome the heart in this case, but it will cost him deare; though thou turnest the grace of God into wantonnesse, the Lord will turne that wantonnesse of thine into bitternesse; the Lord vwill sting that heart of thine one day, and make thee see whether it be good to forsake mercy when it is offered; it vwill bee easier for *Sodom* than for thee, vwhen thou shalt see a company of poore *Sodomites* fry in hell; howsoever God may bring thee to heaven, yet hee vwill make thee fry in hell, and hee vwill make thee thinke a *Sodomite* to be in a better condition for the present, than thou art.

*Ob.* But some will say, God cannot in justice save such a wretch as I am.

*Ans.* For answer to this, see what *S. James* saith, *Mercy rejoiceth, or triumpheth, over Iustice*: howsoever *Iustice* saith, he must be plagued, yet *Mercy* saith, Christ hath made a plentifull satisfaction for him: so then, if God be all-sufficient, and his promise free, and his mercy superabundant, then wee may bee stirred up to hope for mercy from God, our hearts may be supported herein for ever.

Now I come to some other particulars that are plainly exprest in our text.

First, they made a free and open confession of their sins, they did not stay till the *Apostle* went to

to their houses, but they went to him, and said, *Men and brethren*, you have spoken against the sin of murder, and we confesse wee are guilty of this sinne.

*Dod.* The Doctrine from hence is this: When the heart is truly broken for sin, it will be content to make open and free confession thereof; or thus, Sound contrition brings forth bosome confession. *Men and brethren what shall wee doe to be saved?* as if they had said, The truth is, we have heard of the fearefull condition of such as have killed the Lord Iesus, and we confesse whatsoever you have said, he was persecuted by us, and blasphemed by us, we are they that cryed, Crucifie him, crucifie him; wee would have eaten his flesh, and made dice of his bones; we plotted his death and gloried in it; these are our sins, and haply a thousand more that then they revealed; & this is remarkeable, *They goe to Peter and the other Apostles*, they did not goe to the *Scribes & Pharisees* and that curled crew.

*Note.* Whence observe this by the way, when the soule is thus truly broken, generally it will never repaire to such as are carnall & wicked men: for these people knew, that the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* had their hands deeply imbrued in Christs blood as themselves; and besides, they knew them to be such naughty-packes, that they would rather incourage them in their sins, then any way ease them, & recover them from the same: therefore they went to the *Disciples*, because they vvere holy & gracious persons, and vvilling to succour them; and it is certaine, that soule vvas never truly broken for sinne, that goes for helpe to such as are guilty of the same; it is suspicious that these men goe onely to stoppe the mouth of conscience.

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but never to have conscience awakened. You see our converts here went to the *Apostles*, not to the *Scribes* and fellow-murderers but this by the way onely: I goe on in the former point.

A broken hearted sinner knowes more by himselfe than any man can doe, when a man is pinched with famine or drought, he will open his vvants fully and freely, and so a man that is sicke, and hath some heaue disease upon him, will te'l of more paines and gripings than any Physitian can doe: So it is vvith the soule that is deadly sicke in the sight of his finnes and abominations.

*Quest.* But may not a vvicked man that never was truly broken hearted, make a large & open confession of his finnes?

*Answ.* I confesse that in the horror of conscience he may doe it, but vvith the *Dog* he returnes to his former *vornite*, and vvith the *Sow* to her *wallowing in the mire*; the Hogge that is kept in a cleane meadow, will looke somevvhat vvwhite, but if he comes from thence, he will lye downe in the first durty puddle he comes at: so there are some sinners that have beene vvell trained up, and live in a good family, they are a little cleansed; but when they come to live among vvicked companions, they grow as prophane as the rest; and yet all this while they are hogges, and will murmur at others that are more holy than themselves; Now, the *Dog* is he, that hath had his eyes opened, and his conscience awakened, and some horreur laid upon his soule, and this doth make him disgorge himselfe for a while, to ease himselfe of his horreur; but vvhen that man returnes to his finnes, he will snarle and bite too, and fall heavily upon Gods people, so much the more, because he

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hath

hath confest his finnes; thus it was with *Judas* he swallowed downe his *shirty pence*, but God made him come and acknowledge his sinne, and take shame to himselfe, and yet a *Judas*, a devill, and at this day in hell. I tell you, this his confession out-bids most people in our generation; the fish is content to nibble at the baite, and so it is taken vwith the hooke, and vwhen it hath the hooke and bait too, it would be rid of both: so when horror of conscience hath fastned upon the soule of a man, because of sinne, he could be content to vomit his sinne and all up, and yet hee is a very beast.

*Quest.* But doth hearty confession argue true *Contrition*?

*Answ.* I answer, there is a kinde of confession which no man attaines unto, but he hath a broken heart, *Judas*, nor no carnall heart under heaven comes to this, and you must know, there is no vword spoken by the one but may be spoken by the other, and therefore the difference is not from the vwords, but from the invvard frame of the heart: And for the opening of this truth I vwill proponnd and shevv these two things.

First, the confession of a poore broken hearted sinner.

Secondly, I vwill shevv you vwhen the Saints of God are called to confesse.

For rhe first, the difference betweene the true & the false confession, is discovered in these three particulars.

[ *I. Difference betwixt true and false confession of finnes.* ]

First, they differ in the end, a broken-hearted sinner

finer confesserh his finnes , that hee may take shame to himsele , and glorifie God , this is the frame of the soule that truly confesserh his finnes , hee doth it to honour the *Gospell* vvhich he hath so much dishonoured , to discover the vilenesse of his person and of his sinne , that hee hath so much set up ; hee is vvvillingly content that the glory of it may bee Gods , and the shame his ovvne. Consider that passage of the good *Thiefe* upon the *Crosse*, Luk. 23. 40. vvhhen the reprobate vvas going to be executed for his sin, he railed upon Christ: *Note.* (vvhence observe by the vway) A vvicked man vvill be a vvretch though hee should goe to hell presently ; novv vvhhen he vvas railing , see vvhat the *Good thiefe* replies; *Fearost thou not God ? wee have sinned and are justly punished for our finnes,* to dye and to goe to hell too , if God be not the more mercifull; this man , you see , vvas content to fall out vvith himsele , and his finnes , and to honour the justice and holinesse of God in condemning of him. It is said in *Ezekiel*. *They shall remember their wayes that were not good , and shall be asbamed*, Ezek. 16. 16. that is , they shall take shameto themselves, they shall not shrink for the same ; a gracious heart cannot tell vvhat to doe to make sinne , and it selve base enough before God , that his soule and sin may fall out one vvith another , as in the example of *Zachew* : Luk. 19. 28 vvheras the confession of a carnall hypocrite comes not so currantly off, it sticketh in his teeth, hee begins to confesse something , and then he stands ; he saith something , and calls it back againe, & is loath to take any shame for the evill committed : & therefore haply he will come when he is called, and goe avway & confesse nothing at all; Nay , if a Minister heare any thing of

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him

him, he vwill hide it & tell a flat lye, rather than take shame to himselfe for it: it is true, a carnall hypocrite may confesse sometimes to give the Minister content, as commonly such doe; he may confesse, to get inuward vwith a man and to get commendations; nay, he may confesse, to sinne more freely vwithout suspicion, for charity beleeveth this, that vwhen a man hath confessed his sinne, he vwill never sinne in that kind againe; nay, sometimes hee doth it to stop the mouth of conscience, and therefore vwhen conscience is full of horror, to quiet conscience, & to still the clamor thereof, he is content to reveale his sinne: that so hee may have some secret peace for his sinne: thus farre they differ in their ends.

Secondly, they differ in their grounds: the cause and ground of a broken hearted sinner, it is from the loathsomnesse and vilenesse that the heart seeth in sin, and therefore it confesseth to free it selfe from that sinne, and to let out all those abominations that are so loathsome and tedious to him; as the sinner that is truly burthened confesseth all his sinnes, so especially those that are most loathsome & secret, even those sinnes whereby the heart hath bin most estranged from God. for as before the soule did confesse sin freely, because hee was content to take shame to himselfe, so now he doth it to rid himselfe of the same. Then a man fees sin kindly, when it goeth to the very inwards of the soule; it is in this case with a broken-hearted sinner, as it is with that part of a mans body, that is impostumed, or the like, when the impostume is ripe, if it be launced to the quicke, the very coare and all comes out; but if it be pricked with a pin, there may some corrupt matter come out, but the coare remains yet in it still: so it is  
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with an impostumed heart, when a man is truly pierced with his abominations, hee is content to lay open the most inward corruptions of all, that there may be a perfect killing of all, nay, it labours to sweep out the most secret finnes of all, without any ifs, or ands, and he sayth; Oh, this proud, wretched, adulterous heart of mine, hath bene my bane, and it will be my destruction for ever, if God be not more mercifull, now the coare and all comes out; whereas the hypocrite that feeles onely the feare, and horrour, and punishment of sin, executed or threarned, hee confesseth no more than may procure his ease, hee desires not so much to have his corruptions removed, as to be freed from horrour.

[ *The hollow-hearted confession of  
hypocrites* ]

And therefore, a hypocrite will scumme over all his confessions, his talke will bee a hundred miles from his finnes, hee never comes to that maine sinne which keepes his heart from God; and it is remarkable, one man complains hee is troubled with wandring thoughts in hearing the Word, and his soule is taken aside with strange distempers; but follow that soule home, and you shall commonly finde some base corruptions that take up his heart; and another man complains of his hard heart; it stirres not at the word of God, and Gods Iudgements doe not melt him, when yet in the meane time he nourisheth that pride, & selfe-uncleannesse, that is the cause thereof, and there are many besides these: as it is with a Dog, hee doth not gorge up his meate because hee loathes it, but because his stomacke is troubled with it, and therefore when his paine is over, he

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akes it with greedinesse againe ; so it is with an hypocrite , his heart is burthened with extreme sorrow, and therefore hee throwes out so much as did trouble and gall his conscience, & may worke him some ease ; but afterwards he returnes to it againe ; and this is the cause why wee have so many revolters , and backsliders , after such open confessions ; they confesse onely to ease themselves of the horror , and therefore when the horror is gone, they fall to theyr old sinne againe , whereas a sound Christian doth confesse his sin, onely from the loathsomenesse of it.

3. Thirdly , the soule that is truly broken , makes confession with an inward resolution never to meddle with sinne any more ; yet all this while the soule is full of feare and suspection, for feare of falling into those sinnes againe, therefore it desires rather to discover it selfe by desires and wishes , then any confidence in it selfe ; and therefore the soule saith, O, that the Lord would once give me power against these corruptions ! Oh, how happy should I be ! but alas ! I have no power of my selfe ; the soule is willing to fling it selfe into the armes of Gods mercy , and to commit himselfe wholly to the meanes of grace , that God may get himselfe honour by him ; onely hee desires him to bee good unto him by giving of him power against his corruptions.

Whereas the hypocrite that is in feare of some judgement , and the wrath of God hath seized upon his soule ; that he may get ease, will promise any thing, and bee marvailous open , and yet confident in himselfe and say ; If God would give mee health, and raise me up againe , all the world shall see I will be a new man, and they shall see , how holy, and how carefull, and how exact I will be :  
yet,



yet, poore soule, when he is out of his trouble, he returnes to his vomit, and is worse than before, and so much the worse, because hee hath made open confession. As it is with a debtor, an honest man comes freely and doth acknowledge his debt, and desires the Creditor to satisfie himselfe with his body and goods, he desires he may be no loser by him, he suspects he shall not be able to pay him, but hee hopes, so farre as hee is able, to give him content: but another cunning mate promiseth to pay all, if he will give him further day, but intende no such matter. Iust so it is with a soule that is truly broken for sinne, hee layes himselfe in Gods presence, and referres himselfe into Gods hands, and saith; The truth is, Lord, I know, this proud corrupt heart of mine will not yeeld, it will deceive me: I am afraid I shall not be able to walke holily: take this heart of mine, and doe what thou wilt with it, onely purge out my sin and corruption: this is the manner of his confession.

*Ob.* But, is every man bound thus freely & openly to confesse his sinnes? I answer, the Doctrine saith, When hee is called to it. But you will say, when is a man bound & called to make confession?

*Ans.* 1. For answer, I will shew it in foure conclusions.

[ *When a man is bound to confesse his sin.* ]

First, when the soule hath had a true sight of sinne, & hath confessed it to the Lord abundantly, and through Gods mercy hath gotten some assurance of the pardon thereof, then hee need not looke to men for pardon, because the end of confession is accomplished already. A man therefore confesseth his sinne, that he may finde some helpe

against it: not that a Minister can absolve or pardon any (as the Popish shavelings imagine) but that he may have the direction, helpe, and prayers of a godly Minister.

2. Secondly, if we have wronged any body that we have conversed withall, though God hath pardoned the sinne, yet we are to confesse it, that we may make peace, and pray one for another, this is the meaning of that place, *Confesse your sinnes one to another, and pray one for another.* Lam. 5. 16.

3. Thirdly, if a man have used all meanes ordinary and extraordinary, and hath fasted, and prayed, and sought the Lord for pardon of sin, and strength against it, and yet his conscience remaines troubled, & he sinkes under the burden of his corruptions, in this case a man is called to confesse his sinnes to a faithfull Minister. Indeed a man may confesse them to a faithfull Christian, but it is Gods ordinance to confesse them to a faithfull Minister, not that a Minister can pardon his sinnes; but onely to declare when he is *sitted*, and to apply mercy accordingly. It is not a matter of complement, but a duty commanded: It is in this case with the soule, as it is with a mans body; hee that is able by his owne skill and his kitchin-physick to cure himselfe, hath no need to seeke to the Physitian: but if it bee beyond his owne skill, & if kitchin-physick will doe no good, then he is bound to seeke out to a Physitian, unlesse he will bee his owne murderer. It is just so with the soule of a man that is sorrowfull for sinne: when he hath conscionably used all meanes, and yet his clobber-prayers, & his clobber-fastings will not doe the deed, then hee is bound to seek out to a faithfull Minister, for he is the Physitian that God hath appoynted, whereby all the sicknesses of the soule may be eased & cured.

4. Lastly,

4. Lastly, if a man have beene guilty of common open finnes, and it is knowne abroad that hee hath beene an open swearer and adulterer, if God hath broken his heart thorowly for his finnes, and hee lyes (it may be) upon his death-bed, and now enjoys the company of a faithfull Minister, or some holy Christian, hee is bound to acknowledge his finnes, that as God hath beene dishonoured by him, so now he may honour God, and shame himselfe, and discourage the hearts of those wicked wretches that have shared with him in the sin: if ever hee be truly broken, and if God throw him on his sickebed, and these things be layed to his charge, hee will cry out of himselfe and say, Oh, I have hated the light of Gods truth, I did persecute the cause of godlinesse, *I was a persecuter and blasphemers*, saith *Pauls* so it will be with your proud and rebellious hearts, if ever God open your eyes, and awaken your consciences, as they must be, either here, or in hell.

Therefore, when your companions come about you, cry shame of your selves, and say, The Lord knowes, and all the Country knowes, that I have beene a drunckard, and an adulterer; it is the gall of my heart. Now if God had not bin mercifull unto me, I had drunke, and drunk my last: it hath cost me deare, and so it will be with you too. It is strange to see how God throwes some upon their death-beds, and fills their consciences full of horrour, and yet a man cannot wrest a word from them: Nay, though all their drunken companions come about them; they have not a word to say to them, I doe not thinke that the heart of any Christian will endure it, if ever God break his heart kindly.

Thus you see what man is bound to confesse

his sinne; this is farre enough from the tyrannicall confession of that strange Popish doctrine of auricular Confession: they hold, all men are bound, whatsoever theyr condition bee, whether their finnes be pardoned or unpardoned, they are bound to confesse all their mortall finnes, and to expect their pardon authoritatively from the Priests hand, upon the paine of great matters.

[ *Popish Confession what it is.* ]

The aime of the Papiſts herein, is, first, to snare mens consciences; and secondly, to picke mens purses: for when a man hath confessed his mortall finnes, his conscience is snared, and then they must give so much money for the pardon of them agreeable to the offence: Now wee bind no man upon paine to come necessarily; but if he can get pardon from God in the use of the meanes, & get power against his corruptions, in this case wee enioyne no man to confesse but when the Saints doe come, it is not because wee will or can sell pardons, but onely to fit them for mercy. And this is the truth, and that our Church holds.

This falls mervailous heavy & foule upon those that are so farre from this duty, that they are opposite against it, & account it a matter of madnesse and childishnesse, to acknowledge their offences to any man. Men would be comforted in regard of the sorrow they feele, but they would not be content to open their finnes, and take shame to themselves: This harbours in the hearts of many carnall wretches, and so they are deprived of the fruit of the Gospell: They thinke it their cunning, to shif, and mince their finnes, and to keepe them close from the knowledge of the Minister.

It may be, the wife is sicke, and the husband saith,

saith, I pray you shew her some comfort. Why, saith the Minister, what needes shee any comfort, seeing shee was never in distresse? Oh! saith he, she hath lived an honest quiet woman, and so by this meanes wee heare of nothing but good. I would faine wrest this madnesse out of the hearts of carnall wretches. When the Lord hath them upon the racke, then their consciences are full of horror, and they know not which way to take: yet they scorne to acknowledge any thing: shall they bee (convicted of their sinnes, and) such babies, to cry their sinnes at the Market-crosse? they have a better course than so: for (say they) who knowes it? and let him prove it, or the like, What if no man ever yet knew it? thy owne conscience, and God, knowes it.

If thou goest to a Phyitian, thou wilt lay open all thy sores, and all thy paines to him, or else thou expectest no helpe from him; and canst thou looke for any comfort from a Minister, & never discover thy sinnes, whereby thou art hindred in a good course? men would be comforted, and yet never knew why they were afflicted.

You that keepe your sinnes so close, and maintaine them so tenderly, the God of heaven vwill plucke those sweete morsels from your mouthes, and lay them upon you when you would bee rid of them; As a man that is sicke, hee will not send to the Phyitian because he thinkes hee is able to beare it out, till at last the disease begins to fester inwardly, and all the Phyitians under heaven cannot cure him; if he had sent in time, he might have beene eased: so it is with many sinfull creatures, out of a sturdy stoutnesse of heart, they scorne to confesse their corruptions; well, now God opens their eyes, and they begin to say, This

is not well, and that is not well; but you will not send for the Minister all this while, if it be horror of conscience, you will beare it; well, at last you come to your death-beds, and the Lord layes his heavie hand upon you, and then you cry for the Minister and a'l; Oh, saith one, woe to me, because of this adulterous heart, this drunkennes, & this malice, and this madnesse against God and his people I was a cunning persecutor, and with such a woman I committed adultery, and at last, when he hath ended his confession, he sinkes and dyes: Now the Minister comes too late; yee will beare the checke of conscience, and in time the wound growes sore, & your soule sinkes into irrecoverable misery; Oh, woe to that Soule, this is all because he vvould not have his heart launced: well, if thou wilt not, then take that cursed heart of thine, and expect Gods wrath with it, if thou repent not. See how God deales with a sinner in this kinde, the text saith, *His bones are full of the finnes of his youth, which shall lye wit, him in the dust: Although sinne be sweete in his mouth, though hee spare it, and keepe it close as Sugar under his tongue, it is as the gall of Aspes within them; Iob. 10 11. 12.* take heed how you keepe your finnes close, when conscience and horror calls upon you to confesse them, and God hath you upon the racke, and saith, These finnes you have committed in secret, either confesse them, or they shall turne to the gall of Aspes; if still you will have your sins, remember that the God of heaven beares witnesse this day against that soule, that will not come off, but hides his sinne; take heed that God say not *Amen*: when thou art going the way of all flesh, then thou vvilt cry for mercy, but then the Lord vvill say, Remember that impostumed heart  
of

of thine might have beene launced and cured ; but thou wouldest needs keepe thy lust and corruptions still.

**For the Lord Iesus Christs sake, now pity your selves,** if you desire your everlasting comfort, now take shame to your selves, that you may be for ever glorified, O now ! launce those proud rebellious hearts of yours , that you may finde some ease ; teare now in pieces those wretched hearts , that the coare being let out , the cure may bee good and sound !

*Use. 2.* Secondly , this reproves the cunning hypocrite, howsoever he is content to be ashamed for his sin, and to shew the foulness of it , yet it is admirable to consider what slye passages and trickes he will have before he comes to open any thing ; sometimes he sends for a faithfull Minister, and it is his entendment to confesse his folly, and yet he goes back againe and confesseth nothing at all ; but if the Lord follow the close hearted hypocrite, and let in some more of his indignation , and make his wrath to seaze upon his soule , then he sets downe a resolution to confesse all ; and yet there is such dawbing and such secret acknowledgement of sinne ; it sticks in his teeth , something hee will say that may bee every man can say against him ; and then hee speaks of hardnesse of heart, and of wandering thoughts, and that which even the best of Gods people are troubled withall ; but he never comes to those sinfull lusts that lie heaviest upon his soule.

If a man that is sicke have a foule stomacke , but yet is unfit to vomit, it may be he casts the uppermost up, but the spawne of it remaines ; so it is with the hypocrite, he sayth something, and now and then a word falls from him , and hee would  
S
faine

faine bite it in againe if he could, but there is a witnesse within, that must not be seene.

When *Rachel* had stolne her Father *Labans* Idols, hee followed after *Jacob* for them, and searched among the stuffe, but *Rachel* being something foolishly addicted that way, sate still upon them, and *Laban* must not search there: So it is with the close hearted hypocrite, he is content to confesse that which all the world cries shame of him for, but there is some Idol lust, as secret uncleannesse, or private theft, that he will not confesse.

Novv for the terrour of all such gracelesse persons, I desire to discover two things in the point. First, that this is a mervailous fearefull sinne: Secondly, it is a dangerous sinne.

First, me thinkes the sinne it selfe is like the sinne of *Ananias* and *Saphira* Act. 5. 3. he sold all that he had, and as the Lord mooved him, & commanded him, hee gave vway to it that it should bee given to the poore: But vwhen it vvas sold, hee kept backe one part of it: and vwhen *Peter* said, *Did you sell it for so much?* Is this all the price? Yes saith hee.

[ *To hide our sinnes, is a fearefull sinne.* ]

Novv marke vwhat *Peter* saith, *VVhy hast Sathan filled thy heart, that thou hast not lye'd to man, but to God?* Sathan many times steps into the heart: but vwhen hee is said to fill the heart, he shuts out the worke of judgement and reason, and the Word, and Spirit, & all good Resolutions in those particular occasions, vvhich concerne a man.

As if Sathan should say, Knowledge shall not direct him, the Spirit shall not perswade him, and the Word shall not prevaile vwith his heart: but I vwill take possession of him in despite of all these: this is Sathans filling of the heart.

Thus



Thus it is with the Hypocrite : his conscience is awakened, and saith : Thou must confesse thy sins, or else thou shalt be damned for them : the Word commands thee, and the Spirit perswades thee to confesse thy finnes ; and hereupon thou sayest ; This is my condition, and there is no ease nor comfort to be had in private meanes, and therefore I must goe to some faithfull Minister, and reveale my selfe to him : and when thou hast done, thou keepest backe halfe from him, & thoulyest against Conscience, the Word & Spirit, and all : and when the Minister saith, Is this the bottome of thy sins? Diddest thou not commit such and such a sinne? Oh! no! I was never guilty of any such matter : and yet thoulyest. Marke what I say, this is to have Satan fill thy heart, thou givest up thy heart into the possession of the Devill : Knowledge directs thee not, the Spirit perswades not, and the Word prevailes not; but the Devill croudes into every corner of thy heart, and thou wilt cover thy sins, and so perish for them everlastingly.

2. But secondly, as the sin is vile and odious, so it is as dangerous : *He that hideth his finnes shall not prosper*, saith the Wiseman, Pro. 28. 13, Howsoever thy heart may be still for a while, yet thou shalt not prosper in thy family, nor in the Word and Sacraments, but all meanes are accursed to thee, thou shalt receive no mercy at all : hee that confesseth and forsaketh his finnes, shall finde mercy ; but he that confesseth not his finnes, shall not finde mercy.

As we use to have a nest-egge to breed upon, so it is the devils cunning to leave a nest-egge, some bosome lust or other in thy soule, and the Devill fits upon this same, as upon a nest-egge :

and when the devill is caſt out by ſlight overtly confeſſion of your finnes, yet there is ſome ſe creſt luſt ſtill left in the heart, and that will breed a thouſand abominations more in you, For ( I beſeech you take notice of this) the devill returns and brings ſeven devils more than himſelfe, and he hatcheth ſeven times more uncleannesse than there was before : therefore, as you deſire that Satan may not fill your hearts, and as you deſire to have any meanes bleſſed to you, come off kindly and currently, either not confeſſe at all, or elſe confeſſe currently, that you may finde mercy in the time of need.

*Vſe 2.* The ſecond *Vſe* is for Inſtruction, to ſhew us, that a broken-hearted ſinner is eaſily convicted of his finnes, and willing to under-goe any reproofe; he that will confeſſe his finnes freely of himſelfe, will eaſily yeeld when he is called upon to doe it. If the Word lay any thiig to his charge, he will not deny it, a man neede not bring any witneſſes againſt him: hee will never ſeeke to cover his ſinne, but if any occaſionall paſſage of ſpeech come, that may diſcover his ſin, he takes it preſently, and yeelds to it, and ſaith; I am the man, I confeſſe, this is my ſinne and my folly: he doth not fence his heart againſt the truth.

To whom ſhall I looke ( ſaith God ) even to a man that hath a contrite heart, and trembles at my Word, *Eſa. 66. 2.* this is the roote, and this is the fruit: the heart muſt bee contrite and broken by the hammer of Gods Law, before it can ſhake at the hearing of the Word; A broken heart comes not to flout at the Miniſter, ( nay, that is a ſturdy heart ) but a broken heart ſhakes at the word of God: if there come a promiſe, a broken heart trembles,

trembles, least he hath no share in it; and if there be any command, he trembles, lest he should not be able to obey it: but if the Lord meet with some maine lust, or secret malice against the Saints of God, and uncleanness, or the like; if the Lord give a wipe at these things in the Word, then this broken heart hath enough, he hath his load, and longs to be private, he remembers that truth; and the wound being fresh bleeds againe, and hee mournes againe, and layes hold on his heart, and saith, Good Lord, I was this malicious wretch, I intended this mischief to thy Saints, and (if it had beene in my power) I could have sucked their blood: I was that uncleane wretch; shall all these finnes be pardoned? and shall all these cursed abominations bee removed? Can these corruptions be subdued?

Brethren (ye cannot bee ignorant how) a wounded heart is affected with every touch, you that have broken hearts you know it, I shall not need to tell you: Therefore, when ever the Lord comes to take in those filthy and drunken hearts of yours, they will shake within you, and you will say, This is my sinne, and these are my abominations, whereby God hath beene so much dishonoured.

*Use. 3.* The third Use is for exhortation, if you know these things (as I am perswaded you doe), then be intreated in the name of the Lord Iesus, to wa'ke in that way which God hath revealed; this is the basenesse of our hearts, we are loath to unbracke our vile and secret distempers, they are shamefull themselves, and yet we are loath to take shame for them.

Therefore deale openly and freely, with your soules, confesse your finnes freely, that God may deale

deale comfortably with you; hath the Lord at any time let in this horror into thy soule; and is thy heart now troubled at the words; and after all thy teares, & paines, & meanes using with uprightnes, doe thy corruptions still remaine? are they not yet subdued as they might be? canst thou not get any assurance of the pardon of them? I say then, cast away thy shamefull hiding and concealing of sinne, and do not say, what will the world and Ministers say of me? away with these shifts, God calls thee to confession, the Saints have done it, & thou must, nay, thou wilt doe it, (if ever thy heart be kindly broken, as it should be) in some measure pleasing unto God, and profitable to thy selfe.

*Object.* But some will say how may we doe it?

*Answer.* For answer thereunto, I will first give direction how to doe it; Secondly, I will give some motives to work our hearts to the same.

[ *To whom we should lay open our finnes by confession.* ]

First, be wise in chusing the party, to whom you must confesse your finnes, for every wide-mouthed vessell is not fit to receive precious liquor; so this confession is not to be opened to every carnall vvretch, that will blazé it abroad; the minister to vvhom you confesse, ought to have these three graces.

[ 1. *A skilfull Minister.* ]

Hee must bee a skilfull and able Minister of God, one that is tained up, and is master of his Art, and so experienced, that hee may be able in some measure to finde out the nature of the disease. (Not that any Minister under heaven can bee so vwife and holy, as to give pardon to a poore sinner.)

sinners; but onely he is able ministerially to doe it under God. ) He must be able to approve himselfe the Minister of God: he must have the tongue of the learned, and bee able to breake the heart, and prepare the soule for Christ; & then to apply the cooling promises of the Gospell to him.

There are many, who in stead of curing of the soule, kill it, and by popping the Sacrament into a mans mouth, think to send him to heaven: but in conclusion, send him to hell.

[ 2. *A mercifull Phisitian.* ]

Hee must be a mercifull Physitian, one that will pittie a poore soule; they that have experience of trouble and misery in themselves, are most compassionate to others in distresse: hee that hath bin tossed in the Sea, will pittie others that have bin in the same danger. If these people had gone to the *Scribes and Pharises*, they had bin well holpen. No, but they went to *Peter*, and therefore found helpe: when *Judas* had sinned, and betrayed his Master, and his soule was full of horror; hee went to the *Pharises* and confessed his sinnes, but what succour found he? they answered him, *What is that to us?* Mat. 27.4. Hast thou sinned, then beare it, and looke to it thy selfe; so it is with carnall wretches; what comfort yeeld they to a poore distressed conscience? they adde sorrow to sorrow, and say, It is nothing but melancholy, and he hath gotten this by hearing some fiery hot Minister, or by reading too much in some bookes of Election and Reprobation.

[ 3. *A faithfull Minister, & how knowne.* ]

Hee must be a faithfull Minister, one that will not fit mens humours, nor answer the desires of

theyr hearts, in speaking what they would have him; but his faithfulness must appear in two things.

First, in dealing plainly with every one, though a man be his Patron, or of what place or condition soever he be, if he have a proud heart, hee must labour to humble him.

And secondly, as he must apply a salve fitting for the sore, so he must be faithfull in keeping secret the sin that is laid open to him, that nothing may flye abroad, no not after his death, except it be in some cases.

[ *Motives to confesse our sinnes.* ]

Now what remaines, but that you all be moved to take up this duty, and provoke your hearts freely to confesse your evill wayes: to which purpose let me give you three Motives.

[ **1. M O T I V E.** ]

Because it is a very honourable thing, and will exceedingly promote the cause of a Christian, you will hardly yeeld to this on the sudden; a man doth thinke, that if the Minister knowes his vile-nesse, he will abhorre him for it.

But (I assure you brethren) there is nothing that doth more set forth the honour of a Christian, and winne the love of a Minister, than this. Indeed, it is a shame to commit sin, but no shame to confesse it upon good grounds; Nay, when the heart comes kindly off, it is admirable to see how a faithfull Minister will approve of such persons, his love is so great towards them, O, sayth the Minister, it did mee good to heare that man confesse so freely: I hope the Lord hath wrought kindly in him, certainly now he is in the way.

to life and happinesse; Oh, how I love him! I could even be content to put that man in my bosome.}

Whereas this overly, & loose dealing of yours, is loathsome to us; doe you thinke vve perceiue it not? Yes, vve may feele it vwith our fingers, and (vwhen you are gone, I tell you vwhat vvee think) surely that man is an hypocrite, hee hath a hollow heart, hee is not vwillling to take shame to himselfe for his sin, his confession never comes to the bottom.

### [ 2. M O T I V E. ]

Confession is a matter of great safety; I take this to be the onely cause, vwhy many a man goes troubled, and gets neither comfort in the pardon of his sinne, nor strength against it; because hee comes not off kindly in this vwork of Confession.

When you doe nakedly open your sinnes to a faithfull Minister, you goe out in battell agast sinne, and you have a second in the field to stand by you: but especially there is comfort in this particular, for the Minister vwill discover the lusts, and deceits, and corruptions, that you could not finde out, and hee vwill lay open all those holds of Sathan, and that meanes of comfort that you neuer knew: I am able to speake it by experience, this hath broke the necke of many a Soule, even because hee vwould goe out in single combate agast Sathan, and (doe vwhat hee could,) not revealing himselfe to others for helpe, vvas overthrowne for ever.

As it is vwith the impostumed part of a mans body, vwhen a man lets out some of the corrupt matter; and so skinnes it, never healing it to the bottom; at last it cankers in vvardly, and comes to

a gangrene, and the part must bee cut off, or else a man is in danger of his life : so vwhen you let out some corruptions by an overly confession, but suffer some bosome lust to remaine still, as malice, or uncleannesse, &c. Then the soule is carried into fearefull abominations.

Many have fallen souly, and lived long in theyr sinnes, and all because they vwould not confesse freely : therefore as you desire to finde out the deceitfulnesse of your corruptions, confesse them from the bottome of your soules.

### [ 3. M O T I V E. ]

This open and free confession, may keepe the sinne secret : for the onely vway to have a mans sinnes covered, is to confesse them, that so they may not be brought upon the stage before all the vworld.

*Objeſt.* Oh, sayth one; this is contrary to common reason; wee are affraid to have our sinnes knowne, that is our trouble; wee keep our sins close, because we would preserve our honor.

*Anſw.* I say, the onely way for secrecie, is to reveale our sinnes to some faithfull Minister; for if we confesse our sins, God will cover them; if you take shame to your selves, God will honor you; but if you will not confesse your sins, God will breake open the doore of your hearts, and let in the light of his truth, & the convicting power of his Spirit, and make it knowne to men and Angels, to the shame of your persons for ever.

If *Judas* had taken notice of his sinne, & yielded to Christs accusation, and desired some conference with Christ privately, ( and said ) Good Lord, I am that *Judas*, and that hell-hound that have received mercy from thee in the outward meanes, and  
have



have been entertained among thy people, yet it is I that have taken the *thirty pence*, Lord pardon this sin, & never let this iniquity be laid to my charge; ) I doubt not, but though *Judas* his soule could not be saved ( because that now wee know Gods decree of him ) yet God would have saved him from the publike shame that was cast upon him for it : but hee did not doe so , but hid his malice in his heart, and professed great matters of love to Christ, and kissed him, and thus hee thought to cover his sinne wisely: but what became of that ? the Lord forced him to come & indite himselfe in the high Priests Hall, before the temporall and spirituall Councill.

So you that keepe your sins as Sugar under your tongues, and vwill be loose, and malicious, & covetuous still ; vwell, you vwill have your *thirty pence* still, and they are layd up safe, as *Achans wedge of Gould was* ; remember this , God vwill one day open the closetts of your hearts, and lay you upon your death-beds, and then haply yee vwill prove mad, and vomit up all : vvere it not better to confesse your sinnes to some faithfull Minister now ?

If you vwill not give the Lord his glory, he vwill distraine for it, and have it from your heart blood, as *Julian the Apostata* said, When the Arrovv vvas shot into his heart . he plucked it out , and cryed, saying ; *Thou Galilean, thou hast overcome mee*, the Lord distrained for his glory , and had it out of his heart blood.

Now I come to the second fruit of Contrition, vvhich is here plainly expressed, and it is this ; A restlesse dislike of themselves and their sinnes : as if they had sayd, *Men and breshren*, vvee care not vvhath vvee doe against those evils of ours , vvhether-

by the Lord hath beene so much dishonoured, and vvee indangred, command us vvhath you val, vvee must not rest thus, so loathsome are our sinnes, that vvee vwill doe any thing rather than be as vvee are.

[ D O C T R I N E . ]

So from hence the doctrine is this: The soule that is truly pierced for sin, is carried against it with a restlesse dislike and distaste of it: or thus: Sound contrition of haert, brings a thorow detestation of sin; this they professedly proclaime before the *Apostles*. As if they had said thus much in more words;

You say, we are they that *have crucified the Lord of life*, and we confesse it; Oh, happie had it bin for us if vvee had never listened to the plots of the *Scribes* and *Pharises*, but that vvhich is past cannot be undone or recalled,

What must now be done? if vvee rest here, vvee perish for ever: can nothing be done against these our sinnes, that have done so much against the Lord Iesus? Wee must loath our selves, and our sinnes, and vvee must get out of this estate, or else vvee are undone for ever.

Now for the further opening of this point, I vwill discover these three things: First, I will shew vvhath a distaste and dislike this is. Secondly, vvherein this hatred and dislike of sinne consists. Thirdly, I vwill shew the reason, vvhay it must be so.

1. For the first, namely, vvhath dislike this is: for the clearing of vvhich, you must looke backe to that vvhich I spake before of godly sorrow. For of the very same stampe and nature, is this dislike and hatred of sinne: and it is thus much in effect.

[ *Dislike* ]

[ *Dislike and hatred of sin, what it is.* ]

**First**, there is a hatred in preparation ; and **secondly**, a hatred in sanctification : both are saving **vorkes**, but both are not sanctifying **vorkes**. **Vocation** is a saving **vorke**, but not a sanctifying **vorke**, they are two distinct **vorkes**.

**This** hatred in preparation, is that which the **Lord** **vorkes** upon the **Soule**, and smites upon the **soule**, and thereby puts this kinde of turning into the heart ; not that the heart hath any **powerfull** inward principle of grace before, ( for this is the first that the **Lord** **vorkes** ) so that as before the **soule** was forced to see sin, and to feele the burthen of it ; so the heart is now brought to dislike sinne ; this is a **vorke** wrought upon the **soule**, rather than any thing done by the **soule** ; the **Lord** is now fitting and preparing the **soule** for the presence of his blessed Spirit.

And in this great **vorke** of Preparation, the **Lord** **vorkes** these three things.

[ *How the soule is prepared for Christ.* ]

**First**, he stops the **soule** from going on any longer in sinne. **Secondly**, hee wearieth the **soule** with the burthen of sin. **Thirdly**, by hatred the **soule** is brought to goe away from those carnall lusts & corruptions, with a secret dislike of those sinnes which he hath bin wearied withall.

In all these, the **Soule** is a patient ( and undergoes the **vorke** of humbling, and breaking, ) rather than any way active and operative.

1. Thus the heart is turned away from sinne, and set against those corruptions which heretofore

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it was burthened vwith; as it is vwith the vvheels of a Clocke, vvhen the vvheels have run vvrong, before a man can set them right againe, hee must stop it, and turne it to its right place, and all this are meereley wrought upon the vvheele, by the hand of the workeman; for of it selfe, it hath no poise nor weight to runne right; but vvhen the Clock-master puts to his plummetts, then it is able to runne of it selfe, though the vvorkemans hand bee not there. So the will and affections of a man, which are the great vvheels of this curious clocke of the Soule, these vvheels doe naturally of themselves runne all hell-ward, and sin-ward, and devill-ward: Now before the Soule can receive a new principle of Grace;

First, the Lord unmaskes a man, and makes him come to a stand, and makes him see Hell gaping for him; thus the heart is at a maze.

Secondly, the Lord layes the weight of sinne & corruption upon him, and that doth sinke the soule vvith the horrour, and vexation, and loathsomnesse of his finnes.

Thirdly, then the soule is carried away from sinne by hatred and dislike; and saith, Is this the fruit of sinne that delighteth mee? Oh then, no more malice, no more drunkenness, thus the heart is turned away: but after the soule is once brought on to God by faith, & goes to God, and receives the spirit of sanctification, (of vvhich we shall speake afterwards) there is a new principle of life, & out of this gracious disposition the soule is now growne to hate sinne freely, and to knocke off the fingers from corruptions, and beate downe his lusts, and to love God strongly, out of that power of grace which the Lord hath put into the soule.

*Difference*

[ *Difference betwixt sorrow for sinne,  
and hatred of sinne.* ]

There is this difference betweene *sorrow* for sinne, and hatred, sorrow fees the burthen, but hatred flings it away; sorrow looseneh the heart, but hatred lets out the corruption; sorrow saith, doth sinne thus pitch the soule? and hatred saith, no more sinne then; thus the Lord by his Spirit prepares the Soule.

For the prooffe of this point, see what the *Prophet* saith, *You shall consider your wayes, and your doings that were not good, and shall loath your selves,* Ezek. 30. 31. A poore Christian would teare his heart in pieces in the apprehension of his owne vileneffe, and saith; Good Lord, shall I ever be plagued and annoyed with this sturdy malicious heart? & shall I ever carry this vile heart about me, that will one day carry mee to hell, if thou bee not the more mercifull? this makes a man even fall out with himselfe.

Againe, see what the *Apostle* saith, for this thing you have had godly sorrow, but what hath it wrought in you? doth it worke a *holy indignation and revenge against your sinfull courses?* that when thy soule seeth his filthy abominations rising, swelling, and bubbling within thy heart, it takes on exceedingly, and will scarce owne-it selfe, but lookes away from sinne, and is weary of it selfe, in regard of the same; Nay, (if it were possible) that thou couldest bee content to live without a heart, even to forgoe thy selfe, that so thou mayest not be troubled with that vile heart of thine, and so dishonour God no longer. I beseech you observe it, when a man is brought thus farre, Oh he

cries to God, and saith, Lord, was there ever any poore sinner thus pestered with a vile heart? Oh that this heart should ever bee so opposite against the Lord? Lord, except I had a better heart, I would I had none at all: thus the heart loathes it selfe, and in what measure the soule is carried with a restlesse dislike of sin, as it is sin, in the same degree it is most violent against those sins, whereby he hath most dishonoured God: as you may see in *Zachens*, Luk. 19. his heart did more rise against his Master sin; so the Lord having humbled the repentant Church, thou shalt defile thy graven Images of silver, and the ornaments of thy Golden Images, thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloath, and say, Got you hence. *Esay.* 30. 21. 22. They hated all sinne, but especially their Idolotrous courses; so it will be with the heart that is truly broken, he will cast away with hatred all his pleasing and profitable sins: Thus much of the first passage.

[ *Wherein a true dislike of sinne consists.* ]

*Quest.* The second is this: Wherein doth this true hatred of sinne consist?

*Ans.* I answer, First, if the soule doth truly abhorre sinne, it is very willing to make search for it in every corner of the heart. And any sin that he cannot know himselfe, hee is willing that any Christian, or any friend should make them knowne unto him: A King that hates a traytor that would kill him, and a man that hates a thiefe that would rob him, they are willing that any man should discover that traytor or thiefe, and they will certaine him kindly, and reward him for it.

[ *He*

[ *He desires to have his sinne discovered.* ]

When the Ziphites came to Saul, and told him vvh<sup>er</sup>e David was, marke what he saith, *Oh blessed be ye of the Lord, for you have had compassion upon mee.* I. Sam. 23. 20. 21. Iust so it is with a broken bleeding-heart, that hath an open hatred against his corruptions; if any Minister or Christian will make knowne some base lusts that lurke in his soule, he will not flye out, and say, What is that to you? Every tabbe must stand upon his owne bot-tome, and if I sinne I must answer for it: Nay, hee will blesse the Lord for it, and say, Blessed be the Lord, and blessed be such a Minister, and b'les-sed be such a neighbour, for they have shevved mee my sin, and had compassion upon my soule.

Secondly, as the soule desires to have his sinne revealed, so it desires to have sinne killed, and it makes no matter how it be killed, or by whom, so it be killed at all. Hence it comes to passe, that the soule which truly hates sinne, is ever seeking to those meanes, that are most able to give strength to him, and to overcome his corruptions; and is well pleased that any Minister should meer with the base haunts of his heart, and if the word hit & wound that master-sinne of his, he is mervailous content therewith, hee cares not from whom the helpe comes. The sharpest and keenest reproofes; that will shake his very heart, and draw blood out of sinne, and the most powerfull deliverer of Gods-word, that divides betweene the marrow and the bones, he likes best.

[ *He labours to have his sin killed.* ]

Nay, though the great Cannons roare, and Gods ordinances worke mightily upon his heart; so  
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that his corruptions may be killed and subdued, he blesseth the Lord, and sayth: Blessed bee the Lord, I have had a good day of it, the Lord layd battery against this wretched heart of mine; I blessed God for these reproofes and judgements threatened; my heart is in some measure broken under them, I hope my corruptions have gotten theyr deaths wound this day.

[ *Hee hates sinne in others.* ]

Thirdly, as he desires to see sinne killed in himselfe, so he is not able to see sinne in others, but so farre as God hath put authority and opportunity into his hands, hee pursues it with deadly indignation.

As a man hates a Murderer, hee will not onely keepe him from his owne house, but hee pursues him even to the place of Justice: So the Soule that truly hates sinne, will not onely keepe sinne from his owne heart, but he will plucke it from the hearts of others, so farre as possibly he may.

When *Haman* had a spleene against *Mordecai*, he was not onely desirous to kill him, but he would kill all the nation of the *Jewes*, this was hatred indeed: so it is with a broken-heart. If a broken hearted father have had a proud heart, and hath been wearied with it, hee labours to kill all the brood of those cursed distempers in his children.

[ *He hates all occasions and meanes of sinning.* ]

Lastly, hee labours to crosse and undermine all those occasions and meanes that have given any succour to his corruptions of heart: the soule hath such a secret grudge against the thriving of sin, that it loathes all occasions that may maintein his sinne:



finne: as the drunkard and adulterer hate the place where they went in to commit sinne.

As in warre, haply they cannot take the enemy, but they will drive him out of the Country, and burne downe all his Forts, and fill up all his Trenches, that he may finde no provision: so the heart that truly hates sin, and hath beene truly broken for it, will hate all occasions and whatsoever may bee any meanes to strengthen it. Even all these proud and whorish lockes, and these Spanish cuts, and all these wanton and garish attires, and light behaviours, which were nothing else but the Tent wherein his vaine filthy light heart hath lodged.

Thus it was with *Mary Magdalen*, Luk. 7. 38 & the reason why it is so, is this, because the heart that hath bin broken for sinne, and burdened with the evill of it, hath now found by wofull experience, that sinne is the greatest evill of all others; and therefore (for the preservation of it selfe) it will hate that sinne which separates betweene God and the Soule, and with which the safety of the soule cannot stand.

Every thing in reason desires the safety & preservation of it selfe, the soule knows sin to be the greatest enemy, & therefore it is most invenomed with violence against sinne, and saith, Whence come all these miseries? and what is the mint out of which all these plagues and judgements come? Is it not my sinne? It is not poverty, it is not sicknesse, not disgrace that pincheth me, but my sinne first caused all these?

It is the poyson of sinne in poverty, and the poyson of sinne in shame, and the wrath of God in all these, by reason of my sinne. These evils were not evill to mee, but that my finnes make them so.

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Had I a heart to feare God, and to love him, & depend upon him; in poverty God would enrich me, and in shame he would honour mee, and in misery hee would comfort me: It is not poverty, nor shame, that doth hurt mee; but sinne lyes and venomes my soule.

And therefore the soule now cries, *Men and brethren, what shall I doe* to be freed from these corruptions? Great are the evils that I have found, and marvellous are the plagues that I have felt, by reason of my sinnes: but farre worse will that portion be, that I shall have in hell, in endlesse torments hereafter: this will be the perfection of all misery; let it be any thing rather than this: it is better here now to be plagued, than everlastingly damned.

*V. s. 1.* The first Vie is a ground of admirable comfort, & strong consolation to all such as have found this dislike & hatred of sin; he may before his heart hath beene broken for sinne, & so consequently, he shall certainly have Christ and grace.

*Object.* I doubt not, but every soule is perswaded of this, and saith: Indeed, if I could find my soule grieving within me for my rebellions and sins, I should not doubt of mercys; but how shall I know whether my soule hath beene ever as yet truly wounded for sinne, as sinne?

[ *How to know that your soules are truly broken for sinne.* ]

1. *Answ.* I answer, If thy heart is carried against thy sinnes with an utter indignation against them, then certainly thy soule hath beene truly broken: indeed, sometimes a man doth hate his sinnes, more than ever hee hath beene burthened with them; but thus it is commonly, if thy hatred bee good, thy sorrow hath beene sincere; for how can thy

thy heart goe against sinne , except thou have found some evill in it? and how canst thou bee an enemy to corruption, except thy heart hath beene wounded with it? therefore let me advise all those that desire to have an evidence of the worke of grace in theyr soules, to goe in secret, and examine their hearts, whether they can make buy and cry after theyr corruptions, can you bee content that all your sinfull distempers, (even those that would affect you most) should be made knowne either in publike by the ministry of the Word, or in private by some faithfull Christian? and can you be content that he should come home to your hearts, & dragge out your corruptions before the world? when you have beene wounded for sinne, and are enemies against it, (as *David* saith) *Try mee O Lord, and examine mee, and prove my heart, and my reins; and see if there bee any wickednesse in mee, Psal. 39. 24.* opened. Hee deales like a good subject that unlocks all the doores, and bids the officers search if there be any Traitor in his house, if any one hide the Traitor, hee is a Traytor himselfe in so doing; so *David* as it were, sets open the doore of his heart, and saith; Good Lord, if there bee any wickednesse in mee yet not discovered, Lord let that word, that Spirit, and that messenger of thine, finde it out; reprove me, convince me Lord, and discover my hypocrisie, and pride of heart, This is an honest heart certainly.

2. Secondly, when thou hast found out thy sinne by the help of the Minister, here thou wilt not rest, but huntst for the blood of thy corruptions, and canst not be quiet till thou seest the death of them: the Soule can doe little of it selfe, but it would have the Lord doe all for it: so though thou have not sanctifying Grace, and hast not power

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of thy selfe to kill thy corruptions, yet thou makest all thy friends thou hast to use all means to sinke thy enemies, that else would sinke thee.

As it is amongst men, when a man hath found his enemy, hee followes the Law hotly, and hee will have his life or else it shall cost him a fall: hee pursues him from one Court to another, and makes all the friends that hee can, that hee may plague him; and if all the Law in the land will doe it, hee will have him hanged; this is a right hatred indeed; so the soule can doe little of it selfe, yet it endeavours and makes a levie of forces, & prayers, and will not leave sinne with life, it pursues sin hotly and if all Gods words and all the Promises, and if the grace of Christ will do the deed, it will not rest till it see the decay of sinne; and therefore, it will even drag sinne before the Lords tribunall, and there cry for judgement, and say; Lord, kill this proud malicious heart of mine, these are thy enemies, and the enemies of thy grace; Lord, they sought my blood, let mee have their blood, blood for blood, tooth for tooth, O let mee see theyr destruction!

2. *Vse.* Secondly, is this contrition? & doth it bring forth such fruits? then true broken godly sorrow is rare in the world, and there are few that have it, even among those that think themselves some body in the bosome of the Church: therefore save me a labour, and cast your eyes abroad in the world, and inquire in the houses & villages where you dwell, and knocke at your neighbours hearts, and say, Is there any broken hearts here? it will appeare there are but few broken hearts here to be found amongst the professors of the Gospell, and so, few shall be saved.

If this hatred of sinne bee a true evidence of broken-

brocken-heartednesse, what will become of a world of prophane persons, that are carried on with the pursuit of sinne, from which they will not be plucked; the drunkard will have his cups, and the adulterer his queanes, and the chapman his false weights; they are so farre from this dislike of sinne, that they hate every thing save sin; they hate the godly Magistrate that would punish them; nay, they hate the Lord himselfe, and say, it was pittie there was such a law made to punish sin, what shall wee doe? let us doe any thing rather than be hindered in our pleasures; what shall wee doe that we may not be checked and reprooved? get you downe to hell, and there you shall have elbow-roume enough, there you may be as wicked and as prophane as you will, and that will bee your portion, unlesse the Lord be mercifull unto you. Consider what the Wiseman speaks, (Pro. 21. 29) and doe not thinke, a little humbling of you selves before God, and a few prayers will serve your turne, No, no, *Then shall they cry, (saith the text) but I will not answer, they shall seeke me sorely, but shall not finde mee, because they hated knowledg, and did not seeke the feare of the Lord.* Pro. 1. 28.

Oh how fearefull is the doome, and how certaine is the desolation of such poore wretches! Now, the LORD, for his mercy sake, settle these truths in every one of your hearts.

A M E N, A M E N.

SOLI DEO GLORIA.











