

wicked, and cursed with such a heavy curse; What are they that set more by their money than by the special gift of the Holy-Ghost, yea that hate and deride it, and plead against its Sanctifying work? The time is near when your Riches will fail you, and your prosperity die, and your sins will live; and then there is none of you all but will say that Pardon and Grace are greater Riches than all the world.

5. Moreover, the godly have *Angels to attend them and be their guard*, as I have proved to you before. And are horses, and kine, and oxen, think you, greater Riches than the Guard and Ministration of the Angels of God? *Heb. 1. 14. Psalm 91. 11, 12.*

6. And surely the very Communion of Saints and Ordinances of God which in the Church we here enjoy, are greater Riches than all the world. We are now no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-Citizens of the Saints, and of the household of God. *Ephes. 2. 19.* We are members of that well-tempered body; where all the members are obliged and disposed to have the same care one for another, that if one suffer all suffer, and if one be honoured all rejoice, *1 Cor. 12. 25, 26.* As weak as Christians are, and as worthless in your eyes, one of their hearty spiritual prayers, and one word of their holy savoury conference, doth profit us more, then all your Treasures will ever profit you. While the Divine nature is in them, somewhat Divine will proceed from their mouthes, and be seen in their lives, which is worth more then all the Riches of the world. And O how fruitful are the holy Ordinances which we partake of, both in the Churches Communion, and alone in our retirements! A poor Christian can get more in a Sermon which you sleep under, or deride, then you will get by your trades or livings while you live. He findeth greater Treasures in one Chapter of the Bible, or in one good Book, then you can get out of all your lands or labours. The best of your livings will not yield you so much commodity in seven years, nor in seven thousand years, if you could so long keep them, as a believing soul can get from God in one hours prayer, even in secret, where he is not by man observed. You do not believe this, that are ungodly: I know you do not heartily believe it; for else you would try it, and not continue in your ungodliness. But they that try it, know it to be true. Or else what makes them continue in it, and live upon their holy Communion with God

and his servants, more resolutely then you do on your lands and labours. Somewhat you may conjecture they find in holy duty, that makes them so instant in it as they are.

7. Another part of our commodity by Holiness, is, the Promise and Assurance of the Love of God and of our salvation; and the Peace of Conscience that followeth hereupon. All true Believers have objective certainty: that is, the thing is certain in itself, whether they perceive it or not. And they may have subjective or Actual certainty in themselves, if they do their parts. And is not a certain Title to a Lordship or a Kingdom, a greater Treasure then the possession of a straw? Much more is Gods Promise of Everlasting Glory, a greater Treasure then all your wealth. As Heaven is infinitely better then earth, so the Promise of God is the best security. Though we be not with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and do not yet see the face of God, yet have we a Promise that speedily we shall be there, and shall see that which they see, and enjoy all that which they enjoy. The poorest Christian hath all that in Promise under the hand of God himself, which Angels and Glorified Saints have in possession. They can shew you a better Title to Heaven, though they are unworthy in themselves, then any of you can shew to your lands or houses, in your Deeds or Leases. As poor and simple as that Godly man is whom you despise, he is an Heir of Heaven, and a fellow-Heir with Christ, Rom. 8. 17. Gal. 3. 29. Heb. 1. 14. & 11. 9. When we had the washing of Regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy-Ghost, and were justified by grace, we were made the Heirs of eternal life, according to the hope that is given us by the Gospel, Tit. 3. 5, 7. And God that hath given them those [Better things that accompany salvation] is not unrighteous to forget their work and labour of love, if they do but shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end, and be not sloathful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the Promises.] Heb. 6. 9, 10, 11, 12. For this cause was Christ the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the Transgressions under the first Testament, they which are called may receive the Promise of the eternal inheritance. Heb. 9. 15. And we know that he is faithful that hath promised. And if your Bills, and Bonds, and Deeds, and Leases, be part of your Riches, we shall much more take the Promise of God, for our everlasting happiness in Heaven, to be far greater Riches.

8. And yet we may put this among our *Riches*, or at least as the *Over-plus* given us by God, that we have *better advantage*, even for the matters of this world, than the *ungodly* have. For we have a *Promise* that we shall lack nothing that is good for us, *Psal. 34. 10.* and so have not they. We have warrant to cast all our care on God, who by promise is engaged to care for us, *1 Pet. 5. 7.* We are commanded to be (anxiously) careful for nothing, but in all things to make known our requests to God, as little children that care not for themselves, but go to their father for what they want: *Phil. 4. 6.* It is enough for us whatever we want, that our heavenly Father knoweth that we want it, *Matth. 6. 32.* who hath charged us to disburden our minds of these vexatious cares, and to seek first his Kingdom and the Righteousness thereof, and promised us that other things shall be added to us, *Mat. 6. 33.* We have also a promise that all things shall work together for our good, *Rom. 8. 28.* And therefore we shall have more from the things of this life, than the *ungodly* have: Yea more by the want of them, than they by the possession. For if they do us good in our graces and communion with God, and in the matter of our salvation, they help us to that which is of far higher value than themselves. Poverty to a true Believer, is better than Riches to the *ungodly* that destroyeth himself by them, when the Believer is helped by his poverty. Imprisonment to Paul and Silas, was better than liberty to their persecutors. And thus in the fruits and saving benefits, all things are ours, *1 Cor. 3. 22.* We have the Love of God with what we possess, be it more or less, when the wicked have his wrath with it. And who would have their Riches on such terms?

9. Another part of the Gain of Godliness is, that it puts us into a Readiness to die, and a fitness to appear before the Lord. Though all the Godly have not so great a readiness as to desire to be presently dissolved, yet all of them are in a safe condition, and are so far ready, that death shall pass them into a blessed state. For we know that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. And in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: And God that hath given us the earnest of his Spirit, hath wrought in us; to be always confident (or at least given us cause) knowing that whilest we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (For we walk by faith,

faith, and not by sight) we are confident I say and willing, rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord, 2 Cor. 5. 1, 2, 8, 9. Though the abode of the godly in the flesh is usually more needful to those about them, yet to themselves their death is gain, and therefore they have cause to desire to depart, and be with Christ, as being far better, Phil. 1. 21, 23, 24. For sin which is the sting of death is mortified, and the curse of the Law which is the strength of it, is relaxed or nullified to us by the Gospel: so that the Believer may triumph and say, *O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?* 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56. and to give thanks to God that giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ, vers. 57. Verily I would not exchange my part (though alas too small or dark a part) in this one privilege of true Believers, for all the wealth and dominions on earth. O the face of Death will soon make the Glory of all your greatness to vanish, and the beauty of your flourishing estates to wither; and all that you now glory in, to appear as nothing. And then how glad would you be to change Portions with the holy servants of the Lord, whom you now despise! When once you hear, [*Thou fool, this night shall they require thy soul! and whose then are all those things that thou hast provided?*] Luke 12. 20. then in a moment you will change your minds, and cry out of the world as nothing worth, and wish you had busied your hearts and hands in laying up a better treasure. This is one difference, O ungodly wretch, between a holy servant of God and thee! Death cannot undo him, but it will undo thee. It cannot take his Riches from him; for his God, his Christ, his Holiness, the Promises are his Riches: but it will separate thee and thy wealth for ever. It will put an end to all his troubles, and fears, and griefs: and it will put an end to all thy prosperity, and to all thy mirth, and hope, for ever. A godly man dare die; or if he ignorantly fear it, yet shall it be the end of all his fears: but thou dar'st not die, and yet thou must: or if thou ignorantly hope of a happiness after it, yet will it nevertheless end all thy hopes. O what a mercy is it to be ready to die!

10. But the great unspeakable Riches of the Saints is in the Life to come. We have here the Hope and the fore-taste; but it is only there that we shall have our Portion. You see what a poor Christian is according to his outward appearance. But you see not what he will be to eternity. There is the Kingdom for which we

hope,

hope, and for which we run, and wait, and suffer. If God be true, and his Gospel true, then Heaven shall be the Portion of the sanctified. But if it were otherwise, then we would confess their hopes are vain: *Heaven is our Riches, or we have none. There have we laid up all our Hopes; and in these Hopes we will live and die, as knowing they will not make us ashamed. Rom. 5. 5. & 9. 33. 1 John 2. 28.* We believe that we shall live with Christ in glory, and shine as stars in the Firmament of our Father, and be made like to the Angels of God, and shall see his face, and praise his name, and live in his everlasting Love and Joy; For all this he himself hath promised us. *1 Thes. 4. 17, 18. Dan. 12. 3. Mat. 13. 43. Luk. 20 36. Rev. 22. 4. Mat. 25. 21.*

And now, poor worldling, what is all your *Gain* and *Riches* in comparison of the least of these? Do you think in your judgments that there is any comparison! Or rather doth not sin and the world even brutifie you, and make you lay by the use of your reason, and live as if you knew not what you know? *Your Treasure* is all visible, when *ours* is *unseen*, and therefore I may bid you bring it forth, and let us see it, whether indeed it be better then the Treasure of the Saints: Let us see what that is that is better then God, and everlasting glory! What! is a little fleshly ease or mirth? a little meat, and drink, and pleasure? a little more money, or space of ground to use then your neighbours have; are these the things that you will change for Heaven, and prefer before the Lord that made you? O poor miserable sinners! Are you not told that you have *your good things here*? but what will you have hereafter when this is gone? *Luke 16. 25.* When your wealth is gone, and your mirth is gone, your souls are immortal, and therefore your misery and horreur will continue, and never be gone. As the wealth of the godly is *within them*, and *above* the reach of their enemies, and surer then yours, so is it the more durable, even everlasting: When all your Riches are upon the wing, even ready to be gone, and leave you in sorrow, when you are most highly valuing them, you have it now, but it is gone to morrow. [*And what is the Hope of the Hypocrite though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul? Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him? Job 27. 8, 9.* Let the words of Christ decide the Controversie, if indeed you take him for your Judge. [*Mat. 16. 24, 25, 26, 27.* If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me:

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it : For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ? For the Son of man shall come in the Glory of his Father with his Angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

Well sirs, you that are all for *Getting*, and for *Wealth*, judge now if you have not lost your Reason, whether a *Holy* or *unholy*, a *Heavenly* or an *Earthly* life, be the more *Profitable* way ! I would not draw you to any thing that you should lose by. If I speak not for your *Gain*, reject my words as contemptuously as you please. But if I do, then be not against your own commodity. Will such silly *Gain* as the world affords you, do so much with you as it doth : and shall not the *Heavenly* inheritance do more ? Shall all this stir be made in the world for that which you are ready to leave behind you, and will you not lay up a *Treasure* in heaven, where rust and moaths corrupt not, and where you may live for ever ? *Matth. 6. 20.* What profit now have all those millions of souls, that are gone from earth, by all the wealth they here possessed ! Hear sinners, and bethink you in the name of God. You are *leaving Earth*, and stepping into *Eternity*, and where then should you lay up your *Riches* ? Would you rather have your *Portion* where you must stay but a few days, then where you must dwell for ever ? O *Labour* not for the meat that perisheth, in comparison of that which endureth to everlasting life, which *Christ* will give you, if you will follow him, *Joh. 6. 27.* Make you friends of this wealth that the world abuseth to unrighteousness, that when all fails below, you may be received into the everlasting habitations, *Luk. 16. 9.* Make not your selves a *Treasure* of corruptible riches, and set not your heart on *Gold* and *Silver*, lest the rust of it be a witness against you, and eat your flesh as it were fire ; and lest yee heap up another kind of treasure then you dream of, against the last days. How many of you have cause to weep and howl, for your approaching miseries, even then when you are glorying in your prosperity ? *Jam. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.* Are you for *Commodity* ? Refuse not then the best *Commodity* ? Be not enemies to them, or to those holy motions, that make for your everlasting Profit. Take but the *Gainfullest* course for your selves, and we are pleased. If you know any thing better
then

then God and Glory, and any riches that will endure any longer than Eternity, why do you not *shew it us*, that we may joyn with you ? But if you *do not*, why will you not hearken to the servants of the Lord, and joyn with them ? [*Wherefore, saith the Lord, do you spend money for that which is not bread: and your labour for that which satisfieth not ? Hearken diligently unto me, and eate ye that which is good, and let your soul delight it self in fatness: Encline your eare, come unto me, hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you,*] Isa. 55. 2, 3. If there be not more to be Gotten by Christ, and by prayer, and by the promises, and a holy life, then there is by sin, or then there is by all your friends, or lands, or trades, or care, or labour here, then take your course, and turn your back on God, and spare not. But if you are ashamed to *say so*, be ashamed to *think so*, or to *live so*.

Verily sirs, if the Gospel be true, you must be every man of you *Saints* or *Miserable*. *Holiness* is the only *thriving* way: Yea the only *Saving* way. If you forsake this way, you are *Losing* while you are *Gaining*, and *Losing* by your *Gains*. You are but making *Achans* bargain, that by his Gold did purchase a storm of stones that dasht out his brains, *Job*. 7. You are running after *Gehezies* gains; that thought he had got *Riches*, and it proved a *Leprosie*. You are trading with the Devil, though you see him not, and will not believe it, even as certainly as the *miserable witches*, that sell him their souls for a few fair promises, and when they have done, have the miserablest life of any. You are laying up but *Judas's* treasures, which quickly grew too hot to hold, and too heavy for his conscience to bear: and he would fain rid his hands of it if he knew how, and because he cannot he hangs himself, and rids himself out of the ashes into the flames. O covet not such *undoing gains*, which you all know as sure as you breath, that you must let go. Believe but your Redeemer and you shall know, that there are greater and better things before you. Gather not stones when you may be gathering pearls. Hear me poor sinner ! If God and Heaven, if Grace and Glory seem not better Riches than this world, thou judgest thy self to have no part in them.

CHAP. IX.

Holiness is the most Honourable Way.

WE are resolved if *Scripture* and *Reason* can resolve us, that Godliness is the *Safest*, the *Honestest*, and the *Gainfullst* course : I shall next shew you that it is the *Most Honourable* course. I know the *world* thinks otherwise of it. In most places it is a matter of reproach to be but *serious* and *diligent* in Gods service. And though in *this place* and at *this time*, through the great mercy of God, it is not so with us, unless it be with here and there a sottish drunkard, yet there are too few places that are so much freed from this plague. And it is not yet I fear forgotten of God, since the very practice of a Godly life, was a matter of greater scorn and derision, then to have been the prophaneest swearer or drunkard. If a man would not have gone to the Ale-house with them, nor sworn, or spoke prophanely as they did : and if he made any *serious mention* of the *Scripture*, or the *life to come* ; if he *reproved* any gross offendor, if he *prayed* and *instructed* his family, and spent the *Lords Day* in *holy exercises*, this was enough to brand him with the name of *Puritan* or *Precisian*, and make him the common by-word of the town, and (let him be never so conformable to Bishops and Ceremonies) if once he went under the name of a Puritan, he was looked upon as *Lot* in *Sodom*, by the open enemies of Piety, who insulted over them, and lived securely in open wickedness. This is the chiefest sin that God hath been scourging this nation for, if I am able to understand his judgements : I know men are apt to interpret providences according to their own interests and conceits. But I take the help of the *Scripture* and the experience of former ages for my interpretation : and I am verily persuaded (not excluding other sins) that the great sin for which God hath plagued *England* by a sharp and bloody war, was the common scorn that was cast upon his service, it being made the derision of too many in the land. I never came into any place, where meer *serious diligence* for salvation, was not branded with the name of *Puritanism* and too much *Preciseness* ; and those that abstained from iniquity were as Owles among their

their neighbours, even the very wonder and the reproach of those about them. When this is made a *Principle* that all must hold that ever hope to be accepted with the Lord, in *Heb. 11. 6.* that *he is a Rewarder of them that Diligently seek him.* This is the next point in our faith, to the Believing that *there is a God.* And yet among us that called our selves Christians, the *Diligent seeking* of the Lord was so far from being thus esteemed of, that it was the surest way to make a man contemptible and odious unto many. The jealous God did long endure this horrible indignity, but would not still endure it from us. Must he make a *Holy Law* for the Government of the world, and shall the obeying of it be derided? Is he our *Sovereign Lord*, having by *Creation and Redemption* the right of Ruling us, and shall we scorn them that will be *Ruled by him*? Those that will not have *Christ rule over them*, will surely be destroyed, *Luk. 19. 27.* and shall those escape that scorn his service? *Holiness* is the Image of God, and *unholiness* the Devils image: And when the Image of God is made a scorn, and the Devils image had in honour, and that by them that call themselves *Christians*, was it not time for God to arise to judgement? Was it not enough that God was slighted by them, and his service turned out of doors, but it must be made a *by-word*? Is there but *one way* Pleasing unto God, and but *one way* that leadeth to salvation, and must that *one way* be the common scorn? For these things God had a controversie with this land; and he hath pleaded his cause with fire and sword, and spoke by a voice that will not be derided: he hath entered into judgement with Priests and people: He will not always support and maintain a people to deride him. Oh *England*, hadst thou none to make the foot-ball of thy scorn, but the servants of the most High God? Did he not tell thee that they were his jewels, *Mal. 3. 1.* and that *he that touched them did touch the apple of his eye*? *Zech. 2. 8.* Will he give his son for them, and will he *Glorifie* them with himself, and make them equal to the Angels, *Luk. 20. 36.* and didst thou think he would give thee leave to make them the scorn and off-scouring of the world? Hadst thou none to make the football of thy contemptuous sport, but the sons of God, the spouse of Christ, yea his members, and the heirs of heaven? Oh foolish nation, hadst thou none to deride and make thy by-word but *Christ himself*? Yea, it was *Christ himself*, though thou wilt not believe

lieve it! In as much as thou didst it to one of the least of these his Brethren, thou didst it unto him, Mat. 25. 40. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, Isa. 63. 9. and therefore in all their reproaches he was reproached. All those that were derided for Holiness, were derided upon Christs account. If Holiness be vile and to be scorned, then God himself is vile and to be scorned, and consequently is no God: and what greater Blasphemy could be uttered by the tongue of man? For God is Holiness itself. In us it is but a beam, from him the shining glorious Sun. If a little in us imperfect worms be hated by thee, how wouldst thou hate the perfect Holiness of God? And if we deserve thy scorns for our obedience, (alas, our too imperfect obedience) it must fall upon him that made the Law, and gave us these commands. If he be too precise that imperfectly obeyeth God, what will you say of God himself that commandeth more then any of us all performeth? and that chargeth us on pain of damnation to obey him. O how much wiselyer would you do, if you daily studied, and diligently obeyed those Laws your selves! If the Rulers of the earth would remember him that is the King of Kings, and did serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyced before him with trembling, and kist the Son to prevent his anger, and their perishing in the way, Psal. 2. 11, 12. O England! had thy disobedient inhabitants never heard, how vain their rage and imaginations would be, when they set themselves and took counsel against the Lord and his anointed, saying, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us? Did they never hear that the deriders were derided by him that sitteth in the heavens, and how he will shortly speak to them in wrath, that speak against his ways in malice, and will vex them in his sore displeasure, that vex his servants for the doing of his pleasure? Will they not believe till Hell have taught them that in despite of all his Enemies, he will set his son the King of Saints upon his holy hill of Sion? Psal. 2. 1. to 9. Had they never heard how hard at last it will prove for them to kick against the pricks? Act. 9. 5. And will they not know by any other means but feeling, that he will destroy those as his enemies that would not have him to reign over them, Luk. 19. 27. and that he will break them with a Rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a Potters vessel? Psal. 2. 9.

○ Scorners, did you never read his words, 1 Sam. 2. 30.

[Them

[*Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed*] Behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish: for this word shall be fulfilled upon you, and the work be wrought which you would not believe when God foretold it, and will not yet understand and believe, though it be declared to you, *Acts* 13. 41. Think not that the *infirmities* of the *Godly* do justify your contempt of *Godliness*. Think not that a *Judas* in *Christs family* will justify you for making a *scorn* of his family, and persecuting his disciples? or that a *Cham* in the Ark, or the sin of *Noah* will warrant you to make them as bad as the destroyed world, whom God had done so much to save? Think not when you have jeered at a Holy life, that God will take it for a good excuse, to tell him that you had found a fault in his servants, or an hypocrite crept into his Church. He hateth their faults much more then you: but will you therefore hate their *goodness*? Condemn the *breaches* of his Laws and spare not; but will you therefore condemn the *keeping* of them? O *England*! if thou hadst had the grace or wit to use *Christ* better in his wayes and servants, he would have used thee better, and dealt more gently with thy inhabitants, and flames and calamities might have been prevented. Often wast thou told from *2 Chron.* 36. 14. what it was that captivated *Israel*, and made their Priests and people to be the Heathens slaves [*When the Lord God sent unto them by his Prophets, because he had compassion on his people and his dwelling place, they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets, untill the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.*] But alas, thou hast gone much further then this. *Israel* mocked the Prophets; but I remember not that it is ever said of them, that the way of *godliness* it self was made a common scorn among them: but still they gloried in the Lord, and in the Law, and in the Temple, and the Holy Worship. But here, if a man did but talk of heaven, or of any holy subject, or reprove a swearer, or not joyn with them in their impieties, the common cry was [*This is one of the holy Brethren: here is one of the Saints: It will never be well till we are rid of these Puritans and Precisians.*] How oft have I heard almost the same words from English men, as *Lot* did from Sodomites, *Gen.* 19. 9. [*This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a Judge.*] when they lived in their lasciviousness, lusts, excess of drink,

revellings, banquettings, and abominable prophanation of holy things, they thought it strange that we ran not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of us, but forgetting the account that their Judge was ready to require of them, 1 Per. 4. 3, 4, 5.

Well! have you yet taken warning by the Judgements of the Lord? God hath begun to take away the reproach of Holiness, and through his great mercy to us, it is more Honourable in England then formerly it hath been. Is it Honoured by you? Or are you hardened to perdition? Fearfull is the case of him whoever he be, that after all the gentle and terrible warnings of the Lord, dare think or speak reproachfully of a Holy life! Yet hear the calls of the Eternal Wisdom, Prov. 1. 20, 21, 22, &c. [How long ye simple ones will ye love simplicity, and the scorers delight in scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof.] But mercies and judgements are lost on the hard-hearted, Isa. 26. 10, 11. Let favour be shewn to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will be deal unjustly, and will not behold the Majesty of the Lord. When the hand of the Lord is lifted up, they will not see; but they shall see and be ashamed for their envy at his people, and the enemies own fire shall devour them.] And then as they set at nought his counsell, and would none of his reproof, but mocked them that feared God; so will he also laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh. — For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord,] Prov. 1. 25, 26, 27, 29.

I will add but this one word of terror. To scorn at Holiness, is to scorn at the Holy Ghost, whose office or work it is to sanctifie us. As the Father hath commanded us to be Holy as he is Holy, 1 Pet. 1. 16. and made it his Image on us; and as the Son hath come to destroy unholiness, 1 John 3. 8. and give us an example of perfect holiness, and sanctifie to himself a peculiar people, Titus 2. 14. so is it the undertaken work of the Holy Ghost, as sent therefore from the Father and the Son, to make Holy all that God will save. And though I say not that it is the unpardonable Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost to scorn his very work and office, yet I say it is a Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, so near that which is unpardonable, that the thoughts of it should humble all that have been guilty, and make men fear so horrible a sin. But [Blessed is he that walketh not in the Counsel of the

Ungodly,

Ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law doth he meditate day and night.] The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked, but he bleisseth the habitation of the just: Surely he scorneth the scorners; but he giveth grace unto the lowly, Prov. 3. 33, 34. These are the true sayings of the Lord.

I thought not meet to pass by this necessary reproof of the contempt of Holiness, which this Land hath been so guilty of, and which hath undone so many souls, and made such desolations in the Land. And now you shall see, that I am able to make good the grounds of this reproof, and that *Holiness* is no *Dishonourable* thing.

1. The *Holy* servants of the Lord have the most *Honourable* Master in all the world. This only is sufficient to weigh down all the Honours of the world, if it were ten thousand worlds. When the builders of the Temple were asked their names, by the Officers of King *Darius*, *Ezra* 5. 10, 11. their answer was [We are the servants of the God of Heaven and Earth.] No King on Earth, no Angel in Heaven hath a more honourable Master. To be the highest Officer of the greatest Prince, is a Title as much more base then this, as man is baser then the Infinite God. If God can not put sufficient Honour on those that are Related to him, tell us, who can? When *Moses* went to *Pharaoh* for the Israelites deliverance, he was to speak in the name of the Lord; and when *Pharaoh* spake contemptuously of the Lord, as one that he knew not and would not obey, how wondrously doth God vindicate his honour & his people! Let other men be called Knights, and Lords, and Kings, and Emperours; may I but be truly called the servant of the God of Heaven, I shall not envy them their honours! Our relation to so glorious a Majesty doth put an unexpressible Honour upon the poorest person and the lowest works. A servant of the Lord is more Honourable in rags, in a smoaky cottage, or the meanest state, then the Emperour of *Constantinople* or *Tartary* is in all their Wealth and Worldly Glory. And if you think not so your selves, why do you so much honour them when they are dead? What was *Peter* and *Paul*, and the rest of the Apostles, but poor despised men in the world.

world, that travailed about to preach the Gospel? and what was their honour but to be the Holy Servants of the Lords? Yet now they are dead, you are desirous to keep Holy dayes in an honourable memorial of them: and Kings and Princes reverence their names. What were the Martyrs whose memories are now so Honourable with us, but a company of hated persecuted men, that were used by others as Butchers do their beasts, and worse? But because they were the *servants of the Lord*, and suffered for his truth and cause, their names are honourable, and the names of their greatest persecutors do even sink. Its said of *Constantine the Great* (who himself was Greater by his Holiness then his Victories) that he was wont to reverence the Bishops that had been sufferers for Christ, and kissed the place where the eye abode that one of them had lost for the Gospels sake. The Christian Princes that ruled the world, were wont to Honour the poorest mortified retired servants of Christ, that had cast off the world, as perceiving that he is more Honourable than contemneth it, then he that enjoyeth it. The nearest to God undoubtedly are the most Honourable.

2. Consider, that as it is God that the Saints are thus Related to, so their Relation is so *near*, and their Titles so exceeding *high*, which God himself hath put upon them, that it advanceth them to the greatest height of Honour, that men on earth can reasonably expect. Yea, with holy admiration we must say it, so wonderful is the Honour which the Glorious God hath put upon his poor unworthy servants, that they durst not have owned it, nor thought such Titles meet for men, if God himself had not been the Author of them! Nor could they have believed that God would so advance them, if he had not both revealed it, and given them faith to believe his revelation. As if it were not enough for us to be his servants, he calleth us his *friends*! Joh. 15. 13, 14, 15. [Greater Love hath no man then this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants: For the servant knoweth not what his Lord doth: but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.] Jam. 2. 23. [Abraham was called the friend of God.] And they are called the *Lords Jewels*, Mal. 3. 17.

3. They

3. They are called his *Beloved*, and *dearly Beloved*, *Deut.* 33. 12. *Psal.* 60. 5. & 127. 2. *Cant.* 2. 16. & 6. 3. & 7. 10. *Holy* and *Beloved* are inseparable, *Rom.* 4. 7. [*Beloved of God, called to be Saints.*] *Col.* 3. 12. [*the elect of God, Holy and Beloved.*] They are the *dearly beloved of his soul*, *Jer.* 12. 7. For they are *accepted in the Beloved*, *Eph.* 1. 6. Even in the *Beloved Son in whom the Father is well pleased*, *Matth.* 3. 17. & 17. 5.

4. They are called *children*, or *adopted sons*, *Gal.* 4. 6. *John* 1. 12. And he *disdaineth not to be called their Father*, *Heb.* 12. 9. *Matth.* 23. 9. *2 Cor.* 6. 18. [*I will be a Father to you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*] *Mal.* 3. 17. He will *spare them, as a man spareth his son that serveth him.*]

5. They are called also the *Heirs of Heaven*, *Rom.* 8. 17. A more *Honourable heritage* than earth affords.

6. They are called a *peculiar people to the Lord*, *Tit.* 2. 14. and his *peculiar treasure*, *Exod.* 19. 5. *Psal.* 135. 4.

7. They are called *Kings and Priests to God*, *Rev.* 1. 6. They are a *chosen generation, a Royal Priest-hood, a Holy Nation, a peculiar people*, *1 Pet.* 2. 9.

8. The sanctified are called the *Spouse of Christ*, *Cant.* 4. 8. to 13. Because of the similitude of the holy *Covenant* which they make with *Christ*, to a *marriage Covenant*; and because of the dearness of his love to them, and the nearness and sweetness of his *Communion* with them, *Mat.* 22. 2, 4, 9. The Lord is said to be *married to them*, *Jer.* 3. 14. And *their Maker calls himself their Husband*, *Isa.* 54. 5.

9. Yea more, they are called the *Members of Christ*, *1 Cor.* 6. 15. & 12. 12. They are the *Body of Christ* and *members in particular*, *verf.* 27. We are *members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bone, loved and cherished by him, as a man doth his own flesh*, *Ephes.* 5. 25, 28, 29, 30, 32. They are kept by the Lord as the *apple of his eye*, *Deut.* 32. 10. And he that *toucheth them toucheth the apple of his eye*, *Zech.* 2. 8. What nearness! what dearness do those terms express!

10. Yea they are said to be *one with Christ*, *1 Cor.* 6. 17. [*He that is joynted to the Lord is one spirit.*] *John* 17. 21, 22, 23. [*That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be One in us, that the world may believe that thou* hast

hast sent me — that they may be One, even as We are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.] Not that they are One in God-head, or personality, or office with Christ, but most nearly conjoynd as subjects to their Prince, that make *One Body Politick*, and as a wife to a husband, and nearer then these can express, in that they have the communications of his Spirit.

Judge now by all these wonderful Titles, whether any but an Atheist or Infidel can deny, that the Godly are the most *Honourable* people in the world. If it be not a contemptible thing to be the son of a King, much less to be the sons of the eternal King. Deny the Honour of those that are so nearly related to him, and you deny the Honour of God himself, and consequently deny him to be God. Atheism is the beginning and end of all.

3. Moreover the servants of the Lord have the most *Honourable Natures or Dispositions* in the world. And the Honour that ariseth from a mans *intrinsicall Disposition*, is far greater then that which accrueeth to him from his *parentage*, or *wealth*, or *worldly greatness*, or any such extrinsick accidents. Many a proud and worthless person doth boast of the *Nobility* of their Ancestors, and tell you what blood doth run in their veins; when they have debased souls, and nothing advanced them or their Ancestors, but their Riches, or the pleasure of some Prince; and they know that the beggars at their doors did come from *Noah* as well as they. The Surgeon findeth no purer blood in their veins, then in the beggars; nor are their carcasses any more sweet or lovely; and therefore if *their manners are worse*, they are more *base* then *honest beggars*. It is the *mind* that beareth the true stamp of Nobility. They are the *Noblest* that have the *Noblest souls*. All the Silks and Velvets in the world, will not make an *Ape* as Honourable as a *Man*, nor an *Ideot* as a *wise man*. *Solomon in all his Royalty* was not *cloathed like some of the flowers in the field*, Mat. 6. 28. 29. and yet he was more *Honourable* then they. A *Corpse* may be most *sumptuously adorned*: A *Crown* may be set on the head of an *image*. Such as the *mind* is, such is the *man*. And that the *souls* of the sanctified are more *Nobly* qualified then of other men, is easily demonstrated. For,

1. *Christ dwelleth in them by faith, and by his Spirit*, Ephes. 1. 17. & 2. 22. *We are the Temples of the Holy Ghost*, 1 Cor. 6. 19. *The new nature of the Saints hath no meaner an Author then*
the

the Lord himself. It is the Divine Power that giveth us all things that pertain to life and godliness, 2 *Pet.* 1. 3. As it is the Honourable work of God the Father to be our Creator, and of God the Son to be our Redeemer, so is it the Honourable work of God the Holy-Ghost to be our Sanctifier. And therefore as it is a Blaspheming of the Creator to vilifie the Creation; and a Blaspheming of the Redeemer to vilifie the Redemption; so is it a Blaspheming of the Sanctifier to vilifie Sanctification. Though I say not that it is the unpardonable Blasphemy, yet a fearful Blasphemy it is. O that those wretches knew their crime, that mock at the special work of the Holy-Ghost.

2. The new creature is illuminated with a Heavenly light, and cured of its former mortal blindness, and is brought out of darkness into marvellous light, *Eph.* 1. 18. *Acts* 26. 18. *Col.* 1. 13. 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. and is taught of God, *John* 6. 45. 1 *Thes.* 4. 9. 1 *Joh.* 2. 27. And it is more Honourable to see, then to be blind, and to live in the open Light, then in a dungeon. And it is the highest matters in the world that the gracious soul is savingly acquainted with. It is more Honourable to have the Knowledge of profoundest Sciences, then of some low and poor employment. And it is more Honourable to have the saving Knowledge of God, and of the life to come, which the poorest sanctified person hath, then to have the most admired fleshly wisdom, or all the common learning in the world. What high, and excellent, and necessary things doth Grace acquaint the Christian with? He knoweth him that is the cause of all things else, having himself no cause: He knoweth him that is knowledge it self; and that knoweth all things: He knoweth him that is Eternal; that never began, and shall never end. That is Greater then the whole world: that is more glorious then the Sun: that can do all things because he is Almighty; and yet can do no evil, because he is most Good and Holy. He knoweth him that made the world and all things, and holdeth them in the hand of his Omnipotency, and Ruleth them by his wisdom, and doth all things according to the good pleasure of his will. He knoweth him that is mans felicity, to know whom is eternal life. He knoweth the Redeemer, and the Riches of his Grace and Promises. He knoweth the diseases of his own soul, and their danger and cure. He knoweth what end he hath to aim at, and the work that he was made and Redeemed for to do: the Temptations which he must resist; the enemies which he must

conquer, the duties which he must perform : He knoweth his Redeemers Laws and Covenants. What he commandeth, promiseth and threatneth, and to whom. He knoweth what will be hereafter ; and where he shall live when this life is ended : and what he shall do ten thousand years hence, yea unto all eternity. He knoweth what will become of all the Godly and ungodly (that die such) in the world ; and where they shall be for evermore. In a word, he knoweth whence he came, whither he is going, and which way he must go. He knoweth God as his Maker, Governour and End : He knoweth that God that he must Please, and how to Please him, and how to be saved, and to live with God for ever. This is the honourable Knowledge of the Sanctified ; which no men have but they alone. The cunning, Politicians of the world have none of it, (as such). The Speculators of nature, the great Mathematicians, the Learned Doctors, famous for their skill in Languages, Philosophy, and the Theorie of Divinity, are oft without it. They have more of the words, and notions, and forms, and methods, then unlearned Saints have : but they want the Thing that these are made for. They have the signs, and the Godly have the thing signified. They have the Body of Theologie, and the Godly Christian hath the Soul. The ungodly Doctors have better skill to break the shell, but the Godly Christian only knows how to eat the kernel. The Learned may be better at the office of a Cook, to dress the meat ; but only the Godly do feed on it, and digest it. Knowledge is to be valued, (as all creatures are) according to its usefulness. As it is more Honourable to know how to Govern a Kingdom, Command an Army or Navy, or save mens lives, then to make a fiddle or an hobby-horse ; so is it ten thousand-fold more Honourable, to know how to Order our hearts and lives, and to walk with God, and obtain the everlasting Glory, then to know how to get the riches, and pleasures, and vain-glory of the present world.

3. The sanctified are made *Alive* to God, when other men are Dead in sin. *Rom. 6. 11, 13. Eph. 2. 1, 2.* And the poorest man alive is more Honourable then the carcase of an Emperour. *Ecc. 9. 4. A living dog, is better then a dead Lyon.*

4. The sanctified are cleansed from the filthyness of their sins ; which are the most odious defilements in the world : and they are purified by the blood and spirit of Christ. *1 John 1. 7, 9. Ephes. 5. 26. 2 Cor. 7. 1.* The word of Christ hath made them clean.

John 15. 3. Their hearts are purified by faith, Acts 15. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 22. 1 John 3. 3. And therefore the most odious part of their dishonour is removed; sin is a reproach to any people, Prov. 14. 34. Whatever it may seem before ungodly men, it is sin that is your shame before the Lord: And this reproach the godly are now cleansed from. Though it be a dishonour to them that they were ungodly once, it is their honour that now they are not such; and that they are cloathed with the righteousness of Christ.

5. The *Holy nature* of the Saints *disposeth* their hearts, and *enclineth* their wills to the *highest* and *most Honourable things*. As in their *Knowledge*, so in their *Inclinations*, they are above the baseness of the world. The *nature* of man is not to feed as beasts and horses, and dogs do: he is *above their food*; and above their converse and kind of life: that will not *content him* that contenteth them. And the *new nature* of a *sanctified man*, is *above* the delights and contents of the ungodly. His heart cannot endure to take up with their kind of life. To mind nothing but this world, and to have no pleasure but to the flesh, and live as an utter stranger to God, and not to feed on the Heavenly delights, and riches of the Gospel, but live as if there were no such things; this sensual life is *below* his *Inclination*, as feeding on dross, or conversing only with swine or cattle, is below the nature of a man. The *noble soul* is that which is *inclined* to the *noblest objects*: even to God, and Holiness, and everlasting life: and cannot endure the poor, and low, and sordid life of men, that have their portion here. *Psalms 17. 14.* Nothing that is corporeal, or transitory, yea nothing below God, can satisfy a holy soul. It is this *Holy Disposition*, that fits men for holy *Duties*: and that is their fitness for eternal Happiness. If Angels were not *Holyer* then Devils, and godly men then the ungodly, Heaven could not hold them, nor could they any more see or enjoy the Lord, then they that are cast into outer darkness. And therefore if you dare say that the *Holy* are no more *Honourable* then the *unholy*, you must say that the *Holy Angels* are no more *Honourable* then the *devils*: which sure you will scarce be so desperate as to speak.

6. Holiness in the godly is the *Image of God*, in which we were created: and according to which we are renewed by the Holy Ghost. *Eph. 4. 24. Col. 3. 10. Gen. 1. 27.* And what can be spoken more *Honourable* of a creature, then that he hath his *Makers Image*, unless as to the *Degree*, that some have more of it

then others. It is the honourable Title of the *Son* himself, that he [*is the Brightness of his Fathers glory, and the express image of his person*] This is above the honour of any, or of all the Saints. But to have the Image of God in Wisdom, and Holiness, as all have that are sanctified, is a wonderful dignity to be given to a creature, and so low and unworthy creatures as we are. His commands tell us what are the qualifications of his people. [*As he which hath called you is Holy, so be ye Holy, in all manner of conversation : For it is written, Be ye Holy, for I am Holy.*] 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. And how high a command, and strait a Rule is that, given us by Christ, Matth, 5. 48. [*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect!*] Well may it be called an exceeding Righteousness, surpassing the Scribes and Pharisees, which all have that enter into the Heavenly Kingdom, Matth. 5. 20. There is nothing under Heaven, that is known to man so like to God, as a *Holy soul*. Remember this the next time you reproach such. All you that are the Serpents seed, remember when you spit your venom against *Holiness*, that it is the *Image of God* that your enmity is exercised against. O what a strange conjunction of malignity and hypocrisie appeareth in the enemies of God among us ! A *picture* of Christ that is drawn by a Painter, or a *forbidden Image* of God that is carved by an *Image-maker* in stone, that hath nothing but the *name* of an *Image of God*, these they will reverence, and honour, (though God hath forbidden them to make *such Images of him*) The Papists will pray before them, and the prophane among us are zealous for them : when in the mean time they hate the *noblest Images* of God on earth. *Forbidden Images* of God have been defended, by seeking the *blood* of his truest *Images*. Do you indeed Love and Honour the *Image of God* ? Why then do you *hate* them, and seek to destroy them ? And why do you make them the scorn of your continual malice ? Can you blow hot and cold ? Can you both *Love* and *Hate*, both *Honour* and *Scorn*, the *Image of God* ? Search the Scripture, and see whether it be not the sanctified, heavenly, diligent servants of the Lord that are the *Honourable Image* which he owneth, and magnifieth, and gloryeth in before the world. If this be not true, then go on in your hatred of them and spare not. These are not *Images of stone*, but of *Spirit* : not *Images* made by a *Carver* or a *Painter*, but by the *Holy-Ghost* himself : Not hanged upon a wall for men to look on, but *living Images*,