EXPERIMENTS
OF
SPIRITUAL LIFE AND HEALTH AND THEIR PRESERVATIVES

ROGER WILLIAMS.

RE-PRINTED BY
SIDNEY S. RIDER,
PROVIDENCE.
1863.
EXPERIMENTS OF
Spiritual Life & Health,
And their
PRESERVATIVES

In which the weakest Child of God may
get Assurance of his Spirituall Life
and Blessednesse

And the Strongest may finde proportionable Discoveries of his Christian Growth, and the means of it.

By Roger Williams of Providence in New-England.

London, Printed, in the Second Month, 1652.

RE-PRINTED BY
SIDNEY S. RIDER,
PROVIDENCE.
1863.
INTRODUCTION.

As the existence of the following tract was, until quite recently, unknown, a few words of introduction, exhibiting its character and the circumstances under which it was written, may not be inappropriate.

The object of the work is, briefly to present to the christian the evidences of personal piety and guard these evidences from abuse and misapprehension. It is divided into three parts. The author first treats of the evidences of a piety, which, though real, is weak and imperfect; secondly, the evidences of a vigorous and maturer piety; and the third part contains directions for maintaining and increasing piety in the soul of the believer. It is written with clearness and discrimination, and much resembles the treatises of Baxter on the same subject. It is

* Professor Knowles, in his Memoir of Roger Williams, makes the following statement: Mr. Williams is said to have published, in London, in 1652, a work entitled "Experiments in Spiritual Life and Health, and their Preservatives." Of this book, no copy has come to our knowledge.
as well adapted to the condition of christians of
the present day as to the condition of those for
whom it was written, two hundred and ten years
since. There cannot be found in it a word of
sectarian bitterness; on the contrary, it everywhere
breathes the spirit of catholic, christian charity.

The circumstances under which it was written
are certainly peculiar. It seems that his wife, to
whom he appears to have been tenderly attached,
had been dangerously ill, but was now recovering.
During her sickness he had been from home, labor-
ing among the Indians; and while absent, he wrote
this little treatise in the form of a letter to her,
his object being simply to promote her spiritual
improvement. At the request of his friends, it
was published in London; and a dedication was
prefixed to it, addressed to Lady Vane the Younger.
In this dedication, occurs the following remarkable
passage: "The form and style I know will seem
to this refined age too rude and barbarous, and
the truth is, the most of it was penned and writ,
(so as seldom or never such discourses were,) in the
thickest of the naked Indians of America, in their very
wild houses, and by their barbarous fires, when the
Lord was pleased this last year (more than ordinarily)
to dispose my abode and travel among them."
As a writer, Roger Williams has generally borne the reputation of a violent and bitter controversialist. I believe that in this respect he has suffered great injustice. It would seem from this tract, that, on the contrary, his spirit was eminently candid and catholic, and that controversy was to him a painful duty. In the same dedication he says: "It is true, I have been sometimes pressed to engage in controversies, but I can really and uprightly say, my witness is on high, how harsh and doleful the touch of these strings are, [is,] and especially against such worthies both in old and New England, in whom I joyfully, before the world, acknowledge (in many heavenly respects) a lively character and image of the love of God." Every thing in this tract is in harmony with such a declaration.

Stephen Randall, Esq., a descendant of Roger Williams, a gentleman who cherishes a proper respect for the memory of his great ancestor, has been at much pains to procure the use of one of the only two known copies of this work, and at his instance it is now re-published. It is nearly a fac simile of the original copy, retaining, unchanged, all the obsolete words and phrases, with all the peculiarities of orthography. In this form it will be more interesting to the public, and especially to antiquarians, than it could
be made by any change whatever. In the hope, that, after the lapse of more than two centuries, it will again be acceptable to christians of all denominations, and exhibit in a new light the character of a great and good man, it is now presented to the descendants of the Puritans.

F. W.

_Providence, December 1st, 1862._
To the truly Honorable the Lady Vane, the Younger.

Madam,

Our favourable, and Christian respects to me (both of former and latter date) your Godly and Christian Letters to me, so many thousand miles distant in America: And your many gracious Demonstrations of an humble and Christian Spirit breathing in you; are a three fold Cord which have drawn these lines into your presence.

While I have sometimes mused how to express a Christian gratitude, I am at last persuaded to crave your Ladyships acceptance of these poor Experiments of each true Christians personall union, and communion with the Father of Spirits.

It is true, I have been sometimes preft to engage in controversies, but I can really and uprightly say, my Witness is on high, how harsh and doleful the touch of those strings are, especially, against such Worthies both in old and new-England, in whom I joyfully before the world acknowledge (in many heavenly respects) a lively character and Image of the Son of God. This broken piece, is a breath of a still and gentle voice, none but the God of this world, and the men of this world, can I lightly (at this time) expect my opposites.

At other times I have been drawne to consider of the little flock of Jesus, his Army, his body, his building, that
that for these many hundred years have been scattered, routed and laid waft and defolate: At present, I onely examine who are the perfonall and particular Sheep of Jefus Chrift, his Souldiers, his living materials, though scattered, divided, and not compos’d and ordred at their souls defire.

I confefs (Madam) it was but a private and fudden discoure, sent in private to my poor Companion and Yoak-fellow, occasioned by a fudden ficknefs threatening death, into which, and from which it pleased the Lord most graciously to cast and raise her.

The forme and fîle I know will feem to this refined age, too rude and barbarous: And the truth is, the most of it was penn’d and writ (jo as seldom or never fuch discourses were) in the thicket of the naked Indians of America, in their very wild houses, and by their barbarous fires; when the Lord was pleased this last year (more then ordinarily) to dispose of my abode and travell amongst them. And yet, is the Language plaine? it is the liker Christs: Is the composure rude? fuch was his outward Beauty: Are the tryals (seemingly) too close? such is the two edged Sword of his moſt holy Spirit, which pierceth between the very Soul and Spirit, and bringeth every thought into the obedience of Christ Jesus.

Amongst the many Crowns of mercy (Madam) which it hath pleased the Father of mercies to crowne your soul with, as David speaks of his, Psal. 103. there are two which justly challenge (and your Ladyship I know doth humbly acknowledge them) to be the fairest.

The first, That he himſelfe most high, most holy, (who makes his common choice, the poor, Jam. 2. and chooseth few Lords, few Knights, few Ladies, (few wise, few noble, few mighty) hath freely choſen you Madam, in so gracious and bleffed a meafure, to defire to feare his Name.

A second, That for your deareſt Companion and Guide in this vale of tears (amongſt the famous Worthies of this age)
DEDICATORIE.

he hath graciously guided you to such a blessed choice, of such an Husband on earth, who beares so bright an Image of your Husband in the Heavens, and in whose most holy and gracious hand, he hath been such a mercifull and faithfull Instrument, for both the freedoms both of the outward and inner man.

I doe humbly acknowledge (that upon an absolute account) all is mercy, and yet I am also humbly confident, that in a respect (as he graciously remembered his old friend Abra-

ham, and tells us of a speciall love he yet bears the Jewes for Abrahams sake, even so, he hath graciously vouch-

safed at this present an honorable remembrance to the NAMES of some of his more eminent former friends and witnesses.

How hath he crowned the memory of those bis 2 zealous Servants in K. Henry the 8th. his days* with a most emi-

ent and blessed succeffion of such names and spirits at this day? and in a gracious remembrance of his love to that blessed daughter and witneffe of bis the Lady Vane in Q. Maries dayes; how hath it pleased his wisedom and good-

nesse, to remember and to honour that Name, both in your Ladisship and so many otherways, with so many loving kind-

neffes at this day?

My humble cry (Madam) to the Lord shall never cease, those all those your many obligations of both temporall and eternall mercies, may (like chaines of Adamant) draw and bind your precious Soul more and more to re-

solve (by his grace afffisting) to make his name great, who hath made your Jo and Jo to love bis Name, 'bis Son, bis Spirit, bis Truth, bis Children, that others at the Torch of your exemplary meekneffe and fear of God, may light and kindle theirs; That your Souls-eye more and more brightly may see him who is invisibile, and may so ex-

perimentally reffent those invisibile and internal Honors, pleafures and profits that are in him that in comparifon thereof
vi. The EPISTLE.

thereof the visible and worldly, may be accounted by you but dreams of shadows, &c. That your great desire may be a likenesse of so high and holy, and so dear a Saviour, and (as in other excellencies so) in that especially of a desire of saving others, your Children, Kindred, Servants, Friends, yea, Enemies: that neither the pleasing calme of prosperity, nor the dreadfull storms of changes, may quench or dampe that holy fire of your souls love (in Life and Death) to Him whom your Ladyship hath so much infinite cause to love, but never yet saw, in whom, and for ever

I desire to be

Your Honours unfeignedly faithfull.

R. W.
To every truly Christian Reader.

As it is in the Earthly, so it is in the Heavenly Marriage of a poor Sinner to his Maker. There useth first to pass a private kindling of Love, and a private consent and promise (which sometimes are long) before the open solemnity, and the publice profession of a Married Life together. This is my present designe, (not to controvert the matters of publice Order and Worship, but) to present some poor Experiments of those Perfonall excellencies of each true believing soule and spirit.

The Holy Spirit (in Isaiah) tells us of Ballances wherein he weighs the Hills and Mountains: As also in Solomon, of Ballances wherein he weighs the very Spirits, even of men whose way is right in their owne eyes. And in John (14.) he commands us to try the Spirits, pretending to come from Christ Jesus, whether they be of God, or no.

There is not the grossest Protestant or Papist, but pretend to the Spirit of God; yea that horrid Monster Mahomet, blusht not to avouch that in the Forme of a Dove, the holy Spirit of God did whisper in his ear from Heaven. Now blessed is that Spirit, publice or private, who is truly willing and joyfull to lye downe in the Ballances of the Lords weighings.

Hitherto tend these Experiments of personal Communion with God in the Spirit of Holiness, Rom. 1. 3.

'Tis true, all publice and private Christian Spirits, pretend the Spirit of Holiness: yea, how great a part of the World pretend to be Christendome, the Christian world, that
To counterfeit the holy Spirit dreadfulfull, that is, anointed with the Spirit of Christ Jesus? But was it Death in Moses Rites to counterfeit that ceremonial and figurative Ointment, Exod. 30. what shall it be to counterfeit the Spirit of Life and Holiness it self? What I believe therefore (as David and Paul once spake) I freely speak: Yea, who can but speak (faith Peter and John) the Things they have seene and heard? I confess I spake these first but in a private Letter in America, and thought not that the light in Europe should have seen them: But a two-fold desire hath prevailed with me to expose these Tryalls to the Trying of all men.

1. The earnest desire of some Godly Friends.

2. Mine owne desire of sowing a little handfull of spiritual seed while the short Minute of my seed-time (the opportunity of life) lafteth.

My scope is to fill each truly Christian soule with triumphing and rejoicing: I speak peace and joy to the Weakest Lamb and Child (in Christianity) that is so low, so weake, so little, so poor in its owne eyes, that it sometimes faith, it hath no Christ, no Spirit, no Faith, no Love, no nor true Desire in it selfe. To this poore weake one I speak peace and joy, and say, this spiritual poverty is bleffed, and is the first step or round of that spiritual Ladder, Mat. 5. Bleffed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Secondly, I found joyfull Alarums of Encouragement to the strong to grow (as Peter exhorteth) in the Grace and Knowledge of the Lord Jesus.

Tis true, the communion of Saints is sweet and joyful, strong and powerfull, eternally gainfull and profitable; and holy and bleffed is that Spirit that makes the Saints (who are the Excellent of the Earth) its Delight, and after that bleffed hour of the Saints uniting in one Heart, one Spirit, one Worship, let all that love Christ Jesus mourn and lament, and breath and pant: And yet the weakest and
and the faintest 

Lamb that comes but 

stealing in the Crowd 

to touch the hemb of the 
Lord Jesus his garment, 

that 

is content to be esteemed a 
Dog, and to wait for crumbs 
of mercy under the Table of the Son of God: let them I 

say rejoice also, for he that hath begun that blessed work 
by his owne free and eternall Spirit, will by the same his 
his owne holy 
Arme, gloriously finish it. 

I end (Deare Christian) with the propofall of two 

Christian knots, or Riddles, not unsuitable to these present 

Times and Spirits?

First, Why is the Heart of a David himſelf (Pfa. 30.) Two Christi- 

more apt to decline from God, upon the Mountaine of 
Joy, Deliverance, Victory, Prosperity, then in the dark 

Vale of the shadow of Death, Perſecution, Sickneſſe, Ad- 

versity, &c.

Secondly, Why is it, since God worketh freely in us to 
doe and to will of his owne good pleafeure, that yet he is 
pleafed to command us to work out our owne Salvation 
with Feare and Trembling? Let us all humbly beg the 

Finger (the Spirit) of the Lord to untie these Knots 

for us.

I desire to be thine unfeighned in 

Chrift Jefus,

R. W.
The Contents of this Discourse.

The Heads are three.

Under the first are contained the Arguments of Spirituall Life, wherein the Weakest and the Sickest Child of God may finde its Spirituall Life apparent, though over-cast and eclipsed with Spirituall Weaknesse and Distempers.

Under the second Head, Arguments of the Strength and vigour of the Spirit of Life and Holinesse: In which the strongest and the eldest in Christ, may find Experiments of Spirituall Health, and Christian Activity and cheerfulness.

These Experiments respect,
1. The Souls private correspondency with the Lord himselfe.
2. Converse and correspondency with Men.
3. Private Retiredness with it selfe.

Under the third Head are proposed some Means wherein the Spirit of God usually breatheth for the preserving and maintaining of a truly Spirituall and Christian Health and Cheerfulness.

The
The Letter which the Author sent with this Discourse to his Wife M. W. upon her recovery from a dangerous sicknesse.

My Dearest Love and Companion in this Vale of Tears. The true use of sicknesse.

Thy late sudden and dangerous Sicknesse, and the Lords most gracious and speedy raising thee up from the gates and jawes of Death: as they were wonderfull in thine own, and others eyes, so I hope, and earnestly desire, they may be ever in our thoughts, as a warning from Heaven to make ready for a sudden call to be gone from hence: to live the rest of our short uncertaine span, more as strangers, longing and breathing after another Home and Country; To cast off our great cares and fears and desires and joyes about this Candle of this vaine life, that is so soon blowne out, and to trust in the living God, of whose wonderfull power and mercy thou haft had so much and so late experience, which must make thee sing with David (Psal. 103.) Bless the Lord O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name: Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thy sins, and healeth thine infirmities: who redeemeth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with mercy and loving kindnesse.

My dear Love, since it pleaseth the Lord so to dispose of me, and of my affairs at present, that I cannot often see thee, I desire often to send to thee. I now send thee that which I know will be sweeter to thee then the Honey and the Honey-combe, and stronger refreshment then the strongest wines or waters, and of more value then if every line and letter were thousands of gold and silver.

Hezekiah
Hezekiah, upon his recovery from his sickness, made a writing (Isai. 38.) as an everlasting monument of his praise unto God, and as a Goad or spur to himself and others in the ways of godliness for the future.

Thy holy and humble desires are strong, but I know thy writing is flow, and that thou wilt gladly accept of this my poor help, which with humble thankfulness and praise to the Lord, I humbly tender to his holy service, and thine in him.

I send thee (though in Winter) an handful of flowers made up in a little Posy, for thy dear selfe, and our dear children, to look and smell on, when I as the grasse of the field shall be gone, and withered.

Wee know how it pleaseth the spirit of God to distinguish between the outward and the inner man, 2 Cor. 4. [Though our outward man perish; yet our inner is renewed day by day.] It hath pleased the most high to cast downe thy outward man, and againe graciously to lift him up, and thereby to teach us both, to examine and try the health, and strength, and welfare of the inner.

I will not now enter upon the Disputes about that question, what is the Inner-man, whether Christ himselfe, as some say, or an Image or likenesse of Christ Jesus, as others say. That is a Candle or Torch to me, which is written Ephes. 3. That Christ may dwell in your Hearts by faith: unto which agrees that of the first of John: As many as received him, that is received Christ Jesus into the house of their hearts to dwell there by believing and obeying of him, they are borne of the Spirit, and are the Sons of God.

This Inner man, this new-man (which after God is created in holiness and righteousness) I say, this Inner-man hath his tempers and distempers, his health and sickness, as well as this outward-man this body of Clay.

Hence we hear so often mentioned, the renewing of the inward-man, the growing and increasing of Faith and Love,
Love, and other breathings of God's Spirit: the loffe (that is in a measure,) of the Ephesians first love. Hence the many falls of the Lord's best Servants, recorded in Scripture, and the sleep of the Spouse of Christ Jesus, although her heart wake in the truth of marriage-love, which can never wholly dye in her and be extinguished.

The holy Scripture mentioneth a three-fold person in all that are borne againe, First, the body of Flesh and clay, this outward natural being, which must be dissolved and dye, then rise againe to Glory.

The second is the body of corruption, or old man, which being deadly wounded by the Son of God alreadie in all that are his, shall shortly give up the ghost, and rot, and never rise again.

The third is this holy, heavenly inner man, of whose health and daily renewing I now discourse, who is born of an immortall seed, and therefore can no more die than Christ himself: Rom. 6.

Now as this outward man desires not onely life, and being, but also health and cheerfulness in all the living motions and actions thereof: So, (and much more ten thousand fold) requires the inward and spiritual man, an healthfull and cheerful temper. For as the Lord loveth a cheerful giver: So loves he also a cheerful Preacher, a cheerful bearer, a cheerful prayer, and a cheerful sufferer for his Name sake. He loves that the shoes of preparation be on our feet ready to run (all wayses and weathers) the paths of his Commandments: That like a vessel our leaks be stopp'd, and our whole soul be ready in an holy trim, and tightness, for all his holy employments of us in the greatest tempests: that like heavenly soldiers, our Arms be fixt, or like an Instrument, the strings of our affections and parts be all in tune, to make heavenly music in the holy ears of our heavenly Lord and King.

Tis true, as it is between a loving couple, (and as it was in the Church at Ephesus) it is not easie to keep in
the first flame of Love, fresh and equal, although the fire of the truth and sincerity of marriage love never die, or be extinguished.

It is true that Paul cries out (how much more may we) O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?

Tis true, that sometimes corruption and Satan surprize and carry away the strongest champions of Christ Jesus, as slaves and captives for a time, until Christ Jesus rescue, redeem and ransome, by giving repentance unto his Israel, as he did to David, Peter, &c. as Abraham rescued Lot, and as David recovered all his precious captives, led slaves away from Ziklag.

I am far therefore from passing the sentence of death upon the least of the little ones of Jesus, (notwithstanding their spirituall weakness, and sicknesses) in whom the least spark or breathing of the Spirit of Life can be discerned.

And I desire to see and lament the spirituall sicknesses, and diseases of mine own and others' Spirits, which yet are not unto death (as Christ Jesus spake of Lazarus) but for the glory of God, in the fall and rising of his servants.

Yea as Paul distinguisheth of God's afflicting hand on his Saints at Corinth, so must I distinguish, between these three, death, sickness and weakness: Every sickness of God's Children is not a death, for the inner man cannot die, no more then Christ himself. Rom: 6.

Again, every weakness is not a sickness, for some are weak, little ones in the knowledge and love of Christ, while others are grown to be strong and aged in Christ Jesus; Yea, the strongest and oldest Soldiers of Christ Jesus, who have not thought their dearest Heartblood to dear for such a Lord and Master, have yet been troubled with some weaknesses, and fits of spirituall distempers: Weakness in their Eyes is not discerning aright the mind of Christ Jesus, weaknesses in their hands, and Feet, hindring their spirituall
spirituall cheerfulness, and activity in Christ's ways, which weaknesses yet have not brought them to a down right halting in Christianity.

I propose therefore (with the assistance of God's holy Spirit) to examine these three particulars.

First, what are the Arguments of that measure of spiritual all life in Christ, which yet may stand with great spiritual weaknesses and diseases.

2ly. What is the measure of the grace of Christ Jesus, which may be called the health, and cheerfulness, and disposition of the inner man.

3dly. What are those spiritual preservatives, which may keep the Soul in an healthful temper, free from spiritual sicknesses and distempers.

In these Examinations I professe two things: First not to oppresse thy thoughts and memory, with any long discourse, intending only to send thee after thy sickness, a little posey fit and easie for thy meditation, and refreshing.

2ly. All my Flowers shall be some choice example, or speech of some son or daughter of God, pickt out from the Garden of the holy Scriptures for our spiritually refreshing and consolation.

I begin therefore with such trials and arguments as declare, the true life of the inner man, notwithstanding spiritual weaknesses, sicknesses, and distempers.

First then when the Spirit of the Lord in 1 Job. 2. describeth the severall Ages and grouths of this inward man (to wit a child, a strong man, and an old man) it pleafath him to describe the young or little one by this difference, that [He knows the Father] to wit, that he knows the Lord so, as to look upon him (in his measure) as to a Father, that he fears him, loves him, obeys him, and calls upon him as on a Father: according to that of Gal: 4. Because you are sons, he hath sent forth the spirit of his Son crying in your Hearts Abba Father: Father pardon me, Father help me, Father give me, &c.

But
Obj. But may not the Hypocrites call upon God, (and sometime more boldly then God's little ones,) Lord Lord, Almighty and most mercifull Father, &c.

An. I answer, an Hypocrite hath many Lords, and many Fathers, besides, and joyned with their (pretended) heavenly Father. Whereas God's little ones cry out, (Isa. 63.) Doubtles thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, as if they had said: Thou art our only Father, above all Fathers, &c.

False calling upon God as upon a Father. The Hypocrite faies Lord, Lord, but cares for no more of the will of the Lord then may serve his own turne: But a child of God declares his child like submission, to an heavenly Fathers will in all things, according to the difference proposed by the Lord Jesus, (Mat. 7.) Not every one that faith unto me Lord, Lord, but he that doth the wil of my Father which is in Heaven: The difference lies not in the words, but in the Heart, in the upright submission of a child of God, to all that he believes to be the will and pleasure of his heavenly Father.

For a second triall therefore: Where spirituall life is (notwithstanding weaknesses or disempers) there is always a professed willingness to get more and more knowledge of this heavenly Father, of his name, of his works, of his word, of his Christ, of his Spirit, his Saints, and Ordinances.

Hence Beleevers in Jesus, both Men and Women, are called Disciples, or Scholars of Christ Jesus, professing continually to learn more and more of this heavenly teacher. Hence his Disciples or Scholars petition to Christ Jesus, Lord teach us to pray: Lord increase our Faith, &c.

Hence they ask him many Questions, and are by little and little instructed, though for a while they were ignorant of the mystery of his Death, and Resurrection.

Obj. But may not an Hypocrite desire to know more and more of God, of Christ, &c.
I answer, although an Hypocrite out of an itching desire, of knowledge, of novelty, and out of self love, to make use of so much of God, and of Christ, as may serve his own ends, may desire, and attain, and profess, and preach much of God and Christ, yet will he pick and choose as Saul did, while David and all Gods children uprightly desire to have respect to all the Commandments of God in Christ Jesus.

Again, the obedience of Hypocrites is but the task of a Slave, or Hireling, when the obedience of a child of God, is that of a dutifull child to his Father, or an endeared Wife to her Husband, not caufed by terrour or wages, but hearty Reverence and Affection.

Hence follows a third trial of spirittual life, (though Arg. 3. accompanied with much weaknes,) to wit a vehement hunger and longing after the Ordinance of the word preached. Hence that similitude by Peter. As New born Babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, 1. Pet: 2.

But may not Hypocrists and counterfeits, both affectionally hear and preach, &c?

I answer, no queftion, but false worshippers, and false Anf. Chriftians may easily satisſie themselves, and stop the mouths of their confciences, with any formal performance of a Sermon by an bourle-glaſſe, or other traditions, or cuses of Fathers, or the times. But a child of God desires to be as well carefull (according to his sight, for the true Mothers-Breaſt, (a true Miniftrie) as for a Womans Milk, the opening of the word by any in any way, &c. Cant 1. And therefore cries the Spouſe to Chrift Jesus: Oh thou whom my soul loveth, shew me where thou feedeſt, for why should I be as one that turns aside to the flocks of thy companions.

2ly. A true child of God (though weak) looks chiefly at God, and Christ, himſelf in the Miniftrie, and dispensation of the word, and therefore faith (Cant: 1.) Let Him kiffe
kisse me with the kisses of his mouth, for his love is better then wine.

3. While the Hypocrites find their natural delight in the word, as in musick, while yet they obey not: The child of God comes to the breasts of the Church, as a child hangs upon the Mothers Breast, not only for the delight of sucking, but out of a vehement painfull longing, to have its soul satisfied, and its strength of spiritual life and grace increafed in the ways of God: according to that in 1. Pet. 2. [That you may grow thereby.]

A 4th. Argument of the life of the inner man, (though in much weaknes, or sicknes, is a true and unfained desire, to do that which it finds it cannot do, but falls short in doing or suffering the will of God: So Nehemiah pleads with God, from the uprightness of their hearts, that they desired to fear his Name, when a soul can say uprightly in Gods presence, I desire, that is, unfainedly longing to know his will, although I am much ignorant, I desire to believe, though I find an unbelieving heart, I desire to be willing and able to suffer, though I find much fearfulnesse, &c.

Ob. May not an Hypocrite desire to know and love God, &c.

I answer, an Hypocrite may desire to know so much of God, and to have so much of his grace, and so much of his power against some sins, as may serve to save his soul, when he sees he cannot be saved without it: But a child of God, only can desire God for himself, and desire to be like unto God in his holy Nature, and to have every thought brought under the obedience of Christ Jesus.

Hence though an Hypocrite may weep as Esau and Saul, and others have done, yet a true child of God can only in truth cry out, with the Father, of the possessed child in an humble fence of his own weaknes, and spiritual poverty, Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief, that is, help
help me against my unbelief, against my passions, against my uncleanness, against my pride, against my covetousness, &c.

A 5th: trial of a true life (though in weakness, or sickness) is a constant resisting and fighting against all known sin, as sin. He that is born of God, (1. John 5.) keepeth himself that the evil one toucheth him not, unless he be suddenly surprised, or violently forced, by mighty temptations, or counsened and deceived by the deceitfulness of sin, he can no more willingly touch it, then fire or poison, or the Devil himself.

Hence is there a continuall war between the flesh and the spirit, Gal: 5. The law of the mind, wars against the law of the members; The New-man against the old, &c. For instance, although good Jacob was overcome by his Mothers powerful persuasion, yet suspecting a sin he first struggled against it, my Father faith he, will feel me, and I shall bring a curse instead of a Blessing.

But may not an Hypocrite resist temptation, and fight Obj. against sin? I answer, No, not against sin as sin, but as it is dangerous and hurtful to soul, to body, to purse, to credit. So Balaam (I conceive in earnest) refused Balack's mony, and would not sin for an house full of gold and silver, when as yet he loved that sin of cursing Gods people, and the wages of it.

2ly. An Hypocrite cannot resist the sin of Hypocrifte, and other darling sins: but a child of God with David (Psal: 139.) begs of God to search him, that is to help him against Hypocrifte itself, and every false way, and to lead him in the way everlasting.

Sixthly, a child of God though overwhelmed with many weaknesses or temptations, yet he cannot possibly be brought to an ill opinion or thought of God, but is always ready to take his part, to speak well of him, and endures not, with a quiet mind, to hear his name dishonored: Hence Job in his great passions and cursings, could not be brought
brought (no not by his wife) to speak ill of God: but although he complained much of his own affliction, and stood to his uprightnes, against the charge of Hypocrifte, yet still he magnifies the name of his God in all his discourses, and professeth to trust in him, although his God should kill him.

Hence Samson, though carried away first by a Philifian wife, and then by a Philifian whore, yet can he not be carried away so from the God of Israel, but that still he acknowledgeth his high and holy hand in his victories and deliverances, and accordingly poures forth his soul to him for grace and assistance. And hence good Jehoshaphat though very strongly carried away with the flatterie of the idolatrous King of Israel, yet he endures not to hear the name of his God smitten through the sides of his servant the Prophet Micaiah, but plainly (though weakly) takes part with his God and his Prophet, against the King of Israel, and all his Priests and Courtiers, saying, Let not the King say so.

Obj. May not Balaam and other hypocrites pretend the name of God and Christ, be preachers of him, cast out devils, and in Christ's name do many wonderfull things?

I answer: Hypocrites use the name of God onely as Jehu did, for a stirrup to get up into the saddle of their own Names and Honours, or as a commodity to get something by it, as an hireling (of whom the Lord Jesus speaks John 10.) that serves God for wages, and while he cries, let the Lord be glorified, (Isa. 66.) he persecutes his servants, but a child of God cannot be brought except by surprisfall for a time, to prefer his name before Gods, but upon cool thoughts, is seriously willing to be trodden in the dust, and to be cast out, that the name of God alone may be exalted, and glorified, as David after the causing of the name of God to be blasphemed.

A 7th. Argument of the true life of grace (though in much
much weakness or sickness,) I observe to be an humble acknowledgment of, and a submitting unto the correcting and afflicting hand of God, in sicknesses, crosses, losses, &c.

This admirably appears in old Ely, who though he were a bad Father to his own sons, in suffering them unpunished (though not unreproved) in their outrageous transgressions: Yet was he at the same time a good son to God, his heavenly Father, in giving that heavenly and submissive answer to that fearfull threatening sent from the Lord by Samuel against him, saying, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.

Ob: But did not Pharaoh acknowledge, and the Philistines acknowledge God's hand in smiting them, did not Ahab humble himself, Pharaoh sues unto God by Moses, the Philistines send a trespass offering, and Ahab humbles himself by fasting, &c.

I answer, a Saul, a Pharaoh, &c. if it were in their choice, would not submit to the Lord at all, and when they do acknowledge and submit, they are forced to it, by God's powerfull hand, whom yet they look at as a conqueror of Julian said of Christ Jesus, and Jaolor or executioner, not as a Father, with a child like submission, as appears by Pharaoh, the Philistines, Ahab, and many more wofull instances, when the hand of God is removed, &c.

Whereas a true child of God desires, as to acknowledge his Father's hand correcting his righteously, because he hath deserved it, so also graciously and faithfully, because he hopes God aims at his good, as a Father doth at a child's, in giving him fatherly correction, bitter Pills and Phisick.

And therefore (2ly:) as when the Lord strikes an Hypocrite, he either runs from him as a strange child striken by another man, or flies against him in murmuring, or howls out for anguish as a Dog, (Hos. 7.) They howl upon their Beds: So contrarily the true child of God truly
truly desires to run to his heavenly Father, and it as well, yea infinitely more grieved, for the anger, and displeasure of the Lord, as for his own smart and affliction.

The Hypocrite if he might have his own choice, had rather be rid of his pain than his sin, and therefore when his pain is over, he returns with the Dog to his Vomit: But a true child of God, truly (though weakly) desires to see, and abhor, and fly his dearest sins, because he knows they are but flattering traytors and guilded pomons: Hence Job cries out in the midst of all his weaknesses and passions, Oh teach me wherein I have offended.

Gods children join, and Hypocrite, as men force down a drench into the throat of an Horse, but a true child of God, (if under Gods rod,) desires to join with the Lords hand, and the Lords ends, as a child of some understanding is willing to have its wormes killed, and therefore strives (willingly, unwillingly) to swallow down the bitter aloes, or other bitter medicine.

An 8th: Triall of true life, (though in weaknes) is a true (though faint) willingnes and inclination to enjoy more and more of Christ Jesus, in the society of his Saints, after his own appointment, although with hardship and difficulty attained unto.

Hence the Spouse was both asleep, and awake, toward Christ Jesus: Cant : 5. She was willing, and unwilling to rise to open to Christ Jesus: Hence she thinks she hears her Husbands voice: It is the voice of my Beloved: She thinks Christ is knocking at the door of her heart, and will, in such and such arguments, in such and such Scriptures, in such and such professions, and professours, in such and such their sufferings, &c.

Obj. May it not possibly be that the true children of God, not only may neglect, but even deny the Ordinances of Christ Jesus, appointed and practised in his first Churches.

I answer, Gods Israel and people under the Gofpel, may as possibly be spirituall slaves and captives to Egypt and Babylon.
Babylon spirituall, as Israel of old was to Babell, literal, and materially, in respect of the worshipping of God, according to the appointment of Christ Jesus.

In respect of false worship, Gods Israel may be a slave, and asleep, and yet awake, and free, in true inclinations and desires, willing (though mixt with sleepy unwillingness) to be at any pains and cost, to enjoy her souls beloved Christ Jesus, in his own appointments.

Hence such expressions with sighs and tears, if I were perswaded of Gods will, if I were perswaded of the necessity of such public ordinances and forms.

Hence others expressions, if I were perswaded of such and such ordinances, that such a people, or such a people were in the true way of enjoying Christ Jesus, how joyful should I joyn with them?

Hence holy David, though not so thoroughly awaked, to enjoy the Ark and presence of God, he and all Israel brings up the Ark of God with rejoicing, though not after the Lords due order, which caused his holy jealousy to send that perez Uzza that breach of Uzzah amongst them.

It is in the heavenly as in the earthly marriage, there are degrees of marriage affection, and yet all true: The affections of some are more lively and strong, of some more dull and weak: When yet the truth and life appears in a true and longing desire to enjoy the Lord Jesus, in what way soever, himself is pleased to appoint, and to ene.

A 9th. discovery of true spirituall life, in weaknes, I find to be a painfull and a restless mind, in temptations to sin, in yeelding to sin, and lying in sin, the breach not being made up with the Lord in humble confession and suit for mercy, in the blood of a Saviour. This was Davids painfull cage in his silence, Psal. 32. When I kept silence my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the Day.

Gods children have no peace in sin unrepentent of.
So that as a Figh out of the water (its element) as a bone broak or disjoynted, is the troubled mind of a child of God, upon his discovered or but (strongly) suspected, sinfull way or practice.

Obj. May not Hypocrizes be troubled in the fence of Gods displeasure for sin, as Saul, Ahab, and Iudas, &c.

I answer, an Hypocrite like some Tray tor or murtherer, may desire a pardon from the King of Kings, whose person he hates, so did Saul and Ahab, and so may any dissembler for his own ends of peace and safety, &c. But Gods children, and they only grieve at Gods displeasure and grievance. Only a true Wife and Spouse of Christ Iefus can grieve and morun for the displeased absence of Christ Iefus, and cries out in humble bitterness of soul, saw ye him whom my soul loveth?

A 10th. triall of the true life of the inner man, (though weak and sickly,) is a discerning, and liking, and secret wishing that beauty and shining of the grace of Christ Iefus, which appears in others of Gods Children, and which we see wanting in our selves. Thus were there a fort of Gods children, which could see beauty and excellency in those which so affectionately inquired after Christ Iefus, in his visible worship, and the severall parts thereof, although themselves were not so zealously affected. Thus therefore say they: O thou the fairest of Women, (an acknowledgment of heavenly grace and beauty, and they also enquire, and desire to see that beauty of Christ Iefus, which the other Saints so praised. And in Cant: 6. they say, whither is thy Beloved gone, oh thou fairest among Women, that we may seek him with thee: Hence many of Gods dear Saints in Qu: Maries time, and other bloody days, in our own and other countries, have praised God for, and have been ravished with the beauties of the heavenly love and zeal, and patience in others of Gods servants, which they have seen wanting in themselves:

And thus, (whatever be our weaknesses) it must needs argue
argue a life of grace, when we can view the lives and deaths of the blessed martyrs, or witnesses of Christ Jesus, (either in the holy scriptures, or other Records, I say can view them with a liking and true affectation of their graces, with an humble acknowledgment of our own wants and poverties, and a mourning desire of attaining to such a beauteous profession of Christ Jesus.

Such a beauty (doubtless) did many of God's children apprehend in the Lords Ordinances, and in such as suffered for them in England, who yet found not strength themselves, to stand and suffer for, and with them, yet left much and fled to New England, hoping to enjoy there (though with too much weak desire of peace and liberty) the Ordinances of Christ Jesus, their souls Beloved.

Obj. But did not Balaam see the beauty and excellency of God's Saints, when he cried out, let me dye the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his, &c.

I answer, it is usually well said, Balaam desired the death, and blessednes of the righteous, but not the life and righteousnesse of the righteous.

Obj. Balaam seems to have seen the beauty of righteousness it self.

I answer, he might see and like righteousness in the end, and fruit of it, and yet not in the true nature and beauty of it, for then he would have as well desired the life, as the death of the righteous, just as these Indians (amongst whom I write these lines) they see the excellency of the English industry, joyned with plenty, and a better condition then their own, but endure not that life of labour and indeavour, wherein that plenty and better state is found. But God's children beholding the beauty and excellency of the heavenly lives and deaths of others, (like soldiers in a Field) are provoked by those examples, to desire to follow Christ Jesus in those holy paths, and secretly to bemoan their own infirmities and deformities.

These and many more discoveries of the life of Christ Jesus
Jesu[s] in the soul, (though in the midst of many weaknesses, and spirituall sicknesse[s], I hope (my dear love and faithfull companion) thou in truth discernest in thy self, and I, and others have discerned in thee: But oh search diligently in the Lords holy presence, and humbly beg his help, that as the Spirit of God admonisheth, (Gal. 6.) thou mayest have rejoicing in thy self, and not in another's good opinion of thee.

But grant all these, and the assurance of a true and blessed life of grace within us?

Grant this life is as the life of Christ, never again to be extinguished. Yet who rejoiceth not in health, who mourns not under the pains and weaknesses of a sick bed?

Next therefore to the discovery of spiru[ituall] life, all that are born of God must try their spirituall strength, and health, and chearfull temper: The particular instances whereof, being propounded as examples, copies, and samplers for us to follow in the holy Scripture, I shall pick, and gather, and bind up, for both our encouragement, and comfort.

I confesse the beholding of such heavenly patterns may astonish and amaze us, and make us despair to attain to the like heavenly temper: I pray thee therefore (dear love) observe, (what before I said) that these particulars next following are not discouragements from Christ, as if we had no life at all: but encouragements to draw neerer to Christ Jesu[s], when we see such virtue proceed out from him, to such poor sinners like our selves.

These particulars then following are as an holy looking-gla[ss]e, to discover to us our souls spots, & blemishes, as also sweet cordial flowers, to refresh and encourage our drooping spirits.

The severall particular trialls of this spiru[ituall] health, and chearfulness, I shall bind up (as I may so speake) into three severall parcels, as sometimes we see sweet flowers
flowers bound up into smaller bundles, to make up at last one larger bundle or posie in one.

The three severall forts shall be according to that division of the holy Spirit by Paul to Titus.

First such as concern holines, respecting our communion with God in Christ Jesus.

2. Such as concern righteousnesse, respecting others.

3. Such as concern sobriety, respecting our private selves and persons.

First, then it is an argument of the strength, and healthful temper of the inner man, when our apprehensions of God are always such, as bring us to holy wonderment and amazement, at the nature of incomprehensible God, at his properties, and works, from the Sun in the Firmament, to the poorest Worme, at his wonderfull dispensing of his justice, and mercy, and disposing, and ruling all things in Heaven, Earth, and Seas, from the hiegest Angels in heaven, to the lowest Devils in Hell.

This was Davids temper when he cried out, (Psal: 104.) Oh Lord how wonderfull are thy works, in wisedome hast thou made them all! Also (Psal. 8.) O Jehovah our Lord, how wonderfull is thy Name in all the earth! And Psal: 139. he brings this wonder nearer to himself, saying, I will praife thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. As if he would say, fearfully and wonderfully bred in the womb, fearfully and wonderfully brought forth; and we may further say, ever since we came thus fearfully and wonderfully into the world, fearfully and wonderfully brought up, fearfully and wonderfully preferved, delivered, &c.

Obj. But may not naturall men, and Hypocrites admire the Nature, and works of God.

I anfwer, yes, but the wonder which doth poiffe a child of God, caufeth him to cry out with David, Psal. 119. Thy bands have made me, and fashioned me, give me understanding that I may learn thy statutes. Tis fuch

Incomprehensible nature of God.

Gods children ought to walk in constant amazednefs of spirit as to God his nature, works, &c.
such a wonder as draweth up the heart unto God, with longings to be united unto him, to fear his Name, to partake of his divine Nature, and to be like unto Him in holiness, and true Righteousness.

_Obj. The Devils believe, and tremble at God._

I answer, to tremble at the word of God, is alone the property of God's Servants, Isa. 66. The Devils may wonder and tremble at the just sentence, and threatening part of God's word: But God's children tremble at the commanding part, yea at the comforting and promising part of it also, lest they should depart or fall off from it, or loathe, though but for a time as David, the joy and sweetness of it.

Secondly, it is an Argument of health and spiritual strength, when the hallowing, the magnifying, and glorifying of the name of God is our great work and business in this world, unto which all the businesses and works we have in hand in the world beside give way, &c.

Thus Christ Jesus teacheth all his to make it their first request to God, that they may hallow, or glorifie his name: Thus he professeth (as it were upon his death bed) John 17. that he had done his work, that he had glorified his Father upon the earth: Hence he professeth at his most solemn Arraignment, Job 18. for this end was I born, and for this end came I into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth; that is, to give his Father the glory of his truth, and to destroy the lies of the devill the father of them, who beliyeth God in all his holy attributes, and works, and servants, and ordinances, and profaneth and dishonoreth his holy name in them all.

_Obj. Hypocrites profess to glorifie God, and to say, Isa. 66. Let the Lord be glorified._

I answer: No hypocrite can make it his work to glorifie God, when it croseth his own glory: No hypocrite can purely and simply, out of love to God's name and glory, be content to loathe the offer of a kingdom as Moses did, when the
the Lord himself offered it him, and as Christ Jesus did, when the people offered and would have made him a King by force, and the devil proffered him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.

Thirdly, it is an Argument of strength of Gods grace and Spirit in us, when we perform actions of godliness, with a single and upright eye unto God himself in secret. Frequent and constant delight in private conversations argues strong affection to God or men: Hypocrites (faith Christ Jesus) will pray and fast, and give alms, but with a squint eye of private and sinister self respect to be seen of men, &c. But Gods children pray, and do good, and fast in secret, regarding no eye but the eye of an heavenly Father, who seeing in secret will not fail to reward openly.

Ob. But may not hypocrites speak and preach against hypocrisy, against self-love, selfrespect, and fleshly and worldly ends in the performance of spirituall duties? And is it not possible for Gods children to perform spirituall duties with carnall ends and respects?

I answer: Hypocrites may do this, and pretend pure and upright ends for God, as Jehu did: yet discover they hypocrisy, in the very pretence of sinceritie, for not content with the Lords eye and approbation, Come see my zeal (faith he) Jonadab, which I have for the Lord.

2ly, Gods children (doubtles) may look aside, and mark who sees and hears, and rewards their performances of service unto God: But this is either in sins of ignorance; as for instance, many of Gods dear children perform service to God in preaching as hirelings, and conceive themselves not bound although to glorifie Christ Jesus in saving souls) to preach without an hire, and so in other cases.

Or 2ly, this may be knowingly and discerningly, as Paul faith, Rom. 7. When I would do good, evil is present with me: such temptations come in as water into a ship, or as dust and diseases into a sound eye, and then Gods
Gods children be never quiet untill such distempers be cleanfed, and got out again.

Fourthly, it is an Argument of spiritual strength when the Spirit of prayer breatheth forth frequently, and constantly, and fervently to God in us: Hence David prays and cries in the morning, at noon, and in the evening, he riseth at midnight to pray, and prevents the dawning of the day to pray: Thus Daniel is thrice each day on his knees to God, and would not be beaten off, with the powers and terrors of cruel enemies and lions.

Thus the Lord Jesus frequently retired alone to private prayer, and sometimes spent the whole night in prayer to God with strong cries, tears and supplications: And therefore is it that all true Christians are the spiritual Israelites, that is, wrastlers and strivers with God in prayer; like unto their Father Jacob, who wrestled all night in prayer with God, with weeping and supplications, and would not let the Angel go until he blessed him; and therefore his name was called Israel, a wrastler or prevailer with God, as well as Jacob a supplanter and prevailer with men.

Ob. But may not Hypocrites be frequent and fervent in prayer to God? Did not the Pharifees and Jews pray and fast often? Do not the very Turks solemnly pray five times each 24. hours? And the Papists not only keep their solemn morning and evening times of prayer, but many other solemn prayers unto which the severall orders of Friars, Monks and Nuns bind themselves? And how easie is it by worldly engines to wheel about the Indians of America to become frequent prayers unto God, &c.

I answer: Many are the differences between the true prayers of Gods children, and the false of dissembler and hypocrites: I will name a few for instance.

First then hypocrites pray but in a form and lip-labour, as a task and work to be done for carnall respects, to merit at Gods hand, or to stop the mouth of conscience, which
tels them they cannot be Gods children except they pray: But true prayer is the pouring out of the heart to God, the true breathing of the soul to God, arising as Incense and perfume unto God. Hence (no doubt) although Paul before his conversion prayed much unto God, (for he was a Pharafie) yet he never prayed indeed, untill his great change, and the descending of the holy Spirit of prayer upon him; And therefore the Lord lends Ananias with this incouragement unto Paul: Behold he prayeth, Act. 9.

Hence Gods children find a kind of holy pleasure and delight in prayer, whatever be the event or issue, it pleafeth God to give, like as a man finds delight in casting off an heavy burthen from his shoulder, or in the unbossuming of a grief, into the bosome of a friend. Thus Hanna oppreft with grief weeps no more, when she had powred forth her supplication before the Lord: And the Lord Jesus powred forth his prayers, and tears, in the bosome of his Father, and then rests quiet in his Fathers pleasure, as touching the passing by, or drinking of the bitter cup.

Obj. But may not the children of God want holy pleasure and delight in prayer, and depart from Gods presence as heavy as they came?

I anfwer, some spirituall distempers may hinder, and obstruct the operations of the Spirit of prayer: neverthes the soul and spirit praiies and mourns for the absence of holy pleasure, and delight in this holy exercise. Hence Davids mourning (as a Turtledove) in his prayers, and Jeremiah's lamentings for the obftructions, between the Lord and their souls, in this holy Communion.

The second difference is, the Hypocrites prayers more refeft the ears of men then God, as the Lord Jesus tells us: They pray that men may know fo much, and es-tem them Religious: Gods children, like true lovers, delight to be private, and fervent with their heavenly Father and Husband.

Thirdly,
Thirdly, Hypocrites in their prayers most commonly respect earthly things, (and therefore Hose. 7.) they cry and howl upon their beds, for corn and wine: or at the best they respect but themselves, &c. although it be in the pardon of their sins, and saving of their souls: But the prayers of God's children, chiefly eye heavenly things.

Hence the wonderfull spirituality of Christ's prayer to his Father, (John 7.) for the glorifying of his name, and spiritual Grace, and mercy in the souls of believers: Hence the admirable spirituality of Davids prayers, for spiritual and soul mercies, Psal: 119. And the fervent prayers of Paul in all his Epistles for heavenly and spiritual mercies to the Saints of God.

Hypocrites like Dogs howl and fawn for bones and crusts, &c. But God's children beg the proper tokens, and characters of a spiritual Father, to his spiritual children, and beloved.

4thly, Hypocrites will not always cry unto God (Job. 27.) but at last with Saul, if God answer not, they run to the Devil in evil means, murmur and despair: But God's children can no more cease to cry unto God, then to live a spiritual life, and therefore resolve to give God no rest untill they receive an answer, and therefore also wait for his holy pleasure, and pleasure, and at last are satisfied with the Lord's holy pleasure, and sentence, although it seem crozie, add bitter to flesh, and blood: So Moses in respect of his suit to God, for his going into the land of Canaan: So David praying for his child: So Christ Jesus in respect of his bitter cup. So Paul praying against his great temptation.

Obj. But may not Hypocrites pray long, and also wait upon God?

I answer, they may, yet at last, out of unbelief, and anger, like an angry Dog, or sturdy Beggar, they cry out in murmur, and wrath, as the unbelieving King of Israel, what should I wait upon God any longer? But God's children
children never give over: for when they grow weary, they (like Mofes) beg help to their fainting hands in prayer, and desire their eyes may never cease trickling tears unto God, until he look down from Heaven, Lament: 2.

A 5th: Argument of spirituall health, and strength, is a constant holy fence of our own unworthines, vilenes, and basenes in God's presence: Hence Jacob profeffeth himself least then the leaft of God's mercies, that is, then the leaft crum, or drop, or rag, or look of mercy: Hence the Centurion profeffeth himself not worthy that Christ should come under his Roof: Hence Elizabeth her holy wonder, whence is it (faith she) that the Mother of my Lord should come unto me? Hence Mephiboth wonders that David should look upon such a dead Dog.

Ob. But may not Hypocrites profeffe they are not Papits, that they can deserve nothing at God's hands, that if they had their deserts it were woe with them?

I anfwer, Hypocrites may fay fo, but yet are angry when God seems to deal with them, as he deals with others. Hence they quarrell with God, as if that God seemed not to reftpect their offerings of prayer, and fasting, Isa: 58 But God's children confessing themselves Beggars at God's door, and Dogs under his Table, they wait for, and are humbly thankfull for every crum of grace and mercy: So Christ Jesus teacheth us to give thanks for the mercy of a little bread, and then for a little Fish, (Mark 6.) So after moft heavy and wonderfull affiictions, Jeremie cries out Jehovah is righteous, and profeffeth it is mercy that it is not worfe, and that they were not burnt up and consumed.

A 6th. Argument of the spiritual health and temper, is when the affiictions work strong and lively after God, after God for himself, after God as a portion and inheritance, after God as an Husband: when as the Heart panteth after the water-brooks, fo pant our Hearts after God, when
when as the thirfty ground longeth for the showers of Rain, so long our souls after God: When his words are sweeter then the honey, and honey comb, and of more esteem then thousands of gold and silver.

Ob. But may not Hypocrites (as Balaam) professe so much and that in earnest?

I answer, the deceitfull heart of a man will go wonderfull far this way: Yet certain it is an Hypocrite respects God, but as a Dog respects his Master, yea sometimes a stranger, and an Enemy for a crust, or as an Hireling for his wages: But Gods children, in the want of all things, are content with God alone, his Christ, his Spirit, his Favour, his Word, his Ordinances: Hence David profeffeth Psal. 4. Thou putteft more joy into my heart, then in the time when their corn and wine increaseth: And Habacuck, when Vine, and Fig-tree, and Flock and Heard fail, he profeffeth to rejoyce in God, and to glory in the God of his salvation.

2ly. In the loss of all things, in the greatest straights and extremities, Gods children yet find comfort in God, that God their portion is not lost. Thus as David when his wives, and children, and friends, and servants, and cattell were all devoured by an enslaving and captivating sword, and he finds no Remainder, but burnt walls and ashes, and his own company ready to stone him, yet as David they take comfort, and encourage themselves injoying their God.

7thly. It is an argument of spirituall health, and strength, when the holy Commandments of God are not grievous, but pleasant and delightfull to us: when we can say as the Lord Jesus said, it is our meat and drink, to do our heavenly Fathers will: when we are active and ready at the commands of God, and can say (when the Lord asketh whom shall we send) send me, as the Prophet Esay said: And as the Lord Jesus Psal: 40. Here I am, I delight to do thy will O my God: when we can without
without repining, grudging, or delaying, obey commands most grievous to flesh and blood, against not only flesh and blood, but against carnall reason, yea against Hope and Faith it self, as Abraham did, in offering up his most dear and only son Isaac.

Obj. But may not Hypocrites obey the commands of God, as Saul did, &c?

I answer, they may indeed obey God's commands by halves as he did, and as a servant, and hireling, serve God for wages, and with eye service, with opinion of merit, and boast of their half and lame service, as Saul did. But God's children imbrace all the commands of God with delight, even the least, and most despised, with the greatest and most difficult, and when all is done, they confess they have need of mercy, and are unprofitable Servants.

Obj. But may not God's children live in the disobedience of some commands of God, and yet be healthfull, and strong in grace?

I answer, it is impossible that a child of God should (either in spirituall health or sickness) live in the breach of any known command of God his Father. Tis true, Abraham, and Jacob, and David, and others, lived long in the sin of many wives, out of ignorance of God's will, and God's children to this day, even the holy Martyrs or Witnesses of Jesus, (who accounted their heart bloods not too dear for Christ) have and do live in the breach of many Commandments, that concern the worship of God: But they are herein like a traveller deceived, by a false path, which when he once really suspects, he cannot walk a step with ease, now do they cry out with David, Psal: 119. I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts: And when God faith seek my Face, their Hearts answer, Lord thy face will I seek. Psalm 27.

An 8th. discovery of spirituall health and strength, is an humble, a patient and thankful submission to the afflicting, and chastising hand of God. Thus it is said of Aaron, in the sins of God's people.
in that dreadful stroak of God's hand, depriving him of his two sons in the flower of their youth, in the midst of their sin, in the performance of their Priest's Office: it is said, Aaron held his peace: I was dumb and held my peace, (faith David) Psal. 39. for thou didst it: Thus Jeremiah (Lam: 1.) Jehovah is righteous, for I have grievously transgressed against him. Yea Job not only expressed an humble and patient mind, but also (which is wonderfull, but proper to God's children, when in right temper) be blessed God in the midst of so many fearfull and astonishing losses, of so many Cattel, Servants, and Children, saying, Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Obj. May not wicked men and Hypocrites acknowledg God's afflicting hand, and humble themselves?

I answer, Hypocrites may see God's hand, and humble themselves as the Egyptians, and the Philistins did, but cannot possibly be thankful for it: They acknowledg God's hand as a Dog his Masters when he is beaten, but not as a child his Fathers. As a loving and dutifull Wife, receiving Pills or Physick from the hand of her loving Husband, a skilfull Physitian, who knows her sicknes, and out of love and care, prepares them for her, she cannot but be thankful for those bitter medicines, and earnestly desire a kindly working: Thus David, Psal: 119. I know O Lord that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me, for all thy commands are righteous.

A 9th. Argument of spiritual health, and strength, is an humble free confession, and giving glory unto God, in the rising up, or recovering out of any scandalous transgression, against God. Hence the Israelites confession of their sin in desiring a King, (so impatiently, and impetuously as they did, with large confessions, 1. Sam. 6.)

Hence the many bitter and lamentable confessions of holy David and other holy Servants of God, after their committing of known evils: Hence the Corinthians repenting of their fellowship with the inceftuous person in his
his sin, they give such an exemplary evidence of their true
Repentance, that their holy practice is set as an holy Samplar,
and Copy for all Saints afterward to follow, and write after.

Obj. But did not Pharaoh, Saul and Judas confesse
their sins, &c?

I answer, not with intent to glorifie God as Gods Saints
do, taking shame before the world unto themselves, lying
down in the Dust that God may tread upon them, and
be exalted.

Not with hatred of their sins, but in horror and
trouble at the danger of them, or in the evidence of them
flying in their faces. Thus a Merchant casteth those goods
over board into the sea in a storme, which afterward he
wishedeth in again: Like a Dog, they vomit up the filth
which (after their stomach is eafed) they return unto, and
lick up by new Commissions: But Gods children confesse in
hatred of their sins, and loathing of themselves, and (like
men in some sicknesses) are willing to take those medicines
which may provoke and cause vomit, which afterward they
are so far from returning to, that they abhor to touch,
or look on it.

Obj. But may not Gods children return again to their
vomit, and commit the same sins, which they have cast
up by humble confession?

I answer, the sins of Gods children are either, 1. grosse
or scandalous, which when they recover out of, and give
glory unto God, by publice confession, we seldom or never
find them returning to such their vomit again. Hence
we hear no more of Noahs Drunkennesse, of David’s Adul-
try, of Peters deniall of Christ Jesus, &c.

Or 2ly. Their sins are sins of a more private and ordi-

nary disemper, wherein their passions of anger, or neglect,
or forgetfulness prevail against them, never without some
bitternes, and grief, and humiliation, and endeavour, with
resolution of a more watchfull, and heavenly, and spirituall
conversation?
10thly. It is an argument of spiritual health, and strength, to maintain or recover an holy vehement longing, after the enjoyment of God, and of Christ, in a visible, and open profession of his own holy worship and Ordinances, separate from all false worships, Gods, and Christ, &c.

Hence that of David, Lord I have loved the Habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth: Hence he professeth he had rather be a Door keeper in the house of the Lord, (that is in a low condition, in God's house,) then to dwell in the tents of wickednes, though in never so safe and pleasant a condition.

Hence he sums up all his desires in one, Psal: 27. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord, &c.

Hence (though David mist of the Lords Order in carrying of the Lords Ark, and afterwards he mist in his thoughts about the building of God an house and Temple: Yet in both he discovered his holy strong affection, to God's publike honour, and worship. The very same which afterward the Prophet Jeremy, and Daniel declared in their bitter Lamentations, for the Ruine of God's house. And both Daniel and Zacharie, and Haggie, mightily declare this affection for the rebuilding, and setting up again this Temple and worship of God, and what they prophesied, that both Ezra and Nehemia, and afterward Je-hoshua and Zerubabel zealously performed and executed.

Hence it is that in the heavenly Love Song, the love of Christians to Christ Jesus in his visible worship is most elegantly set forth by a similitude taken from the strong affection of married persons: I am, faith the Spouse, sick of love, and O ye daughters of Jerusalem tell Christ Jesus so: If I finde him without I will kiss him openly in the streets, and will not be ashamed. True heavenly affection (like marriage love) at first kindles from some private sparks, to an open flame of publick profession, without shame before all men.
Obj. May not Hypocrites (as Saul in slaying the Gibeonites, and Jebo in slaying the Baalites) discover strong affection and zeal to the Lord and his worship, and consequently in these times to Christ Jesus and his holy kingdom?

I answer: Hypocrites and counterfeits in their profession of love to God's publick worship ever run upon one of these two Rocks. For,

First, either they set up, and maintain, and fight for a fancie, a counterfeit, a false Christ, according to the prophecy of the Lord Jesus, that many (that is, thousands and multitudes of people) should so use his name, that is, with a willing ignorance and delusion.

Or 2ly, if it be the true worship of the true God according to the appointment of Christ Jesus, yet ever in two things the sincere wife (the true love of Christ Jesus) outgoes the whore and counterfeit.

First, the true wife contents not herself with the bare exercise, ordinance or administration (as the hypocrites do) but in all is reslees to enjoy the Lord himself: For as the ordinance is spiritual, and heavenly; so longs the true believer for a spiritual and heavenly communion with the Lord himself in it, that he may become one spirit with him more and more in all these outward and subordinate means and administrations.

Hence it pleaseth the Spirit of God to resemble his worship to the marriage bed, which satisfies not the heavenly Spouse, when the Husband Christ Jesus, is not spiritually embraced therein, but absent.

2ly, The desire of the true believer in the enjoyment of Christ Jesus in any of his appointments is to be made fruitful by him: but the desire of a whore extends no further then Lust or a Reward. Hence Rom. 7. We are married unto Christ Jesus, that we should bring forth fruit unto God: A whoorish heart willingly endures not fruitfulnes, but kills her own conceptions which the true Wife cherishteth, and tendreth as her life.

Obj.
Obj. What should be the reason why so many of God's children who in all ages have discovered their strong affection to God's visible worship, and communion in Christ, have so varied, and wandered from the right, and first institution of the Church, and ministry, and Ordinances of worship?

I answer, God's council touching the spiritual captivity, and desolation, must be fulfilled, when yet notwithstanding, the strength of the affection of God's people hath appear'd in their mourning and weeping, and lamenting after, and contending for the truth of the spiritual enjoyment of their souls Beloved, in all the means of his own holy appointments.

11thly. Again it is an Argument of spiritual health, & strength, in respect of God, when the Heart is fixed, and readily prepared for all the holy pleasure of God. Hence Hezekiah praises for such whose hearts were prepared to seek Jehovah, God of their Fathers: Hence this readiness, and preparation of mind, is compared to the shoes on our Feet, without which we are unfit for travelling, walking, &c. and with which we are ready for any spiritual employment. Hence David professeth that his heart was fixed, and ready, and when the Lord said seek my Face, David's heart answer'd, Lord, thy Face will I seek, &c.

Obj. What is the reason that God's children are sometimes hardly brought on to difficult services, and duties?

I answer, unreadiness, and unfitness is a spiritual sickness or distemper, which when God's children recover out of, then they say as the Lord Jesus in David Psal. 41. Lord my heart is willing, my heart is ready to do thy will O my God: And they say to Christ Jesus, as his holy servant John Bradford said to Queen Mary; If she keep me in prison, I will thank her; If she release me I will thank her; If she burn me, I will still thank her.

12thly. Lastly, it is an Argument of spiritual health, and strength when God's children walk in a continuall fence of their
their own insufficiencies, and distempers, when they discern the evill inclination of their own spirits, and the excellency, and sufficiency of Gods most holy Spirit: And therefore continually say with David, Psalme 143. Thy Spirit is good, lead me, &c. and Psal. 139. Search me O God, and try my heart, and see if thou findest any way of wickednes in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

These and many more, are the trials of spirituall strength, health, and cheerfulnes, in matters concerning God: We now come to the second Head of trialls of spirituall health, and strength, in matters concerning our selves.

First, then it is an Argument of spirituall health, and strength, when (especially) after known sins committed, our hearts are in a broken frame and temper, when our spirits are as it were contrite, and pounded like spice in a Morter, then yeielding the most delightfull smell and savour unto God.

Hence (Isa. 66) a contrite, and broken heart is an House wherein God dwels, an House well ordered, swept, and garnished.

Hence a Spirit of trembling, (Isa. 66.) is an Argument and character of the most dutifull children of God: but of this formerly.

2ndly. It is an Argument of spirituall strength, when we make it our work to observe, watch, and kill our corruptions, and rebellions, and labour to keep under, and beat down our body to an holy fitnes, and readines for Gods service, in fasting, and prayer against temptations.

Obj. But may not Hypocrites humble themselves, and labour to mortifie their lusts and corruptions?

I answer, no question, but in honour of conscience, and and fear of Gods judgments, an Hypocrite may humble himself in fasting, as Ahab, &c. but to kill sin, as sin, and to desire to be ready for Gods will, in denying, and subduing his own, is only the character and property of a child of God.
3dly. It is an Argument of Spirituall health, and strength, when we so look upon our sins, and our sinfull dispositions, that we not only loathe our sins, but also loathe our selves for them: So faith the Lord, (Ezek 6.) My people shall loath themselves for their abominations, and for their whorish heart against me: Thus Job when he recovers himself from his murmurings against God, he cries out, Behold I abhor my self, and repent in dust, and ashes. And David (Psal. 73.) looks upon himself for his murmuring against Gods providence, as an ignorant person, as a fool and a beast in Gods presence.

Object. But may not an Hypocrite loath and abhor himself for sin?

I answer, It is possible for an Hypocrite to be sorry for some sins, and to be angry with himselfe, and to loath himselfe, but not properly for his sins, which he loveth, but (as theeves, whores, drunkards, &c.) for the danger, damage and disgrace which his sin may bring upon him. It is onely the property of Gods children to look at sin as sin, with a loathing eye, and to behold themselves vile and loathsome, even for the most pleasing and profitable, and delightfull, and most secret sins.

Fourthly. It is an Argument of the strength of Spirituall life, when we lay downe our selves at the feet of God, when as a Servants will, our wils are subdued to the Lords will, when the Lord is become our selfe, when his ends are our ends, which give us content and pleasure, although our selves, our ends are loft and destroyed, that wee may finde new ends and delights in God.

Hence Epaphroditus to further the worke of the Lord (Phil. 2) he regarded not his health, and consequentely not his life; as a true Souldier in the Service of his heauenly King and Captaine.

Object. But may not an Hypocrite deny himselfs; his owne ends, his pleasures, his profits, his credit, his liberty, his life.

I answer,
I answer, It is impossible; for all that he doth is still for himself: like Israel, Hosea 7. He is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit to himself: All that he aims at in using the name of God, his glory, his Christ, is still to exalt himself, to save himself: But God's children eye ever a greater end than self, to wit, the glorifying of their God, although it be in their own destructions.

Fifthly, Our hearts are then in an healthfull frame and disposition, when we are cordially willing to goe from hence, that we may be with Christ, Phil. 3. yet for the service of Christ and his Saints, we are cordially willing to stay in hard and difficult Service.

Object. But may not an Hypocrite desire to dye, and to be with Christ?

I answer, An Hypocrite may desire to dye, and to be with Christ in a glorious condition, but no Hypocrite can endure to dye, to be with Christ in an holy and spiritual condition, free from sin: and therefore can he not endure uprightly, &c. to work for Christ on Earth.

Sixthly, Then are we in an healthfull frame of Grace, when God hath brought down our hearts to be content with the changes of his right-hand upon us: when we have learnt the lesson of Paul, to be content with food and raiment, with a traveller's and stranger's portion, so much as may serve us in our journey: When we can tell how to abound without Pride, or security, or trust in earthly things, and when we can tell how to want all outward mercies with quietness and contentation.

Obj. But may not Hypocrites be contented with small matters, and suppress their desires of great things, and say with Esau unto Jacob: Keep that thou haft my brother, I have enough?

I answer, the desires of all men are not alike greedy; but yet the desires of men are truly satisfied without God: Now when changes and the losse of all things fall upon the Hypocrite, he cannot finde those changes and those.

No Hypocrite can truly deny himself.
Seventhly.

Joy in Sorrow.

Hypocrites pretend to suffer for Christ.

Seventhly. Then are our hearts in a healthfull frame, when we are not onely willing to suffer for the name of Christ Jesus, but when we also conceive a kinde of pleasure in it; so faith Paul, I take pleasure in necessities, in distresses, and for Christ's sake; Hence the Saints (Heb. 13. 10.) not onely suffered the spoyling of their goods, but they took the spoyling of their goods with joy.

Objeft. May not Hypocrites suffer joyfully for Christ?

I answer, An Hypocrite may doe and suffer with a seeming joy for Christ: But he can never doe this out of love to Christ, 1 Cor. 13. but always out of self-love for his owne glory and honour, out of strong conviction of conscience, leaft he be damned in denying his light, &c. Onely Gods children can out of love to Christ Jesus rejoice (as some true friend or wife) to be afflicted and to sorrow and loose for their Souls beloved.

Objeft. Why then are many of Gods children so heavy in their sufferings and losses for Christ Jesus?

I answer, This hapneth sometimes out of distemper of body; sometimes out of distemper and weaknesse of minde, which they labour against, and chide themselves for as did David, Psal. 42. & 43. why art thou disquieted O my Soul, and why art thou so heavy within me? still trust in GOD, for I will praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God.

Eighthly.

Christian weanedness from this worlds comforts.

Eighthly. It argues strength of Grace when we use this world, and all the comforts of it with a weaned eye and mind, as if we used it not: as English Travellers that lodge in an Indian house, use all the wild Indians comforts with a strange affection, willing and ready to be gone: or as Passengers in a Ship, willing and ready (when God
God will) to land, and goe afhoar in our own countrey, to our owne House, and comforts in the Heavens.

Thus Gideons Souldiers (in a figure of such as are fit for Christ's Battels) are not only courageous and depart not with the cowards, but also lap at the comforts of this life, with a speedy necessity, but lye not downe to them in excess of affection and delight.

Object. May not Hypocrites use this world with a strange affection, weaned from the vanities of it, &c.

I answer, Doubtleffe not onely a false Christian or Hypocrite, but other naturall men (out of the fence and experience of the vanitie and uncertainty of this life, and the comforts of it) may attaine to a great seeming disdising of these earthly things, though never without sorrow that they are not more full and certain, as being their portion: Onely God's children who have made the Lord himselfe their portion, and his word and Ordinances their inheritance, they only I say use them as from God, tokens of his Love and goodness, and as golden chains to draw them unto him, and humbly submit to God's holy pleasure, in his gracious bestowing or withdrawing of them.

Ninthly, It is an argument of a strong fear of and Ninthly. affection to God, when in all our earthly businesse, we see God, and minde his name and praiſe. Hence faith James: Yee ought in all Journeys and purposes to say, If God will: Hence Boaz that holy man, when he comes into his Field hath God in his mouth: The Lord bleffe you sayed he to his Reapers: Hence the poorest Christian able to contribute (1 Cor. 16.) observes weekly, and therefore daily the dispensations of God towards him; He observes the givings and takings of God's hand, and walks with him though in the poorest and meanest calling and condition.

Object. But may not Hypocrites observe God's blessing in worldly things, in faire winds, good voyages, in the increase of children, corne, wine, cattel, &c?

I answer,
I answer, Naturall conviction enforceth even Pagans to confesse (a Manittoo) an Invisible Deity and God-head in these visible things; But to make it a worke and Business in all these earthly things to see and glorifie God, to walke with him, and to be full of his praise all the day long; this is onely the Character of Gods children, who only truly see his hand, and love his name and glory.

Tenthly, It is an Argument of strength and vigour of grace, to keep a constant watch and bridle on our lips and tongue, that no words passe but such as are seasoned with Salt, to the glorifying of our Maker with our glory, and the edifying or benefitting of others. This Tongue of ours the Lord compares to the bridle of a Horse, to the Helm of a Ship, which if well managed rules the horse and ship, with safety and comfort: and the Spirit of God concludes; that he is a perfect and strong man in Christ, that is thus able to command his Speech and Tongue in this world.

Hence Christ Jesus preacheth Judgement to the world, for the abuse of the Tongue, and the idle words of it, when our words are not working words, and tend not to heavenly profiting of others.

Hence the Spirit by Paul commands (Ephe. 5.) that neither uncleanness, nor covetousness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, be once heard from the mouths of the Saints, but rather giving of thanks, and praising of God.

Object. But may not worldly persons set a watch before the door of their lips?

I answer, Morall wisdom may teach persons the vanity and grosse wickednesse of the Tongue, but onely Gods spirit (and strength of it) doth teach Gods children, in true feare and love of God, not onely to restraine from vaine and foolish, but also to attaine to a spirituall and heavenly Language.

Lastly, It argues strength and life and Grace in Christ, when our hearts by Gods spirit are wrought to such a degree of hatred of sin, that we not onely abhor the acts thereof,
thereof, but also fly and shun the looks and appearance of it: so that we not only fly pride and passion, and covetousness and uncleanness, but also the appearance of them.

Hence Boaz, when Ruth lay downe at his feet in the night, as claiming marriage by right, he not only refrained from uncleanness, or unclean touches, but also he gravely advised her to be gone so early in the morning, that no man should say there came a woman into the floar.

Object. But may not worldly persons not only avoid sin, but also the appearance of it?

I answer, No worldly or unregenerate person can truly hate sin, or the appearance of it, for it is his nature and Element, they can onely hate the dammages and disgrace, and discredit of it, and so a Whore may hate whoredome. ’Tis only the property of God's children, and the new-borne to hate sin as sin, with the sinfull appearances of it as opposite to their new and heavenly nature in Jesus Christ.

Now come to the third head of the tryals of spirituall health and strength, and that respects our conversation with men, in which

First I argue, that it is a strong argument of a strong constitution and spiritual health, when we can make it our worke and trade, to aime at glorifying our Maker in doing good to men.

Thus our great example Christ Jesus made it his worke and trade, to goe about to doe good, which he did abundantly and constantly to the souls and bodies of men.

Obj. Christ Jesus and his Apostles and messengers were endued with power from on high, not only to preach the Word for conversion but also with power of casting out Devils, and healing bodily diseases.

I answer, as an holy witnesse of Christ Jesus (a Woman) Holy women great helps in the Gospel once answered a Bishop, I am a member of Christ Jesus as wel as Peter himselfe. The leaft Believer and Follower of Christ Jesus
of Jesus pertakes of the nature and spirit of him their holy head and husband, as well as the strongest and holiest that ever did or suffered for his holy name.

Therefore it is that we read not only of the service of those great master-builders and work-men of Christ Jesus, the Apostles, but also the service and helpe of Christian women, for instance (Rom. 16.) Phebe, Priscilla, Mary, Peris, were eminently noted for helping forward the work of Christ Jesus, to wit, the glorifying of God in the saving of the poor sons of men.

Object. But is it not possible for God's children to be slack in this work and trade of doing good to the souls and bodies of others, and yet be strong in grace and healthfull?

I answer, DoubtlefTe God's Children may be strong one way, and weak in another, strong in one grace and weak in another, strong in one trial and weak in another: But it is their weakness and sickness, when they are slow and negligent of so glorious and heavenly a worke.

Thus Paul complains of the Saints of Asia, that he found none that stuck close to him but Timothie. Thus was it in Barucks weakness and sickness to seek great and earthly things, and Jeremie (strong in spirituall health and life) chides and reproves him for it, Jer. 45.

Secondly, It argues strength of spirituall life, when we bear a strong affection to the seed of the woman, Christ's seed, God's children. To doe good to all men is a Christian trade, but especially to the household of faith.

This was Davids affection (Psalme 16.) when he look't upon God's children as the excellent of the Earth, and placed all his delight in them: Thus Jonathan though he loft his Fathers love for Davids, though he was to loose a Kingdom by David, yet he loves him as his own Soul.

Thus Ruth so loved that holy woman Naomi, that although she were growne poor, a widow, and now in a tedious travel from Moab to Israel, and Naomi did also intreat her and her sister to goe back, and Orpah her sister

was
was already returned to her kindred and her Gods, yet such was the flame of her holy affection, that she in-treats Naomi not to intreat her: Intreat me not to leave thee, for whether thou goest I will goe, where thou dyest I will dye, and there will I be buried: thy God shall be my God, &c.

Object. May not wicked persons favour, love, and respect Gods children? Did not Saul greatly respect Samuel; and for a while Herod, John the Baptist? Did not Michol love King David, as well as did her brother Jonathan? yea did not David finde wonderfull favour in the eyes of a Philifian Achaz?

I answer, The nature and the grounds of the love of naturall persons to Gods children must be rightly distinguiished: Gods children themselves may and ought to love each other, and others also, according to any naturall and civill Relation; yet onely Gods children can love Gods children for the grace and spirit of God, which they see and finde in each other.

Thus as two Candles or Torches they spiritually close and embrace each other with heavenly affection, being of one common heavenly nature together. Thus Country-men meeting in strange and forraign nations presently know each other by their language, &c.

Thus Brethren rejoice to finde each other in strange places, and to know themselves the sons of one Father and Mother.

Thus Fellow-souldiers which stick close each to other in life and death, yea, although routed, disordered and flying, if possible they can discerne and know each other.

Object. But did not holy David (who was a man strong in grace) did not he lay plots for the life of an holy man, noble and faithfull Uriah? Did not Ahab that holy King of Judah, practice falfe Imprisoning, in committing the man of God to prifon, and that onely for his faithfulnesse in reproving him from God?

I answer,
I answer, This shews that both David and Asah at this time were very sick, and David upon his recovery laments his weakness and wickedness and Blood-guiltiness, Psal. 51.

Quest. But may not God's children have just cause of exercising sharpness each to others?

Yea doubtlesse, for Paul withstood even Peter himselfe to his face, and the Church of Corinth must put away and deliver the incestuous person to the Devill; though probably yet deare, and a brother, according to that of Paul to the Theffalonians, yet count him not as an Enemy, but admonish him as a Brother.

In a way of Justice, in a way of Physick, the dearest friend or Brother may exercise much bitterness, though with much sweetness of temper, and with much tender melting and bemoaning of affection.

Thus in cases have we seen mounfull violence used, to a wife or brother in some kind of distempers and distractions.

But when God's children shall so far degenerate, as to pursue the life of each other, though it be with defire to cover a sin, and to keep God's name from being dishonored (as in David's cafe) it is a weakness, it is a sickness, which although it be not unto death, yet bringeth it neer unto Death's door, and made David cry out with bitterness of his soul, Deliver me from blood-guiltiness O my God, and my tongue shall sing loud of thy righteousnesse.

A third tryal of spiritual health and strength is a compassionate and pitifull, melting-heart over the afflicted or miserable, yea, although our enemies, or enemies of their own Salvation.

Thus the Lord Jesus sights for the hardnesse of the heart of his Enemies: thus he weeps over Jerusalem that was to kill him, and prayed for his persecutors and enemies.

Thus Jeremy powres forth his Book and Rivers of Lamentations for Jerusalem of old, as Christ for the latter.
Thus God's people are commanded to weep with them that weep: And when any oppose themselves, we ought in meekness and patience to bear it, as knowing their woeful and miserable bondage and slavery to Satan: And who knows whether it will please God in infinite mercy and compassion to deliver them by vouchsafing repentance? 2 Tim. 2. 26. in Christ Jesus, as he hath done to us?

Obj. But may not God's children exceed and overgrieve for others?

Yea doubtless, and therefore God chideth Samuel for over-grieving for Saul, because God hath rejected him: God's children may as well exceed the bounds of griefs as of joy and anger, and any kind of passion or affection: but it is ever safer to fall on the right hand of too much mercy and compassion, then on the left of Anger, Wrath and Cruelty.

Hence David weeps over sinners with Rivers of Tears, because they kept not God's Law. Hence we are commanded to bear the burdens of others, and so fulfill Christ's Law. All sin is a burden, but especially to God's children, whether they commit it out of a deceived judgment, and conscience, or out of passion, and sudden flight of temptation: Their sins therefore (especially if superious,) we must cover, and with shame, and sorrow go backward like Shem, and Japheth, as grieving, and unwilling to behold their nakedness.

Obj. But we are commanded not to suffer sin upon our Brethren, but reprove them?

I answer, then is the tongue a fit instrument to reprove others, when it is tuned by a grieved heart, that considers, and ponders it self, as subject to temptation, and sin, as others, except mercy make the difference, and deliver from temptation.

Fourthly, it is a good evidence of spiritual health, respecting others, when we endure not sin to lie upon them, or rather them to lie in the pit of sin, but endeavor Impartially re-proving a character of God's people.
deavour to help them out by wife, and loving, and reasonable reproof, and exhortation.

Hence Job endures not sin in the wife of his Bozome, but chargeth her with folly for her impatient, & impious counsel: Hence David smites deeply his dearest Michol, when she mocks at his holy zeal for the Lord, and his worship.

Hence Christ Jesus sharply reproves his faithfull servant and Apostle Peter, and that only for (seeming) loving, and affectionate counsel: Get thee behind me Satan.

Again, as true love, and zeal for God, (when strong) spares not the dearest: so neither doth it balk, or shun the highest. Thus deal Gods Prophets, even with Kings, and Princes: Thus Samuel spares not Saul, nor Nathan David, Eliab Abab, nor John Baptist Herod and his Queen, even for those most neer, and darling sins, which were most dangerous to touch, and meddle with.

Qu: How stands such bold, and sharp language, (as some of the Prophets used) with humble Duty, Fear, and Reverence, due unto superiors?

I answer, as true affection stands with plain, and sharp reproof of dearest, so true humility in bold dealing on Gods behalf, with the most supream, and highest.

Hence are Gods people also commanded not only to reprove, but to separate in case of final obstinacy in sin.

Obj. This course may seem to destroy humane society, yea nature, and civillity out of the world.

I answer, it is true that Godlines, and Christian affection, and zeal for God destroys corrupt nature, and humanity, but otherwise Godlines sanctifieth, and directeth nature, and civility, in the fear of God.

5thly. Fifthly, it argues strength of spiritual life, and grace, when a Soul is able to withstand, resist, and repel such sins, unto which the opportunity of temptation solicites, and invites us,

Hence
Hence holy Joseph, and David, are propounded to us for heavenly examples of power, and strength of grace, in resisting those most, two plausible temptations (to which the wicked nature of man is so prone, and subject:) the one of lust to women, when strongly and often solicited by his wanton mistress: the other of revenge toward man, when his bloody persecutor Saul, seemed by God himself to be delivered, and brought into his hand.

Obj. But David himself was conquer’d by uncleanness, and Asa wreaks his wrath, upon the very servant, and Prophet of the most High, and yet both David, and Asa were thought to be strong in grace, and power of Godliness?

I answer, Gods champions are sometimes strong, and sometimes weak, strong in some things, weak in others, and (as the strongest bodies) subject to spiritual colds and falls, and hurts, which are most graciously recorded for our comfort in our falls, as well as the holy victories of the Saints, to make us watchful, and courageous.

Sixthly, in matters concerning others, it is a good argument of strength, of grace, when we can patiently, and thankfully bear a Reproof, and Admonition, when we can esteem a Reproof for our evil words, or ways, not as a blow or stroke on the Head, but as a sweet, and precious Ointment powred on us.

Hence the admirable patience, and meeknes of Hanna, when Eli zealously, but uncharitably reproved her for Drunkennes. Hence when Christ Jesus most sharply reproved Peter, and afterward Paul dealt severely with him about dissembling in the matter of Communion; We hear not of the least impatient, or bitter word to either, yea when he was unjustly charg’d, and that by Saints (Act.11) he patiently bears it, and returns a soft, and gentle answer, which turned their murmuring accusations into joyful satisfaction, and thanksgiving.

But now the scorners, yea the godly being (weak) reproved.
reproved burst out in wrath. Thus not only Ahab imprisons Micaiah, and Herod, John the Baptist, but Asa also claps up fast the reproving Prophet, and the best of God's children are subject to such sad distempers, when either a mistake of judgment, or a pang of passion sinfully hinders the receipt and working of the Reproofs of the Almighty, which are wholesome heavenly potions intended by him the Father of mercies, for our good, who ever be the cup, the vial, or instrument.

Obj. Many Philosophers by natural wisdom, and many civil and moral men, out of the principles of civility and morality, and sometimes for some private ends, will bear a Reproof with patience: And hence that of Solomon, rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee: whence it may seem that men by strength of wisdom may receive in love, and profit by a Reprehension.

I answer, God's children (as well as natural men) may also act from Rules of Reason, and natural wisdom, but withall they act from an higher ground, and principle, that is they hear they see God's wise, and holy permitting hand in the foulest mouth; So David acknowledgeth God in Sbimeis railing, and Hezekiah in Rabsheka his provocations, and blasphemies.

2dly. God's children by reproves, by flanders, and reproaches, are sent to God: So David as a figure of Christ Jesus, and so Moses also, when the people in their murmurings, reproached him, as the cause or occasion of their miseries, he runs to God, and praieth even for those unworthy, and unthankfull men.

Lastly, with reference to our walking with others, it is an argument of great strength of grace, when the glory of the Lord and the salvation of God's people is so great, and so dear in our eyes, that we can wish (upon supposition of them two) that we not onely lose our temporall, but our eternall estate and welfare: Hence those two famous and wonderfull speeches of those two glorious stars Moses
Moses and Paul: Blot me out of thy book faith Moses: And I could wish to be accursed from Christ, faith Paul, for Israel's sake.

Ob. But can such a wish be lawfull though for the gain and glory of Christ, since to be accursed from Christ cannot be without sin against Christ?

I answer: I will not dispute what accursedness or separation from Christ, that is, some saying that Paul wifhed onely a temporall, and some an eternall separation from Christ: some a separation from joy and delight in the presence of Christ, but not from the puritie and holinesse of Christ: But I say, doubtles s fo neer as any soul approacheth to these heavenly copies of Moses and Paul, fo neer comes he to the greatest strength, and health, and beautie of a Christian life.

Ob. But can any man now attain to such a strength of grace as this, fo to wish?

I answer: As it is in nature so in grace, there are children and young men (or strong men,) and there are old and aged men in Christ: Again, as it is nature, so in grace; there are differences of children, and differences of young and aged men in Christ: every Israelite had not the strength of Samson: nor every of David's Souldiers the strength and valour of David's worthies: yet so neer to these heavenly copies as we approach, the stronger we are in the grace of God in Christ: And doubtles s it cannot be but it is in the desire of every true child of God, not onely to enjoy a prettie moderate health of spiritual life, but to be as strong in faith as Abraham, in meeknesse as Moses, in patience as Job, in affection to God as David, and as zealous for the Lord and his glory, as were this bleffed pair of zealous servants of the most high, Paul and Moses.

I am
Some means which Gods Spirit ufheth as prefervatives. I Am now come (dear Love) to the third and laft Head propofed, which is some few means of recovering and preferving of Christian health and cheerfulness, and the preventing of spirituall ficknes and diseases: In this I shall defire to be brief, left by too long a discourse I discourage thy reading, and hinder thy ufe and improvement of it.

First then, holy consideration of our estate, a deep and frequent examination of our spirituall condition is an excellent means of Christian health and temper: Thus teacheth us the holy Spirit of God by Jeremie, Lam: 2. Let us search and try our ways, and turn unto the Lord.

This searching and examining of our ways in Gods presence is (as it were) a casting up of our accounts between God and our fouls, wherein we truly verifie that true faying, That often reckoning makes God and our fouls true friends.

This dutie is hard, and therefore we muft often cry to God with David, Pfal. 139. Search me O God, and try my heart, and fee if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlafting.

This holy practice ought to be frequent, but then especially when the hand, and Rods of the Lord are upon us: For then (as Iob faith) God softeneth our Hearts, and we are most like then to be as the ground, mollified upon a Thaw, fit to be broken up, or like the ground moiftened with forms, and fhowers from Heaven, then in some hopefull turn for the Lords most gracious feed, and heavenly planting.

Secondly, maintain an earneft longing, and endeavour to enjoy Chrift Iefus, who is our fouls life in every holy Ordinance, which he hath appointed. If it be poiffible (with true fatisfaction to our conftances, and doubts in Gods presence) let us never reft from being planted into the holy society of Gods children, gathered into the order of Chrift Iefus, according to his moft holy will and Testament: Remembering that Christian health, growth, and flourishing
flourishing, are promised to the Trees planted in Jehovah's house: And that the holy Ordinances are the Lords provisions, and soul meals, and Breasts which he hath graciously appointed for his children of all sorts, and ages.

Especially be much in holy prayer, and fasting before the Lord: this is an Ordinance of which neither Pope nor Devil could ever deprive a child of God: If it be possible practice this duty with others, however before the Lord in secret: remembering how frequent the children of God in holy scripture were in this duty. Daniel is an heavenly pattern: and so is David, who wept and chastised his soul with fasting although he was reproached for it, Psal. 69.

Our holy Bridegroom the Lord Jesus, tells us that the Bridegroom shall be taken away, and then his servants fast: as if he had expressly named the times of the Antichristian bondage, wherein the followers of Jesus, like the blessed Women, (John the 20.) weeping, cry out, they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

This holy Ordinance is of such admirable use among the Saints, that even in the first, and purest times of Christianity, we read of Christian yoak fellows, consenting to a separation from each other, for a time that they may give themselves to prayer, and fasting, 1. Cor: 7.

Obj. But some say fasting as it seems to be more proper to the Old Testament, so seems it not so useful in the New Covenant, when more spiritual worship, and spiritual joys seem more suitable, and seasonable.

I answer, all the former Scriptures declare it to be an Ordinance of the New Testament, as well as a prayer itself. And for the use of it, it is most admirable for the separating, and abstracting of the mind, and spirit, from earthly occasions, and comforts, for the devoting of the soul to heavenly consideration, and examination of our ways, for the pouring forth of prayers, and cries to God in the many

The excellent use of prayer and fasting.
many great, and mighty frights which God's people passe through in this vale of tears, and Lamentation. And indeed it is (as I may say) the taking of a soul sweat, or soul purge for the avoiding and cleansing out our spiritual Humours, and corruptions.

Thirdly, as ever we would preserve our spiritual health, let us carefully take heed of spiritual colds and obstructions: For as it is in the natural man, a cold itself is a great distemper, and the ground and beginning of others, when the warm streams of blood, and spirits are stoppt up, and obstructed: So is it, (and much more in the spiritual) when our heavenly spirits are stoppt by damp colds, and obstructions of unnecessary frequenting of cold societies, and places destitute of the life of the Sun of Righteousnes Christ Jesus.

The Lord Jesus is a Christians Garment: O let us keep that blest garment always close about us, and in all places, and in all companies, and upon all occasions expresse the life, and power of Christ Jesus, longing to know, and to follow his blest words, and examples in life, and death.

Fourthly, take heed of spiritual surfeits, that the feeding too much upon the comforts of youk fellows, children, credit, profit, (though sweet, and wholesome as hony) turn not to bitterness, and loathing.

God's children as travellers on the Land, as Passengers in a ship, must use this world, and all comforts of it, with dead, and weaned, and mortified affections, as if they used them not: If Riches, if Children, if Cattel, if Friends, if whatsoever increase, let us watch that the Heart fly not loose upon them: But as we use salt with raw and fresh meats, let us use no worldly comfort without a savoury Remembrance, that these worldly Goods and comforts are the common portion of the men of this perishing world, who must perish together with them. Let us muse upon their insufficiency to content, and fill our Hearts
Hearts, upon their uncertain coming, and going with Eagles wings: upon their anxiety, and perplexednes full of Thorns, & vexations: upon their certainty of departing, how soon we know not. O let us therefor beg grace from Heaven, that we may use earthly comforts as a stool or ladder to help us upward to heavenly comforts, profits, pleasures, which are only true, and lasting, even eternall in God himself, when these Heavens, and earth are gone.

Fifthly, to maintain a spirituall health and cheerfulness is of no small use (as Paul writes to Timothie) sometimes to help our cold stomacks with a little wine or strong drink of the hope of the joyes to come: Lay hold (faith Paul to Timothie) of eternall life: and as the Souldier meditates upon the glory of his victories: The sick passenger at Sea upon his sweet refreshings on shore: the Traveller upon his journeys end and comforts at his home: the Labourer and the Hireling on his wages, the Husbandman on his harvest: the Merchant on his gain: the woman in travail, on her fruit: so let us sometimes warm and revive our cold hearts and fainting spirits, with the assured hope of those victories, those crowns, those harvests, those refreshings and fruits, which never eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor never entred into mans heart the things which God hath prepared for them that love him: Of which however it pleaseth God to give his servants a taste in this life, yet the harvest, and the vintage are to come, when they that suffer with Christ Jesus shall reign with him, and they that have sown in tears shall reap the never ending harvest of inconceivable joyes.

Sixthly, as it is in the restoring of the body to health, or in the preserving of it in an healthfull condition: it is often necessarie to use the help of sharp and bitter things, bitter pills, bitter potions, bitter medicines, sweatings, purgations, vomitings, blood-lettings, &c. So is it with our souls, and spirits, and preservation of the health and cheerfulness of the spirituall and the inner man.

The power of meditating the joyes that are to come.

Bitter and untoothsome things may yet be of a blessed and wholesome use to Gods people.
Two sorts of bitter afflictions.

The sharp and bitter things which it pleaseth God to make use of in these cases are of two sorts.

First, such as himself is pleased to use towards us in the way of his fatherly afflictions of all sorts: on our spirits, our bodies, our yeak-fellows, children, servants, cattle, goods, &c. out of which, yea also out of the injurious, and flanderous, and persecuting dealing of others, yea and out of our own sins and failings his most holy and infinite wisdom, fetcheth all sorts of cleansing and purging, yea and sometimes a cordiall and healing physic.

The second sort of sharp and bitter means are such, as we voluntarily use and apply our selves unto our selves, for the slaying and the purging out of the filthy humours and corruptions of pride, securitie, uncleannefs, self-love, covetousnefs, and what ever else remains behinde of the body of death in us.

It is true that the word of God, and all his holy Ordinances, they are not only of a feeding, and nourishing, but also of a purging, and cleansing Nature, of a preserving, and a restoring Quality: and therefore out of these, we must take direction for all our Spirituall Remedies, against those soul distempers, unto which our spirituall, and inner men are subject.

First, then it is an wholesome though bitter pill, often to call to mind our many, our great, our known, our unknown transgreflions against the Lord as a Creatour, against the Lord as a Father, against the Lord as a Redeemer, against Christ Jesus, against his holy Spirit, against his Ordinances, against his Saints, against our selves, &c. Yea the sins and several corruptions of our Natures, callings, and conditions, to which we yet are subject, and lye open, and without supply of Grace, and strength from Heaven, we shall fall, and tumble into, as well as the strongest of Gods servants, of whose wofull falls we read of in holy Scripture.

Obj. It is a part of the Lords New Covenant, that he will forgive our sins, and remember our iniquities no more.

I answer,
I answer, unto all the promises of all sorts, (Ezek. 36.) it pleaseth the Lord to add this Gospel Provifo; For all this I will be sought unto faith the Lord, according to that most holy direction, of the Lord Jesus, to pray daily, not only for daily Bread, but also for daily forgiveness.

Obj. The Lord hath forgiven them already in Christ, what need to pray for forgivenes for them again.

I answer, We must marke the Lords Ordinance, for all this I will be sought unto: Prayer and other spirituall Ordinances hath the Lord appointed for our souls good, as well as corporall means for our bodily comfort.

Hence the many examples of the servants of God throughout the whole Scripture, both before Jesus Christ and since, David, Peter, Mary Magdalen, breaking forth into heavenly showers of godly tears. Hence the servient to Paschall Lambe, (the figure of Christ Jesus) was appointed by the Lord to be eaten with bitter herbs, implying and teaching that Jesus Christ himselfe, his blood, pardon of sin, Life and Salvation, and all the spirituall and eternal sweets that here below we finde in Christ Jesus, they have not their native and proper relish without the help of such sharp and bitter herbs.

What though therefore in Gods counsell before the world was, all his works of creation and redemption, vocation, justification, glorification are knowne to him and acted by him? I say, in the most inconceivable deep counsels of his will, according to which he worketh all things, Ephes. 1. 11? yet were it presumptuous madnese in us, and a tempting of the jealous eyes of the most High, to neglect the ways, and meanes, and paths of mercy for Soul or Body, which his most holy Wisedome out of infinite Grace and goodness hath appointed to us?

A second sharp and bitter pill to purge out spirituall corruption, is a due and serious pondering of the nature, of the justice of the most High; notwithstanding all the infinite
The due consideration of God's justice is an heavenly though bitter pill.

Well therefore might Job say: therefore am I troubled at his presence, and when I consider I am afraid of him; and David, Psal. 119. My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgements.

Objecf. But John faith, perfect love casteth out fear.

I anfwer, The true love of God, never casteth out the true feare of God, but only that which is false and counterfeit, that which is the fear of a Beast of slaves and Devils.

Hence it is that the Spirit of the fear of the Lord was poured upon the Lord Jesus himself.

This feare is an holy awe or reverence proper to a true and heavenly ingenuous child of God, even (first and chiefly) to Christ Jesus, the elder Brother (in a sense) of all the children of God. To cherish which holy fear of God, let us cast our eyes upon the fiery flames of his severe justice revealed unto us in a three-fold time, the time past, present, and to come.

For the time past, how dreadfull is that finde of the rejection and ejection of so many glorious heavenly Spirits the Angels, tumbled down for their sin of Pride, from the height of Heaven, and their glorious attendance upon God, to the depth of Hell in horrible slavery to everlasting sinnes and torments.

How dreadfull was that dolefull Sentence upon the whole race of mankinde, for the Sin of the first root, our first Parents in Paradise? How wonderfull those Plagues and Destruétions upon Pharaoh and the land of Egypt, for their oppressing Gods people.

And (before that) how fearfull and horrible was that destruction and burning up of Sodom, and Gomorrah and other Cities with fire and brimstone from Heaven?
And (before both these) how wonderfully fearfull and univerfall was, the destruction of the whole world, in that choaking, and All-o'erwhelming flood or deluge.

How fearfull were the stroaks of God's displeasure upon his owne people of Israel, in their many destruc-
tions and Captivities? How fearfull the rejection of the ten Tribes wholly swallowed up and lost for so many ages
and generations?

How lamentable were the destructions (and especially
that by Titus and Vespasion) of the holy City, that glori-
ous Jerusalem, in the slaughter and captivity of ten thou-
sand Jews, men, women and children?

How fearfull was the rejection of that whole Nation of the Jews, ever since but a curse and a scorne to all the rest of the Nations of the world to this day?

And (above all) who can but tremble at the impartial
flames of God's justice on that green and innocent tree, his
owne, and only begotten son Christ Jesus, when he stood
surety in the room of sinners to make satisfaction for their
transgressions?

Objecl. Grant God's justice and fierce wrath to be so hot,
so fiery and fearfull towards his enemies, yet, what need
his children fear his justice, since that it is satisfied and
his wrath appeased towards his people, by the sufferings
and blood-sshed of Christ Jesus.

I answer, It is so evident, that although Christ Jesus
his blood, hath quenched the fire of God's eternal wrath
toward his people, and sweetened the bitter Cup of all
present Judgements and afflictions: yet for his Name and
Justice sake in this world, God's children have temporally
felt the fearfull stroks of his displeasure, and judgment
must begin at the house of God.

Hence that dreadfull blow of God's righteous hand
upon our first Parents Adam and Eve, cast out of Paradice
with their posterity (even the whole race of mankind) not-
withstanding their belief in the promised seed of Christ Jesus.

Hence
Hence the heavy strokes upon Lot, upon Lot's wife, upon Moses, upon Aaron, upon Sampson, upon Eli, upon David, upon Hezekiah, upon Jofiah, &c.

Object. But some may say, God sees no sin in Jacob, &c.

I answer. Their calamities are Judgments, that is righteous sentences of the most high, Judgments, though not eternall Judgments: these vindicate God's name and Justice before an unrighteous world, and beare him witness of his impartiality, even towards his owne children; these humble and bring his people to repentance and confession, and quicken their pace, and their hearts, to watch against future sins and provocations.

Hence faith the Spirit of God expressly, 1. Cor. 11. For this cause (that is for his childrens abuse of the Lords Supper) many are weak and sick, and some are false asleep; God chastiseth his own people, true chriftian Churches, for the abuse of his holy Ordinances and appointments.

In the second place, let us cast our eyes abroad and behold the direfull signs and tokens, of God's severe Justice executed at this present in the world. How lamentably doe we see before our eyes the daily and continued effects of that first wrath upon mankind, in so many sorrows of all sorts for the first transgression.

Let us consider of the great constant reproach and misery over all the Nations of the World, by reason of God's righteous Sentence in the division of so many Tongues and Languages.

O come and see (faith David) what Desolations (Psal. 46.) the Lord hath wrought in the Earth? How many hundred thousands of men, women and children have of late years been swept away in the world, by wars, famines and pestilences?

And since we are commanded to weep with them that weep; O that our heads were fountains, and our eyes rivers of waters, that wee might weep with Germany, weep with Ireland, yea, weep day and night with England
and Scotland (to speake nothing of other remote Nations) in laying againe and again to heart the strokes of God's most righteous judgements, in their most fearfull slaughters and defolations.

The effects and marks of these most dreadfull blows, the world to so many horrible and blasphemous worships, idolatries and superstitions. To speak nothing of whole Nations and Kingdomes, that know not at all the true and living God, how cold and hard is that stone that lyes upon the mouth of that wonderfull grave of unbelief, wherein the Nation of (God's choice and love) the Jewes lyе buried and o'rewhelmed to this day?

Who can but wonder and tremble at so many hundreth thousand and millions of men given up for so long a time (in so many and so mighty flourishing Nations of the world) I say, given up to those two monstrously bewitching Worships of Mahumatisme and Antichristianisme, the dire effects of God's most righteous judgements upon the Eastern and Western professors of the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus?

Add to these that most fearfull and deplorable captivity of the very soules and consciences of God's owne people (for so many hundred years) under false and superstitious Worships. A righteous judgement, though not so easily discerned, yet in it selfe most dreadfull, and exceeding all the temporall calamities in the world.

But (thirdly) from these two times of past and present, let us cast our eyes on the third which is yet to come, as sure and wonderfull, will shortly be these two most wonderfull and dreadfull downfalls of those two so mighty Monarchies (so great enemies to Christ Jesus) the Turkish and the Popish: according to the Prediction of the holy Prophets. How fearfull the effusion of the Viols, in part fulfilled,
fulfilled, and yet to be powerd forth in their season? And not a little wonderfull is that mighty destruction of the Nations Gog and Magog gathered as the sand of the Sea against the camp of the Saints of the holy City.

And (to come to the full period and finall sentence of the most righteous Judge of the whole world) with what borrows and terrours shall these Heavens and Earth passe away; this Earth with the works thereof being consumed and burnt up? How inconceivably direfull will the last eternall judgement be, when two worlds of men (the former destroyed by water, and this by fire) shall appeare, before the most glorious Tribunall of the Son of God? When all the most secret sins shall be brought to tryal, and an account shall be given for every idle word?

O who who can conceive the terrours of that thundering sentence [Goe yee cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devill and his Angels, where the worm never dyes, and the fire never goes out.]

Object. But some may say, Can these sayings be any other then a Parable or similitude? for is the Devill capable of any materiall fire? such as now is grievous and painfull to flesh and blood?

I answer, Grant these sayings Parabolicall or similitudes, as also that of Dives and Lazarus: yet what are Parables and and similitudes but Glausses to represent unto us in more plain and easie wayses the holy truth and mind of God?

The Kernell of truth is not the leffe sweet though wrapt up in the shels and busks; Beyond all question therefore Christ Jesus foretels most sure and inconceivable plagues to all that know not God, and obey not his glorious Gospel. And by this Worne that never dyes, and this fire that never goes out, declares a torment to be inflicted upon both men and devils which shall be extream like fire which shall be univerfall upon the whole finfull creature, no part exempted, which shall be also eternall.
eternall, never dying, never ending, yet we may adore God's righteous judgements and (working out Salvation with fear and trembling) make sure of a Jesus a Saviour to deliver us from the wrath that is to come.

In the next place (my deare Love) let us downe together by the steps of holy meditation into the valley of the shadow of Death. It is of excellent use to walke often into Golgotha, and to view the rotten skulls of so many innumerable thousands of millions of millions of men and women, like our selves, gone, gone forever from this life and being (as if they never had life nor being) as the swift Ships, as the Weavers shuttle, as an arrow, as the lightning through the aire, &c.

It is not unprofitable to remember the faces of such whom we knew, with whom we had sweet acquaintance, sweet society, with whom we have familiarly eaten and lodged, but now growne loathsome, ugly, terrible, even to their dearest, since they fell into the jaws of death, the King of terrors.

And yet they are but gone before us, in the path all flesh must tread: How then should we make sure, and infinitely much of a Saviour, who delivers us from the power, and bitterness of Death, and Grave, and Hell, who is a resurrection and life unto us, and will raise up and make our bodies glorious, like his glorious Body, when he shall shortly appear in glory.

It is further of great and sweet use against the bitterness of Death, and against the bitter-sweet delusions of this world daily to thinke each day our last, the day of our last farewell, the day of the splitting of this bubble, the breaking of this Candle, and of our passage into the land of Darkness, never more to behold a sparke of light until the Heavens be no more.

Those three uncertainties of that most certain blow, to wit, of the Time when, the Place where, the Manner how it shall come upon us, and dash our Earthern Pitcher all ternible uncertainties.
to pieces, I say the consideration of these three, should be a threefold cord to bind us fast to an holy watchfulness for our departures, and a spur to quicken us to abundant faithfulness in doing and suffering for the Lord and his Christ, it should draw up our minds unto heavenly objects, and loosen us from the vexing vanities of this vaine puffe of this present sinfull life.

Oh how weaned, how sober, how temperate, how mortified should our spirits, our affections, our desires be, when we remember that we are but strangers, converse with strange companies, dwell in strange houses, lodge in strange beds and know not whether this day, this night shall be our finall change of this strange place for one far stranger, darke and dolefull, except enlightened by the Death and Life of the Son of God.

How contented should we be with any Pittance, any Allowance of Bread, of Cloaths, of Friendship, of Respect, &c.?

How thankfull unto God, unto man should we poor strangers be for the least crum, or drop, or rag, vouchsafed unto us, when we remember we are but strangers in an In, but passengers in a Ship, and though we dreame of long Summer dayes, yet our very life and being is but a swift short passage from the bank of time to the other side or Banck of a dolefull eternity?

How patient should our minds and bodies be under the crossing, disappointing hand of our all-powerfull Maker, of our most gracious Father, when we remember that this is the short span of our purging and fitting for an eternal Glory, and that when we are judged we are fastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world?

How quietly (without the swellings of revenge and wrath) should we bear the daily injuries, reproaches, persecuting, &c. from the hands of men, who passe away and wither (it may be before night) like grass, or as the smoake on the chimney top, and their love and hatred shall quickly perish?

Yea,
Yea, how busy, how diligent, how solicitous should we be (like strangers upon a strange Coast) waiting for a winde or passage to get dispatched what we have to doe before wee hear that finall call, Away, Away, let us be gone from hence, &c.

How should we ply to get aboard that which will passe, and turne to blessed account in our own countrey? How should we over-look and despise this worlds trash which (as the holy woman going to be burnt for Christ said of money) will not passe in Heaven?

How zealous for the true God, the true Christ, his praise, his truth, his worship, how faithfull in an humble witnffe against the lyes and cozening delusions of the Father of lyes, though gilded o’re with truth, and that &q the hands of the highest or holyest upon the Earth?

How frequent, how constant (like Christ Jesus our Founder and Example) in doing good (especially to the Souls) of all men, especially to the Household of Faith, yea even to our enemies, when we remember that this is our seed time, of which every minute is precious, and that as our sowing is, must be our eternall Harvest: for so sayeth the Spirit by Paul to the Galathians: He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption or rotten-nesse, and he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

FINIS.