

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*,



*Images*, actuated from Heaven, by spiritual influence from Christ their head, and shining forth in exemplary lives to the honour of their Father whom they resemble, *Matth. 5. 16.* It is not in an *outward shape*, but in *spiritual wisdom*, and *Love*, and *Holiness* of heart and life, that they resemble their Creatour. Whether you will believe it now or not, be sure of it, you malignant enemies of Holiness, that God would shortly make you know it, that you chose out the most *excellent Image* of your maker under Heaven, to pour out your hatred and contempt against. And in as much as you did it to his *noblest Image*, you did it unto him.

7. If all this be not enough to shew you the *Honourable Nature of Holiness*, I will speak the highest word that can be spoken of any created nature under heaven, and yet no more then God hath spoken; even in *2 Pet. 1. 4.* where it is expressly said, that the Godly are [*partakers of the Divine Nature.*] I know that it is not the *Essence of God* that is here called the *Divine Nature* that we partake of: we abhor the thoughts of such blasphemous arrogance, as if that grace did make men Gods. But its called the *Divine nature*, in that it is caused by the *Spirit of God*, and floweth from him, as the *Light or sunshine* floweth from the sun. You use to say, *the sun is in the house*, when it *shinerh* in the house, though the sun it self be in the firmament: so the Scripture saith that God dwelleth in us, and Christ and the spirit dwelleth in us, when the Heavenly Light and Love and Life, which streameth from him dwelleth in us; and this is called the *Divine Nature*. Think of this, and tell me whether higher and more Honourable things can easily be spoken of the sons of men, *1 Joh. 4. 16.* [*God is Love; and he that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God in him.*] O wonderful advancement! high expressions of a creatures dignity! Blessed be that Eternal Love that is thus communicative, and hath so enobled our unworthy souls: with what alacrity and delight should we exalt his name by daily praises that thus exalteth us by his unspeakable mercie? *Psal. 75. 10. & 89. 16, 17.* [*Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk O Lord in the light of thy countenance: In thy name shall they rejoyce all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted: For thou art the glory of our strength; and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted: For the Lord is our defence, and the holy one of Israel is our King.*]



Psal. 148. 13, 14. [Let them praise the name of the Lord: for his Name alone is excellent: his Glory is above the Earth and Heavens: He also exalteth the horn of his people; the Praise of all his Saints.] He hath first exalted our blessed Head, even highly exalted him by his own right hand, and given him a name above every name, Act. 2. 33. & 5. 31. Phil. 2. 9. and with him he hath wonderfully exalted all his sanctified ones, Heb. 2. 10. 11. For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to Glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings: For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified, are all of One: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them Brethren.] 1 Cor. 12. 12. [For as the Body is One, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body: so also is Christ.] What greater honour can man on earth be advanced to? And the Honour of the just is communicative to the societies of which they are members. The Churches are called Holy for their sakes. [Prov. 11. 11. By the blessing of the upright the City is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked] Prov. 14. 34. [Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people] Let therefore both the persons and Congregations of the Saints continually exalt the name of God: [O Bless the Lord for ever and ever, and blessed be his glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.] Neh. 9. 5. [The Lord liveth: and blessed be our Rock: and exalted be the God of our Rock of our salvation.] 2 Sam. 22. 47. [Psal. 30. 1. I will extoll thee O Lord, for thou hast lifted me up.] Psal. 27. 6. [And now shall my head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea I will sing praises unto the Lord.] Psal. 28. 8, 9. [The Lord is their strength, the saving strength of his anointed: He will save his people, and bless his inheritance, and feed them also, and lift them up for ever.] Psal. 147. 6. The Lord lifteth up the meek, and casteth the wicked down to the ground.] Thus shall it be done to them whom God doth delight to Honour. He will Deliver them and Honour them? Psal. 91. 15.

4. And as the sanctified have the most Honorable dispositions, so have they the highest and most Honorable Designs. The End of their lives is incomparably above other mens. The rest of the world (though they may talk of Heaven, and wish for it rather  
then



then Hell, when they can live no longer) do indeed drive on no greater trade, then *providing for the flesh*, and feathering them a nest which will quickly be pulled down : and like the spider, spinning themselves a web, which death will shortly sweep away. But the Design and daily business of the Godly is for everlasting Glory. Heb. 11. 10. *They look for a City that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.* ] ver. 13, 14, 15, 16. *They confess themselves strangers and pilgrims on earth, thereby declaring that they seek a Countrey. And truly if they were mindful of that (deceitful world) which they came out of (and have forsaken) they may have opportunities (and too many invitations) to return to it : But now they desire a better Countrey, that is, an Heavenly : Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called Their God : for he hath prepared for them a City* ] This Noble End ennobleth both the persons and conversations of believers. To Rule a Kingdom is a Nobler design then to play with children for pins or points. But to seek the Everlasting Kingdom is far above all the highest designs that are terminated upon earth. If Everlasting Glory with God in Heaven, be a nobler state then a worldly life, then must the seeking it be a nobler design. Paul sheweth you the difference very pathetically, Phil. 3. 18, 19, 20. *[For many walk (of whom I told you often, and now tell you weeping) that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ ; Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things : But our Conversation is in Heaven]* that is, we live as Citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, and not as those that are here at home. It is Heaven that sanctified persons mind ; that they study and care for, and labour and live for in the world. And therefore, though in their *Natural capacity*, they are but as other men, yet in their *Moral and Relative capacity*, I think I may say without Hyperbole, that they are much more advanced above the dignity of the great unsanctified Princes upon earth, then Reason, and learning, and manly designs advance a man above a beast. It is the *Nobleness and baseness* of the end that doth honour or abase the agent : and therefore none are truly Honourable but those that seek the spiritual, the high, eternal Honour.

5. The *Employment* as well as the *Designs* of the Godly, do prove them to be the most Honourable. Both the *End* and *Matter* do shew the excellency of their *Work*. As the *End* Honoureth



Honoureth the person, so doth it Honour all the works that are Means thereto. The first thoughts of a Godly man when he awaketh, and the last when he lyeth down (if he observe his Rule) are usually for Heaven. When you are conversing with worldly men, about these common worldly things, they are in prayer or holy meditation conversing with God, about the matters of his service and their salvation. Their hearts are toward him: their thoughts are on him: They are devoted to him: Their daily business is to serve him. [*When I awake* (saith David, Psal. 139. 28.) *I am still with thee.*] Psal. 16. 7. 8. [*I will bless the Lord who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons. I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.*] The life of the Godly is called in Scripture [*a walking with God*] such was the course of *Henock*, *Noah*, and *Abraham*, Gen. 5. 22, 24. & 6. 9. & 17. 1. & 24. 40. *They walked before God*, Gen. 48. 15. and in his ways, Deut. 28. 9. *They love the Lord their God with all their heart and soul* (as to the sincerity of it:) and *walk after him*, and *fear him*, and *keep his commandments*, and *obey his voice*, and *serve him* and *cleave unto him*, Deut. 10. 1, 2, 3, 4. And can an inhabitant of this world have a more honourable employment then to *serve the Lord*? and a more honourable state then to *walk with God*? should we not have thought such words intolerable to be used of the best on earth, if God had not been himself the author of them, and put them into our mouths? Hear more of his own expressions concerning the conversations of his servants [*I Cor. 1. 9. God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his son Jesus Christ*] 1 Joh. 1. 3. [*And truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*] By [*fellowship*] is not meant here [*a society of equals.*] God forbid we should think so blasphemously: But it is a *Communion* of the beloved sanctified Creature with his blessed Creator, agreeable to his distance. In their secret addresses, his servants have communion with him: Their Prayer is nothing else but a humble speaking to the living God, for the supply of all their wants. In their Praises and Thanksgivings it is God that they deal with: and the words of their mouths and the meditation of their hearts, are acceptable in the sight of their Redeemer, Psal. 19. 14. They poure out their souls before him: and he openeth his ears and his bosome unto



unto them, Psal. 62. 8. & 10. 17. [ *He will feed his flock like a shepherd : he will gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.* ] Isa. 40. 11. And in the publick Worship of God in the holy Assemblies, his servants also have communion with him : It is him that they hear whoever be the messenger : It is him that they adore, and praise and magnifie [ *Come ( say they ) and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord : to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his wayes, and we will walk in his paths* ] — Come, and let us walk in the light of the Lord ] Isaiah 2. 3, 5. [ *We have thought of thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of thy Temple* ] Psalm 48. 9. [ *In his Temple doth every man speak of his glory.* ] Psalm 29. 9. Yea, the common employments of the Godly are sanctified, and thereby advanced above the highest actions of the wicked. For it is God and Glory that is in all their ultimate End. [ *Whether they eat or drink, or what ever they do, they do it to his glory,* 1 Cor. 10. 31. That is, They intend his Glory as their end, and they do it in reverent obedience to his Will, and in a holy manner behaving themselves as may honour him whose work they do. And he that hath the face to say, that Prayer, Praise, Thanksgiving, Meditation, holy conference and other works of Holiness and Righteousness, are not a more Honourable employment then the sordid drudgery of the world, must say also that the life of a worldling is more Honourable then the life of the holy Angels and the heavenly host. They are obeying and praising God, and living in the sense of his dearest love, while you are sinning and scraping in this Earth. And can you believe that your life is more Honourable then theirs? If not; you must confess, that the Godly that come nearest the work of Angels, do live a more Honourable life then you. When Christ called *Peter* to leave his fishing and follow him and be his servant, he tells him that he will make him a *fisher of men* : as intimating that it was a more honourable work to catch souls by the Gospel, and win them to God and to salvation, then to catch fishes. To please God and save our souls, and further others in obeying him to their salvation, is the Highest work that the sons of men are capable of while they live in flesh.

As the Priests were sanctified to draw nearer unto God, then the common people, and to be employed in his most Holy service,



so are the godly separated by grace from the ungodly world, and brought nearer God, and used by him in the noblest works.

[ In a great house there are not only vessels of Gold and of Silver, but also of wood, and of earth, and some to honour, and some to dishonour. ] 1 Tim. 2. 20. [ If a man therefore purge himself from sin, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the masters use, and prepared unto every good work. ] Ver. 21.

The Vessel that Swine are fed in, is not so Honourable as that which is used at a Princes table. If you would know what use the Godly are employed in, read 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9. [ As lively stones they are built up a spiritual house: they are a holy Priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God, which shall be acceptable by Jesus Christ. They are a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood an holy Nation, a peculiar people that they should shew forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light: ] The holy Scriptures tell you the work of Saints: Compare them with the work of the drunkard, the glutton, the gamester, the fornicator, or the covetous or ambitious worldling, and let your reason tell you which is the more Honourable, Psalm 34. 9. [ O fear the Lord ye his Saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. ] Psal. 31. 23. [ O Love the Lord all ye his Saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful. ] Psal. 89. 5, 7. [ The heavens shall praise thy wonders O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the Congregation of the Saints. God is greatly to be feared in the Assembly of the Saints: and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him. ] These are the employments of the Saints.

6. Moreover, the Godly have the most Honourable entertainment by the God of all the world. They are bid welcome when others are rejected. The door is opened to them that is shut against the wicked. They are familiar with Jesus Christ, as the children of the family, when others are strangers whom he will not know. Cant. 5. 1. Matth. 25. 10. Matth. 7. 23. [ I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye workers of iniquity. ] Psalm 1. 6. [ For the Lord knoweth the way of the Righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish. ] The faithful are feasted by him, when the rest are examined with a [ Friend, how comest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment! bind him hand and foot and cast him into outer darkness, ] Matth. 22. 12, 13. They are called the children that have the bread, and the rest are called



called the *dogs*; of which some are *without*, and those *within* do feed *but on the crumbs that fall from the childrens table*, Matth. 15. 26, 27. Revel. 22. 15. Hear the Lords invitation and his promise: Isa. 55. 2, 3. [ *Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good; and let your soul delight it self in fatness; Encline your ear, and come unto me, hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you.* ] Who is it that is admitted into the *Tabernacle of the Lord*, and who shall dwell in his holy hill? He that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. — In whose eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord, Psalm 15. 1, 2, 4. The upright shall dwell in the presence of the Lord. ] Psalm 140. 13. [ *God will save Sion, — and the seed of his servants shall inherit it, and they that love his name shall dwell therein.* ] Psal. 69. 35, 36. And [ *Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, O Lord, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts: he shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy House, even of thy holy Temple.* ] Psal. 65. 4. Saith David [ *Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.* ] Yea, Christ entertaineth faithful souls with a spiritual feast of his own flesh and blood. His flesh to them is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed, John 6. 55. and he that eateth and drinketh these, shall live for ever, Verse 54, 56. The returning Prodigal is met with joy, and quickly embraced in his Fathers arms; the fatted Calf is killed for him: a ring and new apparell is provided him: and musick must express the Joy for his recovery, Luke 15. O how welcome are converted sinners to the God of mercy? And as they are welcome at their first return, so are they in all their attendance on him, and addresses to him, and service of him, while they continue in his family. They have boldness now to enter into the Holiest, by the new and living way that is consecrated: and are invited to draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, Heb. 10. 19, 22. [ *In Christ we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.* ] Ephes. 3. 12. And God hath made us accepted in the beloved, to the praise of the glory of his grace, Ephes. 1. 6. We are living sacrifices, acceptable unto God, Rom. 12. 1. And our services, though weak, are sacrifices acceptable and well-pleasing to him, Phil. 4. 18. 2 Tim. 2. 3. & 5. 4.



when the prayers of the wicked are abhorred of the Lord; his people serve him acceptably in reverence and godly fear, Heb. 12. 28. He answereth their prayers, and often speaketh peace unto them, and signifieth his acceptance of them. If they could bring him a house full of Gold and Silver, they would not be so welcome to him as they are in bringing him their hearts, their humbled hearts, their broken, tender, melted hearts, that burn in Love to him, and flame up towards him in desires and in holy praise. [*To this man will I look, saith the Lord, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my Word*] Isa. 66. 2. This is the Honourable entertainment of the Saints.

7. And they are members of the most Honourable Society in the world. The Church is the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, Luke 1. 33. Col. 1. 13. The Kingdom of God, Luke 17. 21. & 18. 17. The Kingdom of Heaven, Mat. 3. 2. & 13. 31, 33, 44. It is the School of Christ, or his University, in which Believers are his Schollars, learning to know him, and serve him, and praise him for ever, and trained up for everlasting life, Acts 11. 26. Luke 6. 13. Mat. 5. 1, 2, &c. It is the family or household of God, Eph. 2. 19. 1 Tim. 3. 15. Heb. 10. 21. 1 Pet. 4. 17. It is the Spouse, yea the Body of Christ, Eph. 5. 25. So loved by him, that he gave himself for it, becoming the price of our Redemption, and thought not his life too dear a Ransom, nor his blood too precious to cleanse and save us, Eph. 5. 25, 26. Tit. 2. 14. The Church, which every godly man is a living member of, is a Society chosen out of the world, to be nearest unto God, and dearest to him, as the beloved of his soul; to receive the choicest of his mercies, and be adorned with the righteousness of Christ, and to be employed in his special service, 1 Pet. 2. 4, 5, 9. John 15. 19. Eph. 1. 4. Psalm 132. 13. & 135. 4. Eph. 5. 1. The Lord that Redeemed them is their King and Head, and dwelleth in the midst of them, and walketh among them, as the people of his special presence and delight, Psalm 2. 6. & 89. 18. & 149. 2. & 46. 5. Isa. 12. 6. Jer. 14. 9. Zeph. 3. 5, 15, 17. Rev. 1. 13. & 2. 1. Psalm 95. 2. The Church is a Heavenly Society, though the militant part yet live on earth: For the God of Heaven is the Sovereign and the Father of it: The glorified Redeemer is their Head: The Spirit of Christ doth guide and animate them: His Laws revealed and confirmed from Heaven, direct and govern them: Heaven is their end; and heavenly are their dispositions, employ-



employments and conversations : *There is their portion and treasure, Math. 6. 20, 21. and there is their very heart and hope. They are risen with Christ, and therefore seek the things that are above : For their life is hid with Christ in God, Col. 3. 2, 3, 4.* Their Root is there : and the noblest part of the Society is there : For the glorified Saints, and in some sort the Angels, are of the same Society with us ; though they are in heaven and we on earth. *The whole family in Heaven and earth is named from one and the same Head, Eph. 3. 15. [ Heb. 12. 22, 23. 24. We are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, to the General Assembly and Church of the first born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, &c. ]* This is the Honourable Society of Saints : the eye, the pearl of the whole Creation.

8. Moreover, the Godly have the most *Honourable Attendance.* The creatures are all theirs : though not in point of Civil propriety, yet as means appointed and managed by God their Father, for their best advantage. The *Angels* of God are ministering spirits for them : not as our servants, but as Gods servants for our good. As *Ministers in the Church* are not the servants of men, but the servants of God for men : And so whether Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present or to come, all are ours. ] *1 Cor. 3. 22.* The *Shepherds* servant is not the servant of the sheep, but for the sheep. And so the Angels disdain not to serve God, in the guarding of the weakest Saints. As I formerly shewed from *Heb. 1. 14. & Psalm 91. 11, 12. & 34. 7.* [ *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. For he giveth his Angels charge over us, to keep us in all our ways : they shall bear us up in their hands, lest we dash our foot against a stone.* ] Sun and Moon, and all the creatures, are daily employed in our attendance. O how wonderful is the Love of God to his unworthy servants, in their advancement ! Remember it, when thou art scorning at the servants of the Lord, or speaking against them, that thote poor, those weak despised Christians, that thou art vilifying, have their *Angels* beholding the face of God their Father in the Heavens : Take heed therefore that you despise not the least of these. It is the warning of



Christ, *Matth.* 18. 10. The same blessed spirits that attend the Lord, and see his face in blissful Glory, do attend and guard the meanest of the godly here on earth. As the same servants use to wait upon the Father and the children, in the same family, or the bigger children to help the less.

9. And it is the *Honour* of the *Godly*, that they that are themselves most *Honourable*, do *Honour* them. To be magnified by a fool, or wicked flatterer, is small Honour: but to be magnified by the best and wisest men, this is true Honour. We say that *Honour* is in him that giveth it, and not in him that receiveth. But it is God himself that Honoureth his Saints: It is he that speaketh all these great and wonderous things of them which I have hitherto recited. Search the Texts which I have alledged, and try whether it be not he. And surely to have the God of Heaven to applaud a man, and put Honour upon him, and so great Honour, is more then if all the world had done it. Yet we may add, (if any thing could be considerable that is added unto the approbation of God) that all his servants, the wisest, and the best, even his holy Angels, are of the same mind, and honour the godly in conformity to their Lord.

And here Christian, I require thee from the Lord, to consider the greatness of thy sin and folly, when thou art too desirous of the applause of men, especially of the blind ungodly world; and when thou makest a great matter of their contempt or scorn, or of their slanderous censures. What is the approbation of the eternal God so small a matter in thy eyes, that the scorn of a fool can weigh it down, or move the ballance with thee? If a feather were put into the scales against a mountain, or the whole earth, it should weigh as much as the esteem or dis-esteem of men, their honouring thee, or dishonouring thee, should weigh against the esteem of God, and the honour or dishonour that he puts upon thee, (as to any regard of the thing it self; though as it reflecteth on God, thou maist regard it.) He is the wise man that God calls wise: and he is the fool that God calls fool: (and that is every one that layeth up riches for himself, and is not rich towards God, *Luke* 12. 20, 21.) He is the Happy man that God calls Happy; and he is a miserable man that God counts miserable: and who those are, you may see in *Psalms* 1. and many Scriptures before-cited. Hear the words (and you that are Believers, lay up the blessed promise) of Christ himself, *John* 12. 26.



[ *If any man serve me, him will my Father Honour.* ] And who cares then for the dishonours of all the wicked of the world? Our tried faith as preciouser then Gold, will be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ. ] 1 Pet. 1. 7. See 2 Tim. 2. 21. We must learn therefore to imitate our Lord, John 5. 41. and not to receive our Honour from men; and not to imitate the wicked, vers. 44. *that receive Honour one of another, and seek not the Honour that cometh from God.* There is enough for us in Gods approbation. And yet all his servants do imitate their Lord; and his Judgement is their Judgement; and whom he honoureth, them do they honour; Angels, and Saints, and all that enter into the Tabernacle of the Lord, *do contemn the vile, and honour them that fear the Lord, Psalm 15. 4.* And though no mans Judgement or Praise be valuable in comparison of the Lords; yet the Honour and Praise that is given by the wise and Godly, is more then a thousand times as much from ignorant ungodly men. If the Athenian Orator regarded the censure of *Socrates* more then of all the rest of his auditors, we have cause to judge he Elogies of experienced holy men a greater honour then of thousands of the wicked, & greater then all their contempt or scorn is able to weigh down. The applause of the wicked is oft-times a dishonour in wise mens eyes. Was it not *Balaams* chiefeft honour to hear from *Balak*, [ *I thought to promote thee to great Honours, but the Lord hath kept thee back from Honour.* ] Numb. 24. 11. The Honour that God keepeth a man from, is no Honour: but it is an Honour to be kept from such Honour by the Lord: Innocent poverty is incomparably more Honourable then Riches by iniquity, which is the greatest shame.

10. Lastly it is *unspeakable everlasting Honour that holiness doth tend unto, and which holy men shall enjoy with God.* The very Relation of a Godly man to his everlasting Glory, is an Honour ten thousand times surpassing the Honour of all the Kingdoms of the world. If you did but know that one of your poor neighbours should certainly be a King, would you not presently honour him, even in his rage? You may know that the Saints shall reign with Christ, as sure as if an Angel from heaven had told you so, and more; and therefore how should a Saint be honoured? If God had but legibly marked out some among you for salvation, and written in their fore-heads, [ *This man shall be saved* ] would not all the Parish reverence that man? Why a Heavenly mind,



mind, and the Love of God, and self-denial, and holy obedience, are Heaven-marks infallible, as true as the Gospel, and written by the same hand as the Gospel was, I mean by the Spirit of God himself: If a voice from Heaven should speak now of any person in the Congregation, and say, [*This man shall reign in Heaven for ever*] would it not be an Honour above all your worldly Honours? Why Holiness is Gods Image, and the Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, and beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the sons of God, and we have the promise, and seals, and oath of God for our confirmed certainty; yea and the Knowledge of God in Christ is the beginning of eternal life, *John* 17. 3. and what would we have more? The presence of Christ in a little of his Glory upon the Mount, transported the three Disciples: And the glimpse of the Glory of God which *Moses* saw, did make his face shine that the Israelites could not behold it. The approaches of the Saints to God in holy Worship here on earth, are exceeding Honourable, because they participate of heaven, and it is upward that they look: *1 Chron.* 16. 27. [*Glory and Honour are in his presence: strength and gladness are in his place.*] The soul that is beholding God by faith, and conversing with the Heavenly inhabitants, is quite above all earthly things: and as Angels are more honourable then men, and Heaven then Earth, so are Believers that converse in Heaven with Angels, yea with Christ himself by faith, more honourable then terrestrial carnal men.

But the great Honour is behind; yet near at hand; when the promised Crown is set upon their heads: O mark the Honour that is promised them by the Lord of truth. The soul it self before the Resurrection of the body, shall be with Christ, *Phil.* 1. 23. Even present with the Lord, *2 Cor.* 5. 1. 8. *John* 12. 26. [*If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall also my servant be.*] And at the Resurrection Christ that hath loved the Church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctifie and cleanse it — will present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish, *Eph.* 5. 25, 26. Will they not be Honourable even in the eyes of the ungodly world, when they hear the sentence of their Lord, [*Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,* *Mat.* 25. 34.] and vers. 23. [*Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord:*] [*When*



[ When Christ shall come to be Glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe ] 2 Thes. 1. 10. Mark here ; that it is one end of the coming of Christ, to be Glorified and admired in his Saints. [ Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his Saints, to execute judgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him ] Jud. 14. 15. Our hearts shall be established unblameable in holiness before God even our father at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ with all his Saints ] 1 Thes. 3. 12, 13. we shall then praise him [ that hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us Kings and Priests to God, ] Rev. 1. 5, 6. He that overcometh shall be clothed with white rayment, and confessed by Christ before the Father and the Angels of heaven, Rev. 3. 5. Yea he shall be a Pillar in the Temple of God, and go out no more : and Christ will write on him the Name of God, and the name of the City of God, New Hierusalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from God, and his own name, vers. 12. Yea he will grant to him to sit with him in his throne, as he himself hath overcome and is set down with the Father in his Throne : vers. 21. And he will honour his Saints to be Judges of Angels, and of the world, 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3. And they that overcome and keep his words unto the end, to them will he give power over the nations, and they shall rule with a rod of iron, and break them to shivers as the vessels of a potter ; even as Christ received of his Father : and he will give them the morning star, Rev. 2. 26, 27. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear the Glorious things that are promised to the Saints. The high praises of God shall be in their mouths, and the two-edged sword in their hands — to execute on the wicked the Judgement Written, such Honour have all his Saints, Psal. 149. 6, 9. Then shall we hear the Praises of the Heavenly society saying [ We give thee thanks O Lord God Almighty which art and wast, and art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power and hast reigned, and the Nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the Prophets and to the Saints and them that fear thy name, small and great, and shouldst destroy them that dwell on the earth ] [ then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of



their Father: Who hath ears to hear, let him hear, Matth. 13. 43.] Yea [they shall be equal to the Angels of God, Luk. 20. 36.] This is the Inheritance of the Saints in Light of which God is now making us Meet to be partakers, Col. 1. 12. If [all that sate in the Council against him, saw Stevens face as it had been the face of an Angel] Act. 6. 15. what shall be the glory of the Saints when themselves shall see the face of God, and his name shall be written in their foreheads, Rev. 22. 4. when the ungodly world shall know, that Holiness was the most Honourable State?

But perhaps some will say, that [this language will make men Proud: To tell men that they are the most Honourable persons in the world, is the way to make them the Proudest persons.]

To which I give you a manifold answer that your Objection may not have the least pretence that it is unsatisfied.

1. *Worldly Honours* are of a more swelling nature than *Heavenly Honours*: and yet it would scarcely be taken well, if this conclusion should pass for currant, that the most Honourable are the most Proud. For then it would follow that none are so vile, so like the Devil, so unlike God: and so the Princes and nobles of the earth would become the most despicable persons in the world, and their very Honour it self would be their dishonour, and so no Honour. And if worldly Honours will not warrant you to conclude the persons to be most Proud, much less will the Heavenly Honour.

There is the more Need and the less Fear of the Honour of the Godly, because it is the blessing of an Humbled soul. God casts them down before he lifts them up: It is only the Humble that he exalteth. They feel their sin and misery before they know their Honour. A Broken heart hath need of healing, and a fainting soul is fittest for a Cordial. You need not fear when you refresh the sick, lest it should make them wanton as it may do the sound. A comfortable word to one that is lamenting over the dead, and weeping at a grave, is not so likely to make them Proud, as to others in prosperity. A drooping and discouraged soul, is hardly raised high enough, and kept from sinking: They have had the sentence past upon them,



them, and have had the rope as it were about their neck : they have been at the very gates of Hell : they have seen by faith what work, what woes there are for sin in the life to come, and therefore these souls have need to hear of their Felicity.

3. Moreover, they have a great deal of work to do ; and their strength and courage is too small : and the work is such as flesh and blood cannot away with, much less afford them sufficient strength for. Such labourers must have encouraging strengthening food. Their work is such as will keep them under. God doth not keep his servants idle : and therefore they are in the less danger of waxing Proud and wanton. Isa. 35. 2, 3, 4. [*They shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.*] And why is this foretold them? [*Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees : say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not : behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence ; he will come and save you*] Heb. 12. 12, 13. [*Wherefore lift up the bands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make strait paths for your feet, lest that which is lame, be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed*] we are commanded 1 Thes. 5. 14. as to warn them that are unruly, so to comfort the feeble-minded, and support the weak.

4. Moreover, the Godly have the greater need of such encouragements, because they have much suffering to undergo. They have all your hatred and scorns to suffer, and all the adversities of the world, with which their Father shall please to exercise them. And he that layeth the burden on them, will give them strength by strengthening means. Gods net hath corks as well as leads. If birds had not feathers as well as flesh, they would be unable to fly. As Christ himself was encouraged to endure the contradiction of sinners, and to bear the cross, and despise the shame, by looking at the joy that was set before him, and so for the suffering of death was crowned with Glory and honour ] Heb. 12. 2, 8. & 2. 9. so will he have his people tread in his steps, and take up their cross and follow him, and deny themselves and all the world ; yet so as to look at the recompence of reward, and seek for glory, honour, and immortality, and by these to be animated to the work and patience of the Saints, as expecting to be Glorified with him, when they have suffered with him ] Matth. 16. 24. & 10. 38. Heb. 11. 26. Rom. 2. 7.



8. 17, 18. As the Angel said to *Elijah*, 1 King. 19. 7. *Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee*] so God encourageth his servants by his Honours and rewards, because the journey, the labour, the suffering is *too great*, without such encouragement to be cheerfully undergone: And in the strength of these consolations, they bear the cross.

5. The objection is most against the Lord. If it be an error to Honour and extol the Godly, as tending to make them Proud; it is God himself that is the owner of it. The words that I have recited to you are his own words. Do we devise these sayings? Or do we not shew them you in the Scripture? And dare you charge God with error, or encouraging Pride? Do you think he knew not what he said, when he spake such Honourable things of his servants. Did he need you to have taught him to have ended his word, and to have warned him that he make not his servants proud! As if he hated not pride as much as you!

6. Yea God will do more then this for his servants, he will advance them to *Salvation*, and yet he will *not make them proud*. There is no *Pride* in *Heaven*, though there be the *greatest Glory*. The *Angels* are *most glorious*, and yet *least proud*. If you would not wish God to *keep men out of Heaven* lest it make them proud, you should not grudge at his Honouring *them on earth*, with the mention of their *Heavenly* titles, upon that account.

7. The Exaltation of the Saints is a *spiritual exaltation*, which is not so apt to make men Proud, as carnal exaltation is. *Charity* puffeth not up, as *aery knowledge* doth. It is *selfishness* that is the Life of Pride, (which consisteth in excessive *self-esteem*, and desire of an excessive esteem with others, and to be magnified by them) And nothing but Grace can subdue this *selfishness*, and therefore nothing else can destroy Pride.

8. Moreover the Honour of the Saints, is the less like to make them Proud, because *Humility* is *part of the Grace* that is bestowed on them. To be Proud and *Holy*, is to be *sick* and *well*, to be *Light* and *Dark*: they are plain contraries. No man is proud but for want of *Holiness*: and therefore that *Holiness* should efficiently make men proud is impossible, any more then *Health* can make men *sick*, or *Darkness* can be caused by *Light*. And if objectively any be Proud of his *Holiness*, that is but in such a measure as he is *unholy*. *Holiness* doth ever mortifie  
Pride,



*Pride*, and contain Humility and self-denial, as an essential part : All Christs Disciples learn of him in their measure to be meek and lowly.

9. Let experience tell you whether it be not some worldly Honour or *parts and gifts*, that are the much commoner object of Pride then *Holiness*. I have oft heard talk of mens being proud of their *Humility and Holiness* : but the Temptations of my own soul, have comparatively layn but little that way ; nor have I observed it the common case of others, in any proportion with other kinds of Pride. Riches and Honours, and Beauty and Dignity, I see people ordinarily proud of. And I see many Proud of *Counterfeit Graces*, that have none that is *sincere* (as far as may be perceived by others) to be proud of. And I see many Proud of their *Learning*, and *Knowledge* and *nimble tongues*, a hundred fold more then ever I found true Christians, Proud of the *Love of God*, and a *Heavenly mind*. Alas we have much a doe for the most part, to discern that we *have* any of this at all, and to find so much of it in our selves as is necessary to our support and thankfulness.

10. Lastly consider, what abundance of Means the Lord hath adjoyned as Antidotes with his servants Honours to keep them from being puffed up with Pride ; and then tell me whether you dare charge God with error or want of wisdom in this thing.

1. The nature and life of *Holiness* consisteth in the souls retiring home to *God*, and adhering to him, and walking as before him. And there is not a more powerful means in the world, to keep *Humble* the soul, then the *Knowledge of God*. O when a poor sinner hath but any lively apprehensions of the Greatness, and Glory of the Lord, it amazeth him, and levelleth him with the dust, and abaseth him in his own esteem, and maketh him say with Job 40. 4, 5. [Behold I am vile, what shall I answer thee ? I will lay my hand upon my mouth] & 4, 5, 6. [I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor my self and repent in dust and ashes] One glympse of God were enough to humble any soul that truly knoweth him. A Godly man hath still to do with that Majesty that continually aweth him. His heart is with him : His thoughts are on him ; his work is with him. It is his word that he readeth, and heareth and discourseth of, and therefore as his word, with reverence and Godly fear, as know-



ing that our God is a consuming fire, *Heb. 12. 28, 29.* It is God that he prayeth to, that he meditateth on, and he praiseth, and hath still to do with. And therefore no wonder if he walk humbly with so holy and great a God.

2. The sin and misery that once they were in, while they knew not God, will do much to keep humble a gracious soul, as long as they live. Though God so forget our sins as to forgive them, yet we can scarce forgive our selves, or at least can never forget them. Though *he see* no sin in his servants, as *he seeth* it in the world, nor so as to hate and condemn them for it; yet *they see* that once they were as bad as the world, and were children of wrath as well as others; They condemn themselves when God doth justify them; and set their sins before their faces, which God doth cast behind his back. O those dark, those ungrateful, and those perilous dayes, will never be forgotten by the renewed soul. The thoughts of them shall ever keep us humble. When we look on the wicked miserable world, to think that such were many of us, though mercy have washed, and sanctified, and justified us.

3. Moreover, God hath so contrived the way of their salvation, that they shall have all by a Redeemer, and by free Grace, and none shall be justified by the works of the Law, nor by any merit of his own; but *Boasting is excluded by the Law of faith, Rom. 3. 19, 27, 28.* and we shall have nothing but what we receive besides and contrary to our desert.

4. And alas too much corruption still remaineth in us: We have *flesh that fighteth against the spirit, Rom. 7. 24. Gal. 5. 17.* We know but in part, and Love God but in part, and serve him with such constant weakness, that these things are usually such humbling matters to a gracious soul, that were it not for the Comforter, they would be unable to look up. O to feel how dark we are! how far from God! how strange to heaven! how little we believe, and know, and love! these are humbling thoughts indeed to a soul that is acquainted with it self. No poverty, beggary, or the reproach in the world, would be so humbling to them. To find such remnants of that odious sin, that cost them dear, and had cost them dearer, if it had not cost their Lord so dear, this is constant matter of humiliation.

5. And too often do their corruptions get advantage of them, and produce some actual sin, of thought, word or deed: and this also must be grievous to them.

6. The



6. The very *Bodily infirmities* of Believers, are a constant help to keep them humble. They have all this *treasure but in earthen vessels*, 2 Cor. 4. 7. Their souls are here so poorly lodged in corruptible Tabernacles of earth, and so meanly clothed with frail, diseased, mortal flesh, that it is madness to be proud.

7. And the *many and great afflictions* of the godly, are medicines that are purposely given them by their Physician to cure Pride, and keep them humble. Why else must their sufferings be so many? and why must they daily bear the Cross? but that they may be conformed to the image of Christ.

8. And to the same end it is that God doth let loose upon them *so many enemies*. All Satans temptations, and the worlds allurements and vexations, and all their disappointments here, and all the scorns and mocks of the ungodly, and the censures and slanders of wicked tongues, and often bitter persecutions, what are they but the bitter medicines of God (permitted and ordered by him, though caused by the Devil and wicked men) to save the servants of the Lord, from the sin and danger of being lifted up? Do you say that their *Honour* will make them proud? Why *you* that thus oppose them and despise them, are *curing* them of their *pride*, and do not know it: as Scullions scoure the rust off the vessels for their Masters use; and as Leeches draw out the blood that causeth the disease; and as the Jews by their sin promoted the Redemption of the world by the death of Christ. When God seeth his servants in danger of being lifted up above measure, he oft sendeth a messenger of Satan (who may be an Executioner of Gods chastisements) to buffet them, (2 Cor. 12. 7.) Sometimes by slanders, sometime by reproaches, sometime by imprisonments or greater sufferings, and sometimes by horrid troublefom temptations.

9. The very *foresight* of death it self is a *humbling means*: and the last enemy Death, is yet unconquered, and our Bodies must corrupt in dust and darkness, and be kept in the grave as common earth, till the Resurrection, that the soul may not grow proud that hath such a body.

11. And the *Day of Judgement* is so described to us in the Scripture, as tends to keep the soul in awe and in *Humility*. To think of *such a day*, and *such a reckoning*, before *such a God*, me thinks should humble us.