

ing on that day, so he began that very day to preach unto *Mary* the comfortable doctrine of his *Ascension*, in words that deserve to be written in gold, or rather in the deepest room of every true Believers heart: [ *John 20. 17. Go to my Brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God* ]; The first Sermon that ever was preached on a *Lords day*, even on the first *Lords day* by *Christ* himself, even to a beloved penitent woman, whom he chose to be as it were his *Apostle* to his *Apostles*, to deliver them this Message as from him.

On the same day the *Disciples* being *Assembled*, he owned and blessed their *Assembly*, and gave them the *Holy Ghost* and *Apostolical* power.

When *Thomas* being absent from the *Assembly* the first *Lords day*, did miss the sight of *Christ* and was unbelieving, *Christ* left him a whole week in his unbelief, and would not heal him till the next *Lords day*, which he honoured with that cure. Then the *Disciples* being met again, *Christ* came among them, and convinced *Thomas*.

On another *Lords day*, they were all with one accord in one place, and the *Holy Ghost* was in the extraordinary measure given them. And *Acts 20. 7.* it is mentioned as the custom of the *Disciples*, to come together on the first day of the week to break bread; and *Paul* then preached to them even till midnight. And *1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.* the *Collections* for the *Saints* were made every first day of the week in all the *Churches* of *Galatia*, and at *Corinth*, because they had then their holy *Assemblies*. And therefore *Rev. 1. 10.* it is called peculiarly the *Lords day*.

2. But to clear this past all rational doubting, we find in all the writings of the antients, and historie of the Church, that all the Churches through the world unanimously observed the *Lords day* as instituted by *Christ* or the *Holy Ghost* in the *Apostles*; none ever questioning or contradicting it, that ever I read of. He that hath read the writings of the Antients, and denyeth this, is unworthy to be disputed with. The practice of the universal Church is a full exposition of the fore-cited Scriptures; and though it be no Law to us it self, yet is it a full discovery of the fact (telling us what was the primitive practice) and so a discovery of the Law. And shall any private ignorant man, come in after one thousand six hundred and twenty six years, and say the *Apostles* and all the Churches in the world have been deceived till this day,



and we must rectifie the mistake? Shall these fellows come in at the end of the world, and call the Apostles and all the Churches of all ages *Puritanes*, for keeping *holy the Lords day*? Or will any but a brain-sick person hearken to such shameless men as these?

*Object.* But the antient Churches did not keep that day as a Sabbath, but only as a day for publick worship.

*Ans.* We will not stick with you for the name: We urge you not to call it the Sabbath, (though the Antients sometimes did so: See our Homilies of the Place and Time of Prayer) if you will call it as *Scripture* and the Churches did, by the name of the *Lords day*. And it was then the custom of the Churches, to spend almost all the day in publick worship and Holy Communion, and therefore they had but little time for any private duties that day. And yet (though the private practises of particular persons on that day be little mentioned in Church-history) no man can prove that they used to spend any remaining hours of that day as common time in common business. So that to quarrel against the holy observation of the *Lords day*, is but to quarrel with the *Holy Ghost* and the *Apostles*, and all the Churches of all ages since, and with the happiest season for the worshipping of God, and seeking our own and other mens edification.

7. What is there yet remaining then that you quarrel with as too much preciseness? Is it the strictness of mens lives in forbearing sin, and not doing as their neighbours do, in rioting and vain recreations, and delights? For this I need not stand to justify them, with any impartial sober man. If sin be evil, and displease God, and deserve damnation, he that most fully and carefully avoideth it, is the honestest and the wisest man. You will not blame your child or servant for being loth to offend and disobey you even in the smallest matter. You like not him that offereth you the least abuse, so well as him that offereth you none. You had rather be well then have the least disease. You will not take a little poyson; nor would you feel a little of hell: Why then should we not avoid the least sin so far as we are able? If sinning be good, then Devils are the best creatures, and Angels and Christ (in his manhood) the worst. But if sin be the greatest evil, What will you call those men that do not only wilfully commit it, but plead for it, and reproach those that would fain avoid it? Or what if some of those that you reproach, are mistaken in some point, and take that



that to be a sin that is none ? Or what if you think it to be no sin which they scruple ? Will you blame a man that loves God, to be afraid of that which he suspecteth may offend him ? Or will you blame him that cares for his salvation, to make as sure of it as he can ? and to keep as far from the brink of hell as he able ? How is it that you observe not that your very *reproaches* do confute themselves ? What is it that you are *offended at* in the *servants of the Lord* ? Is it *Good* or *Evil* ? Surely it is some *fault* or other of theirs, that you will *pretend* to be the cause. For scarce any but the Devil himself will openly and professedly oppose *Goodness* under the name of *Goodness*. And if it be a ( real or supposed ) *fault* that you speak against them for, doth it not intimate that they should *avoid all faults* as far as they are able ? And yet will you at the same time reproach them for being too strict and fearful to offend ? as if it were their *fault* that they are *unwilling to be faulty* ?

But let us hear what God saith of this. Prov. 14. 9. [ *Fools make a mock at sin.* ] vers. 34. [ *Righteousness exalteth a Nation : but sin is a reproach to any people.* ] And yet you would make the avoiding it, a reproach. ) Gen. 4. 7. [ *If thou do well, shalt thou not be accepted ? and if thou dost not well, sin lyeth at the door.* ] Numb. 32. 23. [ *Be sure your sin will find you out.* ] Jam. 1. 15. [ *Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.* ] 1 Thes. 5. 22. [ *Abstain from all appearance of evil.* ] Matth. 12. 36, 37. [ *But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgement : For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.* ] Matth. 5. 19. [ *Whosoever shall break one of the least of these Commandements, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of heaven : but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of heaven.* ] vers. 22. [ *But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgement — but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.* ] vers. 28. [ *I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already with her in his heart.* ] Vers. 34, 35, 36, 37. [ *I say unto you, swear not at all : Neither by heaven for it is Gods throne : nor by the earth ; for it is his footstool : — But let your communication be Yea, Yea ; Nay, Nay ; for whatsoever is more then these cometh of evil.* ] Jam. 4. 12. [ *But above*



all things, my Brethren, swear not; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, nor by any other oath: but let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay, lest you fall into condemnation.] *Eph. 5. 3, 4.* [But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not once be named amongst you as becometh Saints: Neither filthyness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient but rather giving of thanks. An hundred such passages of Scripture I might recite, that might quickly satisfie you, what God expecteth, and whether it be too much preciseness to fear the smallest sin.

8. But perhaps it is the rigor of their Church discipline that maketh you offended with those that you count too pure and precise: because they will not let other men alone, but are reprovving them, and bringing them to open penitence and confession of their open sins, and casting those out of the Communion of the Church, which do refuse it. *Answ.* But do they do this of themselves, or doth God command it them? Do you think that the Communion of Saints, is to be turned into a rabble of impiety? and the Church into a swine-stye? Do you not know that the Canons of the antient Churches for many hundred years after Christ, are stricter in this Discipline by far, then those that now offend you by their strictness? And hear what the Holy Ghost saith, *Lev. 19. 17.* [Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.] *Matth. 18. 15, 16, 17.* [If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established: And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen man or a Publican.] *1 Cor. 5.* For I verily as absent in body but present in spirit, have judged already as though I were present concerning him that hath done this deed, that in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such a one to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus — Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven — Now I have written to you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater,



ter, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such a one no not to eat — therefore put away from among your selves the wicked person.] 2 Thes. 3. 6, 14. [Now we command you, Brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw your selves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us — And if any man obey not our word by this Epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.] 2 John 10. [If there come any to you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God Speed: for he that biddeth him God Speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.] Jam. 5. 16. [Confess your faults one to another.] Josh. 7. 19. [Give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him, and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.] Prov. 28. 13. [He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whose confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.] Doth not all this justify the exercise of Discipline, and condemn the neglect of it?

9. But (saith the impious person) why make they such a difference between themselves and other men? extolling themselves as the only servants of the Lord, and condemning others as ungodly and children of the Devil, and terrifying mens consciences with the fears of hell?

Ans<sup>r</sup>. If any do so against such as are sanctified and renewed, and have the Spirit of Christ, and live to God, they deal uncharitably; and if you dislike their censoriousness, so do I, and so do all the sober, considerate servants of the Lord. But if it be only against the carnal unsanctified world that they do thus, it is God that maketh the difference and not they. Do you not find the whole Scripture dividing all the world into two ranks, the godly and the ungodly? the regenerate and unregenerate? the converted and unconverted? the sanctified and unsanctified? the carnal and the spiritual? the earthly-minded and the heavenly-minded? the pardoned and unpardoned? the justified and unjustified? the children of God, and the enemies of God? the servants of God, and of the Devil? the heirs of heaven, and the heirs of hell? To prove this would be to repeat the Bible. Read Psalm 1. & 37. & 15. & 10. Matth. 5. Rom. 8. Job. 3. Matth. 13. 1 Job 3. &c. Do you not find Christ himself acquainting you before hand that one sort shall be set at his right hand in judgement, and the other at his left; and one part sent to life everlasting, and the other



to everlasting punishment? Matth. 25. Do they speak any more of the everlasting torments, the worm that dyeth not, the fire that is unquenchable, then Christ himself hath done? Matth. 13. 2 Thes. 1. &c. Do you love to be flattered into Hell? and deceived in a matter of everlasting consequence? Is it not better for you to search your hearts, and try whether you have the spirit of Christ or not, and then search the Scripture, and try whether any man be his that hath not his spirit, Rom. 8. 9. or can be saved that is not converted and born again of the spirit, Matth. 18. 3. John 3. 3, 6. [Examine your selves whether you be in the faith: Prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you except you be reprobates? 2 Cor. 12. 5.]

10. But you will say, that the Reason of your distaste against these that are so forward in Religion is, that they are inwardly as bad as others, and as proud and worldly; and why do they not excell others in good works, as much as they do in their devotions?

Ans. 1. So they do, according to their ability: Twenty years tryal and more I have had of them since I was a Minister of Christ; and I can truly say, that ordinarily I have known of many a shilling, if not pounds, that have come from the purses of these that you call Puritanes and precise, for one groat or penny that I have known come from most others about me of their rank, to any pious and charitable use. But all that are godly, are not rich: and though Christ extolleth the widows two mites, the flanders by regarded them not: Matth. 12. 42. 43. 2 Cor. 8. 12. [If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.] And he that hath said, [Take heed that you do not your alms before men to be seen of them; otherwise you have no reward of your Father which is in heaven, Matth. 6. 1.] hath hereby kept his servants from making the world acquainted with much of their deeds of charity: And for the sins of the heart that you charge them with, they are known to none but God, unless they be discovered in their lives. But malice in all ages hath been used to such unproved flanders of the servants of the Lord.

2. But suppose them as bad as malice doth imagine: Is that any reason why both they and you should not be better? It is Holiness and not sin that I am pleading for. Is their godliness and care of their salvation necessary, or not? If it be, why do you not

imitate



imitate them *in that* ? and if you know any fault in them, take warning and avoid it : But be not so mad as to run into Hell, because some fall in the way to Heaven, or some miss the way that seemed to go thither. Imitate not the *Judas* in Christs family, but the rest of his Disciples, and that not in their falls, but in their faith and piety. All that shall be saved, have both *Holiness* towards God, and *Justice* and *Charity* to men. *The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits*, Jam. 3. 17. If you want the first, you are *ungodly*; if the later, you are hypocrites : And if the hypocrite and the *ungodly* will stand snarling here at one another, they shall perish together, in that misery that will convince them that *neither* of them were the heirs of life : when *Saints* indeed, and none but they, shall live with Christ.

Object. *But it is but a few that are of so strict a mind and life, and shall none be saved but these few ?*

Ans. Christ hath told you whom he will save : He will not falsifie his word, nor take the unsanctified into heaven for want of company. He hath told you that the *gate is strait, and the way narrow that leads to life, and few there be that find it*, Matth. 7. 13, 14. and that it is *a little flock to whom the Father will give the Kingdom*, Luke 12. 32. You shall not want company in heaven, nor find comfort in your company in hell.

But if you would have the number of the godly to be greater, why do you not *increase it* by your joyning with them ? Why do not *all the Town and Parish* agree together, and bind themselves in a Covenant to serve and seek the Lord, as the Israelites, *Josh. 24. 2 Chron. 15. 12, 13*. O happy people that will thus accord, and heartily perform it.

And now, Beloved Hearers, I have finished this first Part of my task, and proved to you the *Necessity* of a *Holy life* ; That *One thing is needful*, while you pittingly cumber your selves about many things, is the message that from Christ I have been hitherto delivering to you. What say you ? Are you yet *resolved* to seek this *One thing* with the chiefest of your desires, and care, and labour, or are you not ? Dare any one of you say that you have not heard that which should resolve a sober considerate man ? I think you dare not. But if you dare, I am sure you shall never be able to make it good, and justify your words, to God, or to  
O your



your Consciences at last, or to any wise impartial person. Now  
 take your choice, whether you will now be *SAINTS* and  
 for ever like *ANGELS*; or now be like *BRUTES*, and  
 for ever like *DEVILS*: For one of these must be your case,  
 as sure as you have heard these words.

*FINIS.*



A  
S A I N T  
OR A  
B R U T E.

*The Second Part.*

Clearly *Proving* by *Reason* as well as  
Scripture: 1. In general, that *Holiness* is *Best*,  
and *Necessary* to our felicity. 2. Particularly,  
that it is *Best*, 1. For *Societies*; 2. For indivi-  
dual *persons*; And more distinctly, 1. That  
it is the only way of *Safety*. 2. Of *Honesty*.  
3. The most *Gainful* way. 4. The most *Hon-*  
*ourable*. 5. The most *Pleasant*; And there-  
fore to be chosen by all that will obey true *Rea-*  
*son*, and be *Happy*.

L O N D O N ,  
Printed Anno Dom. 1662.





# A Saint or a Brute.

## The Second Part.

### CHAP. I.

*Holiness and its fruits are the Best part : Wherein the Happiness of Saints consisteth.*

Luke 10. 42.

*But One thing is Needful : and Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.*



Hough I have before taken up this latter part of the Text by way of Motive, in the Conclusion of the former Part of this Treatise, I am very loth that a subject of so great importance should be so lightly passed over: And therefore by Gods assistance, I shall attempt a fuller handling of it. The Necessity of Holiness I have spoken of already : It is the Goodness of it that I am next to speak of.

And before I enter upon it, let me intreat thee Reader, whoever thou art that openest this Book, to remember that I am writing and thou art reading of the greatest and highest matters in the world ; and therefore come not to it with common affections, and read not this as thou wouldst do a History or a Rhetoricall Oration, to find delight for a curious mind ; but confessing



sing thy self a Scholar to Christ, with reverence take thy Lesson from him, as that which thou camest into the world to Learn, and which all thy comforts, thy hopes, thy safety, and thy everlasting happiness depend upon.

And here in the entrance, I will freely tell you what moveth me to fall upon this subject, and be so earnest with you in this point. *One thing* is the observation of the *carelessness* and *wilfulness* of the most, that live in the neglect of Holiness and Everlasting Life, for all that can be said to perswade them to a wiser course: While they all profess themselves to be Christians, and to take the Scripture for the Word of God, and confess this Word in particular to be true, that it is Heaven and Holiness that are the most Necessary, and most to be desired and sought after, yet will they not be moved to *Live* according to *this Profession*, nor to *Love* that *Most* which they confess to be the *Best*, nor to *seek* that *first* which they confess to be most *Needful*. They have the case *here* decided by the mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and as plainly, and fully, and peremptorily decided as they could wish. If they were Infidels, and understood but the Law of Nature, even *Reason* might tell them that there is no doubt of it, but that Eternal Life is more to be sought after then transitory things: And yet they live as if the case had never been decided by Christ or by reason; or as if they had never heard of any Life but this: Look into most Towns, and see whether there be not more at *Martha's* work, (and worse) then at *Mary's*. Look into most families, and see whether they be not with *Martha*, *troubling themselves with many things*, when the *Good part* is almost cast aside. Even in the Families of Lords, Knights, and Gentlemen, that are doubly obliged to God, and pretend to be wiser then the ignorant Vulgar, the matters of their salvation are turned out of doors, or thrust into a corner, and the matters of their bodies do take up the day. How many *Martha's* for one *Mary*, shall we find among both Rich and Poor!

Yea that is not the worst, but they that are so blind and wicked as to *choose the worse part themselves*, would have all about them do so too; And as *Martha* grudged at *Mary's* practice, and complaineth to Christ against her, so these repine at the choice of the Godly, and think them but melancholy crack-braind people, that make more ado for their salvation then they need: And they are not content to keep such ungodly thoughts in their breasts,



to their *Own* damnation, but they must be the Devils mouth to spit reproach in the face of Holiness, and consequently in the face of Christ, as if they bid defiance to the Lord, and would make it their employment to jeere and scorn mens souls from Heaven. If one in a family do with *Mary* choose the better part (though without any neglect of their calling in the world,) the rest make a wonder of them, and some deride them: and some hate and vilifie and threaten them, and few will imitate them: and who more forward to distaste and despise them then the Masters of the Families that are bound to teach and lead them in that way! so that a poor soul (even in a Land and Age that countenanceth Holiness more then almost any other in the world) can scarcely sit at the feet of Christ, and Learn his word, and seek his Kingdom and Righteousness first, but they are gazed at, and censured and derided, as if they did some very foolish, needless, yea or wicked thing! As if it were the only folly for a man to follow Jesus Christ, and obey his God, and save his soul, and do that work with greatest diligence, for which he is a man, for which he hath his Life, and Time, and Mercies, and which if he neglect, he is lost for ever! The Lord have Mercy upon the poor deluded world! whence comes this general dampe and dottage upon the *understandings* and the *hearts* of men! of *Great men*, of *Learned men*, of men that are accounted wise in the world!

It is *Good and Evil* that constituteth all that wonderful difference that is between the *Reasonable* creatures, both here and hereafter: The *Good of Holiness*, and the *evil of sin* do make the difference, between the *Godly* and the *wicked*: the *Good of Everlasting Happiness*, and the *Evil of Everlasting Misery*, doth make the difference between the *Glorified* and the *Damned*. *Goodness* in General is so naturally the object of mans will, that *Evil as Evil* cannot be desired, and *Good as Good* cannot be hated. What then is the matter that few attain the greatest good, and few will scape the greatest misery? It is because they would not *Choose that Good*, and *refuse the way and cause* of Misery. But how cometh it to pass that men will make no wiser a choice? Is the case so *doubtful* that they cannot be resolved in it? every man would have that which he *thinks* is *Best for him*. Why do men follow after wealth, or pleasure, or credit in the world, but because they take it to be *Best for them*? Why do



do they set so light by *Holiness*, and Christ and Heaven, but because they apprehend them not to be *Best for them*? Would men refuse, and obstinately against all persuasions refuse a Holy life, if they took it practically to be *Best for them*? what! will they *contrive* their own *destruction*? do they long to do themselves a Mischief, and the greatest Mischief in the world? No, thats not the case; But the matter is this: Their *senses* draw them another way; Their eye, their ear, their taste, their feeling, every sense hath a Pleasure of its *Own*, and this sense or flesh is violent and unreasonable, and would fain be satisfied: and Reason that was given us to Rule it, is bribed and blinded and perverted by it, and so is ready as a servant to obey it, and to take its part; and the fleshly mind discerneth not the things of God, for they are spiritually discerned: the Will also and the Affections are by the bias of a fleshly inclination corrupted, and habitually lean to the fleshly part: And that which men Love, they will easily think well of, and are glad of any thing like Reason to defend it; and that which is against the Inclination of the Will, will hardly be thought well of, and any thing like Reason will serve against it. This depravation of the mind and will of man, enslaved and ruled by the Flesh or sensuality, is the very cause that most men will not choose the Better part, and so the cause of their perpetual misery. And till the Holy Ghost send in a heavenly light of Wisdom into the mind to shew them the true difference between the Good and the Evil, and a new Inclination into the Will, that shall turn their hearts from the Evil to the Good, they will still go on, and the matters of God will seem foolishness to them, and they will take those men for the *veryest fools* that follow the *Wisdom* of the *Lord*, and provide most carefully for eternal life; and they will take those for the *wisest men*, that are most *contrary* to the *God of Wisdom*, and that dare leap most fearlessly into Hell; Or if this be not their *Opinion*, but conviction force them to a wiser kind of *language*, yet will it be their *Practical estimation* and their *Hearts*, as their *Choice* and *Lives* will easily declare. For that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit, Joh. 3. 6. The fleshly man will have a fleshly mind and will, and openly or secretly will *Live after the flesh*, and such are the heirs of death, Rom. 8. 5, 7, 13. *Fleshly generation* cannot make a *spiritual mind* or heart in any, but it must be by  
spiritual



*Spiritual Regeneration* : and therefore except a man be born again of the spirit as well as of water, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, *Joh. 3. 3, 5.*

This inward difference of *Inclinations* is the true cause of the difference of the judgements and the courses of men, about the matters of God and their salvation.

This is it that makes so many to think none wise but those that are more dangerously mad then men in Bedlam ; and that makes so many others stand in doubt as men unresolved what to choose, and what course to follow : As if it were really a difficult point for a man to be resolved in, Whether it be best and wisest to follow the teachings of God, or of the flesh : and to seek first the Kingdom and Righteousness of God, or to make a pudder for nothing in the world ; and to claw this itching flesh a while, though they must smart for it for ever, or to master the flesh and live to God !

In a word, the world are half unresolved, [*whether it be better to be Holy with Gods promise of Eternal Glory, or to take the Pleasures of sin for a season, and neglect this Holiness, though this course be threatened by the Living God with Everlasting torments ?*] This is the true state of the Question, which I say one part of the world doth seem to be unresolved in, and another part are resolved on the worse side, against their souls and a Holy life ; and only those that the illuminating sanctifying spirit hath resolved, do choose the needful better part.

The reason of this distracted judgement of the most, is within themselves. It is not because that there is any such difficulty in the case, as should put a wise man to a stand ; Nor it is not because they have not sufficient evidence in the word, or that God denied them Teachers, Books, or any Necessary Means for their information. The Light is among them ; but they Love it not because their hearts and deeds are evil, and their darkness doth not comprehend it ; and this is their delusion, and their condemnation, *Joh. 1. 6, 7, 8. & 3. 19.*

When I am preaching to a congregation of many hundred or thousand souls, if the salvation of all that people did lie upon any other question no harder then this that we have in hand, so it were such as fleshly interest, and corrupted minds and wills had no quarrel against, how easily, how surely should I save the souls of all that heard me ! Reader, let me have thy judgement. If



the Question were, *Whether Light or Darknes be the Better? Whether a dead corps be better then a Living man? Whether a cottage for a day, or a Rich habitation for term of life be better? Whether as much drink as will make thee drunk, or a nights lodging with a whore, be better then Lands and Lordships for thy life time, or for a thousand years? Whether one Sweet cup with shame and beggery all thy life after, or one bitter draught with perpetual prosperity, should be rather chosen? Whether a sick man were better take an unpleasing medicine that would cure him, or a pleasant poyson that would kill him? Whether he were better pay a little to the Physicion, or dye to save his money? Whether that Prince be wise that will sell his Kingdom for a cup of wine, or for childrens rackets? Or whether that child be vertuous that cannot abide his Fathers sight or house or commands, but loveth better to do that which he knows displeaseth him, or to tumble in the dirt with swine? I say, if any of these were the Question to be Resolved, and the salvation of all that heard me lay upon the true Resolution, I leave it to your own judgements, Whether I were not like to save the souls of all that heard me? And yet in a case as clear in it self, and much more clear, how few do we prevail with? Is not the Question [Whether God or the Creature, Holiness or Sin, Earth or Heaven, Short or Everlasting pleasures should be preferred?] as plain to a wise man as any of those that I mentioned before? Is it not as plain a case to a man of judgement, [Whether Holiness, with Everlasting joys, be better then fleshy pleasures with damnation?] as whether a Kingdom be better then a Tayle, or Gold then dirt, or health then sickness? Yet do your salvations lie upon this Question, this easie Question. I must again repeat it; *All your salvations lie upon the practical resolution of this easie Question.* Be but Resolved once that God is Best for you, and Heaven is Best for you, and accordingly make your Resolute Choice, and faithfully Prosecute it, and God will be Yours, Heaven will be yours as sure as the Promise of God is true. But if you will not Choose God and Glory as your Best, but will Choose the world and simple pleasures as Better for you, you shall have no better then you chose, and shall suffer a double condemnation, for neglecting and refusing so great salvation.*

You hear now by mens talk, and you see by their lives that the world is divided upon this Question, *What it is that is Best for a man,*



man, and which is his Best and Wisest course? One part (and the greater) think in their hearts that present prosperity is best, because they think that the promised happiness of the life to come is a thing uncertain; or if there be such a thing, they may have it after the pleasures of sin; These are the Infidels.

Another part have a superficial dead Opinion that Heaven and Holiness are Best: but the Love of the flesh and the world lyeth deeper at their hearts, and beareth the greater sway in their lives: and these are the Hypocrites; that is, Christians in Opinion and Profession, and so much of their Practice as will stand with their fleshly interest, but Infidels in their Practical estimation, and at the Heart, and in the reserves and secret bent of their lives.

Another part, being illuminated and sanctified from above, Believe the Certainty and Excellency of Glory, and see the vanity and vexation of this life, and taste the sweetness of the Love of God, and perceive the Necessity and sweetness of that Holiness, which others so abhor, and hereupon give up themselves to God, and set themselves to seek for the Immortal treasure, and make it the principal care of their hearts and business of their lives to escape damnation, and live with Christ in endless Glory.

All the world consisteth of these three sorts of men, Infidels, Hypocrites, and true Believers. Now the Question is, Which of these three are in the right? Both the other do condemn the Hypocrite that halteth between two opinions; and One thinks that Baal is God, that the World is Best, and therefore he gives up himself to it: and the other thinks, that The Lord is God, and Heaven is best, and therefore he gives up himself to it. And if it would do any thing with those that doubt, towards the turning of the scales, to tell you which side Christ is on, its told you here in my Text, as plain as the tongue of man can speak [One thing is Needful: Mary hath chosen that Good part, which shall not be taken away from her.]

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THE Doctrine which I am now to handle to you from the plain words of the Text, is this.



*Doct. That those that prefer the Learning of the Word of Christ, to guide them by Holiness to Everlasting Happiness, before all the lower matters of this world, are they that choose the Better part, even that which shall never be taken from them.*

If now the word of Christ alone would serve your turn, I had done my work : I needed not to go any further : You would be now resolved, that Heaven and Holiness is best, and would set your hearts and lives to seek it ; and so it would be your own for ever. But this Text hath long stood in the Gospel, and men have heard and read it often, and yet the most are not perswaded ; and therefore I must try to open it a little farther to you , and plead it with you , and work the Reason of it upon your minds.

Reader, our business is but to enquire, *What it is that is Best for Man to set his heart on and seek after in his Life, and Enjoy for ever ?* I say, it is the *Everlasting Enjoyment of God in Heaven* : For Christ saith so. If thou think otherwise, let us debate the case. If thou believe as I do, Live as thou professest to believe. If men did but deeply and soundly know *what it is that is best for them*, it would set right their hearts and lives , and make them happy. But not knowing this, is it that keepeth them from God and Holiness, and everlastingly undoes them.

Though I have often opened this heretofore on other occasions, yet my present subject now requireth , 1. That I tell you, *What that is that here is called [The Good part.]* 2. *What it is that is set against it, and by fleshly minds, preferred before it ?* And having briefly opened these two things, I shall come to the Comparison, and shew you *which is the better part.*

1. That which Christ calls here [that good part] is 1. *Principally, the end of man, or our everlasting Happiness with God in Heaven.* 2. *Subordinately, the Means by which it is attained.* 3. That *Happiness which is the end, comprehendeth in it these particulars, which if you distinctly apprehend, you will much the better understand the nature and excellency of it.*

1. The true Believer hath the *small beginnings, and earnest, and foretastes of the Everlasting Blessedness in this Life, in his approaches to God, and living upon him by Faith and Love, and in his believing apprehensions of the Favour of God, the Grace of*  
*Christ,*



Christ, and the Happiness which in Heaven he shall enjoy for ever.

2. At death, the souls of true Believers do go to Christ, and enter upon a state of Happiness.

3. At the last day, the body shall be raised and united to the soul, and the Lord Jesus Christ will come in glory to judge the world, where he will openly absolve and justify the Righteous, when he condemneth the ungodly, and will be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that do believe, and the Saints shall also judge the world, and be themselves adjudged to everlasting Glory.

4. Their everlasting habitation shall be in the Heavens, even near unto God, and in the presence of his Glory.

5. Their company will be only Blessed Spirits, even the holy Angels and glorified Saints, with whom we shall be One Body, and constitute the New Jerusalem, and be perfectly one in God for ever.

6. Their Bodies shall be perfected and made immortal, spiritual, incorruptible and glorious bodies, shining as the Stars in the Celestial Firmament: No more subject to hunger, and thirst, or cold, or weariness, or shame, or pain, nor any of the frailties that now adhere unto them, but be made like the glorified body of Christ.

7. The Souls of the Saints united to these Bodies shall also be Perfected, having far larger capacity to know God and enjoy him then now we have; being freed from all ignorance, error, unbelief, pride, hard-heartedness, and whatsoever sin doth now accompany us; and perfected in every part of the Image of God upon us.

8. The eyes of the Glorified Body shall in Heaven have a Glory to behold that is suitable to their Bodily capacity: Heaven being not a place where the Essence of God is confined, but where a prepared glory will be manifested to make Happy the Angels and Saints with Christ. And whatever other senses the Glorified Bodies shall then have (whether formally or eminently, we cannot now conceive what they will be) they will all be satisfied with suitable Delights from God.

9. The Blessed person of our Redeemer in our Nature Glorified, will there be the Everlasting object of our delightful intuition and fruition: An object suitable to the eye of the Glorified Body



it self. We shall for ever live in the sight of *his face*, and in the sense of *his unspeakable Love*.

10. The Glorified Soul (whether mediately or immediately) shall behold the Infinite most Blessed God, and by knowing him, be perfected in knowledge: As we shall see the person of Jesus Christ, and the glory of God with open face, and not as in a glass as now we do, so we shall know *so much* of the *Essence* of the Deity as we are capable of, to our felicity.

11. With the Knowledge of God and the Beatifical Vision will be joyned a perfect Love unto him, and closure with his blessed will: So that to Love him, will be the everlasting employment of the soul.

12. This Love will be drawn forth into everlasting praise; and it will be our work before the Throne of his Glory, to magnifie the Lord for ever.

13. In all this Love, and Praise, and Glory, and in the full fruition of the Eternal God, we shall Rejoyce with full and perfect Joy, and we shall have full content, delight and rest.

14. In all this Blessedness and Glory of the Saints, the Glory of God himself will shine, and Angels shall admire it, and the condemned spirits with anguish shall discern it, that God may be Glorified in our Glory.

15. In all this Happiness of Believers, and his own Glory, the Lord will be well pleased, and that Blessed Will which is the Beginning and the End of all, will be accomplished, and will have an Eternal complacency, as the Saints shall have an endless complacency in God.

This is the Glory promised to the Saints; This is that Good part which they choose. I cite not the Texts of Scripture that prove all this, because the things are all so plainly and frequently expressed in the premises. And I shall have occasion to do somewhat of this anon. And so (in brief) I have told you what the Good part is.

2. We are next to enquire, *What it is that is put by worldly, carnal men, into the other end of the scales, and is set up in comparison with all this Everlasting Glory?* Yea what it is that is preferred by ungodly men before it? What is it that sin and the world will do for men? What do they find that lose the Lord? What do they get that miss of Heaven? What do they choose, that refuse the Needful, Better part?

And



And here I am even amazed at that which I must give you an account of ; O wonderful astonishing thing, that ever such base unworthy trifles should by Reasonable men be put into any comparison with God ! Wonderful, that so much madness and wickedness can enter into the mind and heart of man, as to let go all this Glory for a toy ? And yet more wonderful, that this should be the case of the greatest part of men on earth ! And yet more wonderful, that so many make so mad a choice, even when the case is *opened* to them, and *plainly opened*, and *frequently opened* ; and when they are *earnestly entreated* to be wiser, and *importuned* to make a better choice !

In a word, All that is set against the Lord, and All that is preferred before this Everlasting Life, and All the Portion of ungodly men, is no more then this ; *The Pleasure of sin for a season : The satisfying of the flesh* : A little ease, and pelf, and fair words from men as miserable as themselves ; and all this but for a little, a very little time, when *Temperance* is as sweet at least ; a little that is *excessive* or *forbidden*, in wealth, or meat, or drink, or cloathes, or lust, or other fleshly pleasures, is the Joy, and the Heaven, and the God of the ungodly. The fleshly pleasures which are common to the *beasts*, and a little vain-glory among men, and this for a short uncertain time, ( and then to pass to everlasting punishment ) this is the *chosen portion* of the wicked. This is *All* for which they refuse the Lord, and for which they refuse a Holy life : This is *All* for which they part with Christ, and part with their Everlasting Peace ! This is *All* that they have for Heaven and their salvation ! and *All* for which they sell their souls ! To the everlasting shame of sin and sinners, it shall be known that *this was All* ! To the abasing of our own souls, that sometime were guilty of this madness, I shall tell you again that *this is All* ! To the humbling of the best, to the confounding of the wicked, and the amazement of us all, I must say that *this is All* ! This dirt, this dream, this cheat is *All*, that the wicked have for God and Glory ! This *Nothing* is *All*, that they obstinately prefer and choose, before him that is *All* in *All* ! O wonderful madness, stupidity, and deceit ! so common ! so wilful ! and so uncureable ! till tender mercy and grace shall cure it, in them that shall be saved.

Well, the ballance is now set before you : You see what is in the One end and in the other : You see the *Part* that *believers* choose,