

1. And certainly the works of *Charity* are *Delightful*. There is not a pleasanter work in the world then to *do good*. Even *proud men* find a great delight in the *Reputation* or *Name* of *doing good* : that they may be accounted the great *Benefactors* of the *world*, that is, to be as *earthly gods* among their neighbours, and as the *Sun* is to the lower world, that all may be below them, and live by their influence. This is the top of that prosperity that sinful ambition doth aspire to. And if the *Name* of *Well-doing* be so pleasant to the *Proud*, the Conscience of the thing it self should be more pleasant to the upright. *Open bounty* is the *hypocrites glory* : But to do good in *secret* is the *believers pleasure* ; for their *Father which seeth in secret*, shall reward them *openly* : Yea the very delight of doing good, and especially a great or publike good, a spiritual and everlasting good, is a reward unto it self. It is the speech of Christ recited by *Paul*, *Acts 20. 35.* that it is more blessed to give then to receive.

There are many things concurring that make it very *Pleasant* to *do good*. It proceeds from the power of *Love* : and the exercise of *Love* is pleasant. And *Love* makes our Brethren to be to us as our selves, and consequently their welfare is as our own, and rejoiceth us as if our selves received, all that they receive. And what abundant pleasure then hath a Believer ? When so many thousand of his brethren, do receive so many thousand benefits daily from *God* himself : and all these are to the Christian, through the union and power of *Love*, as if he had received them all himself. But especially when he himself is the instrument of conveyance. The poor have comfort in receiving of relief ; but nothing in comparison of *his that gives it*, if it be done for the *sake of Christ*, in *uprightness* of heart. A poor man receiveth from the giver perhaps but an outward small commodity : But the upright giver receiveth from *God*, the sense of his acceptance, and peace of conscience, with the promise of an everlasting recompence : A mite, or a cup of cold water, given to a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, or to a Disciple in the name of a Disciple, shall certainly be rewarded, *Matth. 10. 40.*, 41, 42.

A true Believer is *Covetous* to *do good*, as others are to receive it : and studyeth for opportunities of laying out his gifts and wealth for *God*, as others study to gather it for themselves. As a worldling studyeth for a good bargain, that he may grow rich ; a



true Believer studyeth for opportunities to lay out that he hath for God, and to improve his Masters stock to the best advantage. The Covetous doth not more long to get more, then Believers do to be rid of that they have, in the way and on the terms, as may do most good, and be best accepted : And they are even afraid lest opportunities of doing good should over-slip them, and the seed-time should pass by : A Believer knows that, as his life and soul, so his worldly riches, are nowhere sure but in the hand of God : And therefore if they can procure his security, and get him to receive it, and return it them in Heaven with the promised advantage, they have then secured it indeed : All is lost that God hath not, in one way or other : and all is secured that he hath, and for which we have his promise. This is *laying it up in heaven*, *Matth. 6. 21.* While we keep it, we cannot secure it from thieves: When we have disposed of it according to the Will of God, upon the warrant of his promise, it is then in *his Custody*, and then it is safe : Neither rust or moath can then corrupt it, nor the strongest thieves break through and steal. To be Good, and do Good, is to belikest unto God ; and therefore must needs be the sweetest life.

2. Works of *Justice* also have their *pleasure* : For they demonstrate the Justice of God himself, from whom they do proceed. That which is most *Pleasant to God*, should be most *Pleasant unto us*. And as he hath bid us, *not forget to do good and to communicate, because with such sacrifice he is well-pleased*, Heb. 13. 16. so he hath told us that he *delighteth in the exercise of loving-kindness, judgement, and righteousness in the earth*, Jer. 9. 24. He hath shewed us what is good : and what doth he require of us, but to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with our God? Mich. 6. 8. And therefore he commandeth Israel, Hos. 12. 6. [*Turn thou to thy God : Keep Mercy and Judgement : and wait on thy God continually.*] Private justice between man and man, and family-justice between parents and children, masters and servants, and Political justice between the Magistrates and the people, do all maintain the order of the world, and procure both publike and private peace. It is selfishness and injustice, tyrannie, oppression, disobedience and rebellion, that procure the miseries of the world : But Righteousness is safe and sweet.

2. You have heard of the Pleasure of *Holy Actions*, both *Internal* and *External* : The truth is evident also from the *Objects* of



of these *Acts*, and the *matter from which* a believer may derive his *Pleasures*. And O what an Ocean of delight is here before us ! Were our powers, capacities and acts but answerable to the *Objects*, we should presently have the Joies of heaven.

I. A Believer hath the *ever blessed God himself* to derive his comforts from. He hath his Nature and Attributes to be his comfort : He hath his near Relations to afford him comfort ; and this is more then to have all the world. It is a God of Infinite Power, and Wisdom, and Goodness, that we believe in, that we Love, and Worship, and Obey. It is also a Father Reconciled to us, that hath taken us in Covenant to him as his people, through Jesus Christ. And where shall we find comfort if not in God ? It is in vain to look for that from any creature, that is not to be found in him. Poor worldlings ! you have nothing that is worth the having, but the crumms that fall from the childrens table. God is our Portion, and the world is yours : and yet you have less even in this world then we. You have the shadow, and we have the substance : You have the shell, and we the kernell : You have the straw and chaff, and true believers have the corn : Your comforts are shaken with every storm ; and tost up and down by the Justice of God, or the Pride of man : But God that is our Portion is unchangeable : Yesterday, to day, and the same for ever : We have a *Kingdom that cannot be moved*, Heb. 12. 28. Persecutors cannot take our God from us, nor can any thing separate us from his Love, Rom. 8. 36. They may separate us from our houses, from our Countries, from our friends, from our riches, our liberties, our lives, from our Books, our company and Ordinances, but not from God, who is our great Delight. In poverty, in persecution, in sickness, and at death, we have still our interest in God : A Christian is never in so low a state, but he hath a God to whom he may go for comfort, who is more to him then your sweetest pleasures. Is it not a pleasure to have such a God as can cure all diseases, supply all wants, overcome all enemies, deliver in all dangers, and hath promised that he will do it so far as is for our good ! If he want water that hath the Sea, or he want land that hath all the earth, or he want light that hath the Sun, yet doth he not need to want delight that hath the Lord to be his God, if he do but keep in the pathes of grace. And are you yet unresolved, whether Godliness be the most Pleasant Life ? Take all your pleasures, and make your best of them, may



I but have the Lord to be my God, and I hope I shall never desire to change with you.

2. A Holy life is therefore *Pleasant*, because we have a *full sufficient Saviour*, from whom we may daily fetch delight. The Eternal Son of God is become the Healer of our wounds, our Peace-maker with the Father, the Conquerour of our enemies, the Ransom for our sins, the Captain of our salvation, the Head of his Church, and the Treasure of all our Hopes and Joies! Sin and misery are the works of Satan, which Christ came into the world to destroy. If Hypocrites can steal a little Peace to their Consciences, from a false conceit that they have a part in Christ, what comfort may it be to the true Believer, that hath a sure and real interest in him! That is the sad and miserable life, when you are out of Christ, and strangers to his Covenant, and cannot say his benefits are yours, but you are yet in your sins, without his righteousness: But when we have a special interest in him, the foundation of our everlasting joy is laid, and the heart of sin and misery is broken: What fear or sorrow can you name, that I may not fetch a sufficient remedy against from Christ? What can the Prince of darkness say to our discomfort, which we may not answer by Arguments from Christ? By this judge of the Comfort of a Holy life. If the Godly over-look the Grounds of Joy, that are laid in Christ, and live in a mistaken sorrow, that is not for want of Reasons and warrant to rejoyce, but for want of a right discerning of those Reasons. But what have you that are ungodly, to answer against all the terrours of the Law? or to answer against all the accusations of your consciences? or to comfort you against the remembrance of your approaching misery? While you have no part in Christ, you have no right to comfort. One thought of Christ to a believing soul, may afford more *Delight* then ever you will find in a sinful life.

3. Moreover, we have the *Holy Spirit of Christ*, that is purposely given us to be our *Comforter*: And if that be not a pleasant life that is managed by such a Guide, and that be not likest to be a joyful soul, that is posselt by the Spirit of joy it self, there is no joy then on earth to be expected. Hath God promised his Spirit to *comfort you* that are *wicked in your sin*? No, it is the malicious deceiving spirit that is *your Comforter*: that by his comforts he might keep you from solid, spiritual, everlasting comforts:



forts; But the Repenting, Believing soul that is united unto Christ, and hath already had the *spirit* for his *conversion*, it is he that hath the promise of the *spirit* for his *consolation*. And if that be not the most comfortable life, where the God of Heaven becomes the *comforter*, we cannot then know the effect by the cause. If *Life* it self will *quicken*; if *light* it self will *illuminate*; the *comforting spirit* will certainly *comfort*, in the degree and season as God seeth meet, and the soul is fitted to receive it.

4. Moreover, we have the *whole treasure* of the Gospel to go to for our Delight. And little doth the sensual unbelieving soul know what sweetness, what supporting pleasures may be from thence derived. I had rather have the holy word of God to go to for contents, then the treasures of the rich, or the pleasures of the sensual, or the flatteries and vain glory of the ambitious man: All that the world doth make such a pudder about, which they ride and run for, which they so much glory in, will never afford them so much Content, as one Scripture promise will do to a truly faithful soul. I must profess before Angels and men, that I had rather have one Promise of the Love of God, and the life to come, which is contained in the holy Scriptures, then to have all the riches, pleasures, and honours of this world. My God, this was my Covenant with thee, and to this I stand. O blessed be the Lord, that hath provided us such a Magazine of Delight as is this heavenly sacred Book! The Precepts appoint us a pleasant work: The strictest prohibitions do but restrain us from our own calamities, and keep out of our hands the knife by which we would cut our fingers: The severest threatnings do but deterre us from running into the consuming fire, and hedge about the devouring gulf, lest we should foolishly cast our selves therein. And these are the bitterest parts of that holy word. But when we read the promises of a Saviour, and the wonderful history of his Incarnation, and of his holy self-denying life, his conquests, miracles, death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, and his promise to return; when we read of the foundation which he hath laid, and the building which he intends to finish, of his rich abundant promises to his chosen, what provision do we find for our abundant joys! No strait can be so great, no pressure so grievous, no enemies so strong, but we have full consolation offered us in the promises, against them all. We have promises of



the pardon of all our sins, and promises of heaven itself; and what can we have more! we have promises suited to every state, both prosperity and adversity. What do we need which we have not a promise of? And the word of God is no deceit. What but a promise can comfort them that are short of the possession? May I not have more joy in *sickness with a promise*, then the *ungodly without a promise in their health*? A *promise in prison* sets a man as at liberty! A *promise in Poverty* is more then *riches*. A *promise at death* is better then life. What I have a *promise of*, I may be sure of: but what you possess without a promise, you may lose (and your souls and hopes with it) this night. There is no condition on earth so hard to a man that hath interest in the promises, in which he may not have plentiful relief. We live by *faith*, and not by *sense*; And we reckon more on that as ours, which we *hope* for, then which we do *possess*. We are sure that there is no true felicity on earth; If then we have a promise of Heaven, when Infidels lie down in the dust with desperation, have we not a more comfortable life then they?

5. Moreover we have *Heaven it self* to fetch our comfort from. Not *Heaven in sight*, or in *Possession*; but *Heaven in Promise*, and seen by *faith*. And if *Heaven* will not afford us pleasure, whence shall we expect it? Even *sensual men* can rejoyce as well in what they *see not*, if they are *assured it is theirs*, as in what they *see*: And why then may not Believers do so much more? A worldling when he *seeth not* his money in his chest, or at use, or his lands and cattel that are far from him, can yet rejoyce in them, as if he *saw them*: And should not we rejoyce in the certain Hopes of Heaven though yet we see it not? when I am pained in sickness, and role in restless weariness of my flesh, if then I can say [ *I shall be in Heaven,* ] may it not be the inward rejoycing of my soul? You know where you are, but you know not where you *shall be*. The Believer knoweth where *he shall be*, as truly as he knoweth where *he is* (unless it be one that by his frailty hath not reacht unto assurance; who yet hath reached unto Hope.) What great matter is it if I lay in greatest pain, if I can say [ *I shall have everlasting ease in Heaven* ] Or if I lay in prison, or in sordid poverty, and can say [ *I shall shortly be with Christ.* ] Or if I had lost the love of all men, and could say [ *that I shall everlastingly enjoy the Love of God?* ]

Molt.



Most of your comforts do come in by the way of your thoughts. And what *Thoughts* should so rejoyce the soul as the thoughts of our abode with Christ for ever? If a day in the Courts of God be so delightful, what is ten thousand millions of ages in the Court of Glory? and all then as fresh as at the first day? *There* it is that our sin will be put off: Our carnal enmity laid by: our temptations will be over: our enemies will all have done: our fears and sorrows will be at an end; Our desires will be accomplished: Our differences be reconciled: Our charity perfected, and our expectations fully satisfied, and Hope turned into full fruition. O may I but be able with stronger faith, and fuller confidence to say [*that Heaven is mine, and when this tabernacle is dissolved, I shall be with Christ,*] my life and my death will be delightful, and I need not complain for want of pleasure. Let who will take the pleasures of the flesh, may I but have this. In prayer, in meditation, in holy conference, in every duty, it is the expectation of approaching blessedness that drops in sweetness into all. No wonder if it can sweeten a course of duty, when it can make light the greatest sufferings, and turn pain into pleasure, and death into life, as being unworthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed.

But the wicked have none of these delights, unless they steal a little by self-deceit: They may make their best of their present pleasures, and of the cup while it is at their mouths, and of their wealth and honour while it is in their hands: but its little pleasure that they can fetch from Heaven! The thought of it may rather feed their terrors. What pleasure they can pick out of the dirt, let them make their best of: But heavenly pleasures are above their reach.

So much for the *Objects* of a Holy life, from whence a Believer may fetch his pleasure.

Object. But you tell us only of the Pleasant part; but the troublesome and bitter part you say nothing of.

Ans. Come on, and say your worst of a Holy life, and tell us which is that bitter part.

Object. 1. The scripture requireth us to mortifie the flesh, to renounce the world, to forbear our Pleasures, to deny our selves, and to take up our Cross and follow Christ; and will you call this a pleasant life?



*Ans.* And do you indeed think this so sad a business? Here are *three* things contained in this objection, as the matter that seemeth so displeasing to you. 1. The parting with your *sins*. 2. The *sufferings* that are principally for *sin*. 3. The *sufferings* that are principally for the cause of *Christ*.

1. And do you think that *sin* is so *lovely* a thing that a man cannot *live merrily* without it? *sin* is the breach of the Laws of God, and the injury of the Heavenly Majesty, and the provocation of his hot displeasure, and the poison and sickness of the soul. And is it your *sport* to *abuse the Lord*? Is your *pleasure gone*, if you may not *injure the God* that made you? What *natures*, what *sinful hearts* have you, that must have *such pleasures*? Cannot a man *live merrily* unless he may provoke the God of Heaven, and trample upon mercy and despise salvation! Can you not *live in pleasure*, unless you may *drink poyson*, or keep your *sickness*, or tumble in the *dirt*? One would think that *mischief* to our selves or others should be small pleasure to an *honest mind*. Its no *pleasure* to you to spit in the face of your dearest friends; or to abuse your parents, or to provoke your neighbours; and is it such pleasure as you cannot *forsake*, to *abuse the Lord*, and wrong your *souls*? The *pleasures of sin* do tend to *pain*: some *pain* doth usually attend it here, and *much more hereafter*: God would *prevent your pain and misery*, by preventing or destroying your *sin*: And do you accuse his word because it would keep you from so costly, so bitter, so dangerous delights! It is for your *Pleasure*, that this *pleasure* is forbidden you. The *sweetness* of the poyson of *sin* will be soon gone, when the gripings of the tormented Conscience do remain. You will forbear the most *delightful fruits or drinks*, if your Physician tell you they will hazzard your *life*, or torment you afterward. You are short-sighted, and short-witted, and look but to the *present relish* of things, and choose them if you taste them *sweet*; but God looks to your *everlasting pleasures*. So that you may well reckon it among the *pleasures of a holy life*, that you have such *preservatives* against the greatest sorrows: and that you are kept from the *pleasures* that will be *bitterness* in the latter end.

Yea at the present hath not *drunkenness* more trouble attending it then *sobriety*? Reckon up the consuming of mens *estates*, the troubles of their families, the sicknesses of their bodies, the shame and



and contempt that it bringeth on them *here*, and the wounds of their consciences, and tell me whether it were not *more pleasure* to forbear those cups than to drink them. And hath not *Gluttony* more trouble attending it than *temperance* ! By that time the charge be paid, the sickness that *fulness* breedeth be endured, the physician paid, and all the effects of *gluttony* overcome, you will find that the *pleasure* was little to the pain. The like I may say of *Uncleanness*, *worldliness*, *passion*, *pride*, and all other sins that usually bring a punishment with them.

2. And then for *Castigatory sufferings*, it is not *Godliness* that is the cause of them (as sufferings.) *Sin* less, and *suffer* less. Provoke not God, and he will spare the rod. Do you hurt your selves like careless children, and then blame God for bidding you, [Take heed?] God doth not punish men for *Holiness*, and well doing. It is for want of *Holiness* that you are punished. I think therefore that it is part of the *Pleasure* of a *Holy life*, that it keeps men out of the way of punishment. You must have pain, and unpleasant physick, when once you have taken a surfeit of sensual delight, and made your selves sick with too much of the creature. *Holiness* would have prevented this : And when *thats too late*, it would cure it by the cheapest means that your health will bear. Is it not then unreasonable when you have troubled your selves, to blame you physician for troubling you in order to a cure ?

3. And for those sufferings that are principally for *Christ*, consider, 1. That they are also originally from *sin*, and therefore you may know what to blame for the bitter part. Though the Time, and place, and manner and measure of your sufferings may proceed from the gracious providence of your Lord ; yet that supposeth that *sin* had brought you into a state of suffering in general before, which *Christ* did not presently and plenarily remit and take off, but disposeth of them by his wisdom, as may make most for his *Glory* and your good. 2. And will you grudge at a little transitory pain, that is usually requited with comforts in this life, and rewarded with pleasures unspeakable hereafter ! You grudge not to cast away your seed in hope of an increase at harvest ; nor do you murmur at your daily labour if it be but blessed with success. And will you grudge to pass through sufferings to glory, and to sow in tears that you may reap in joy ? It is



but few that suffer Martyrdom, or any great matter for the cause of Christ, especially in our dayes: And those few have usually more joy then sorrow. If you knew the *joyes* of *Martyrs*, you would never so shrink at the *sufferings* of *Martyrs*. And for a few mocks and scorns of foolish men, it is scarcely worth the name of a *suffering*: Nor is it so much as wicked men suffer in their sin. As Godliness is a shame among the foolish wicked men; so wickedness is a shame among all that are pious, wise and sober. And why should not the shame of sin be more loathed then the undeserved shame of honesty? Alas, all this is nothing to the sorrows of the ungodly. A little of the vinegar of affliction will make us relish our prosperity the better, and through our frailtie is become a *necessary sauce* to that luscious state that we are so apt to surfeit on! Do you not see what lamentable work prosperity, victories, honour, and worldly wealth and power have made in the world? and shall we grudge at that necessary moderate affliction that saveth us from the like overthrows? O how few are able to withstand the temptations of great or long prosperity! Experience of the frequent, woful falls of prospering men, that seemed once as firm as any, hath made me fear when I hear of the exaltation of my friends, and the less to grieve for their adversity or my own. Holiness therefore is the most pleasant way, notwithstanding the afflictions that do attend it: And if God will give me an *increase* of *Holiness*, (of Faith, and Love, and a Heavenly mind) though it be with an *increase* of my *Afflictions*, I hope I shall take it as an *incerease* of my *pleasure*, and give him the praise of so merciful a dispensation. And thus I have proved to you from the Nature of *Holiness*, that it is the most *Pleasant* way.

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II. **I** Should next shew you the *Delights* of *Holiness*, from the *Helps* and *Concomitants* that promote our *pleasure*. But because I am afraid of lengthening my discourse too much, I shall only name a few things of many.

I. God being our *God in Covenant*, his Love is to the holy soul, as the Sun is to our bodies, to illuminate, warm, revive, and comfort them; and did not sin cause some eclipses, or raise some clouds, or shut the windows, we should rejoyce continually, and find



find how sweet a thing it is, being justified by faith, to have peace with God.

2. We are in Covenant with Jesus Christ, who intercedeth for our peace with God. And the Father *always* beareth his intercession, John 11. 42. And therefore that measure of comfort which he seeth suitable to our present state, we shall be sure of. Who shall condemn us? when it is Christ that dyed, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us, Rom. 8. 34. We have a great high-Priest that is passed into the heavens, even Jesus the Son of God; one that is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are, but without sin; and therefore through him we may come boldly to the throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. ] Heb. 4. 14, 15, 16. What comforting words hath he spoken to us in the Gospel? and what comfortable relations hath he put us into? He calleth us *his friends*, if we do his Commandments, as if *servants* were too low a title, John 15. 14, 15. Peace he leaveth with us: his Peace he giveth to us; not as the world giveth: commanding us that we let not our hearts be troubled or afraid, Joh. 14. 27. To those that Love him, he hath promised his *Fathers Love*, and that they will come to him, and make their abode with him. John 14. 23. If any man serve him, let him follow him; and where Christ is, there shall his servant be; if any man serve Christ, him will the Father honour, John 12. 26.

3. That we might have sure Consolation, the Spirit of Christ is given to be our Comforter: and we are in Covenant with him also, who surely will perform his Covenants.

4. The servants of Christ have his *holy image*, the mark of his children, which is the in-dwelling Evidence of his Love, to assure them of their happiness.

5. They have manifold experience of the kindness of their Father, in hearing their prayers, and helping them in their straits, and delivering them in their distresses.

6. They have also the help of the Experience of others, even of all the godly with whom they do converse, who can comfort them with their comforts, and tell them how good they have found the Lord.

7. They have the Ministers of Christ appointed by office to be the helpers of their Faith and Joy: to be the messengers of glad tidings;



*tidings* to them, and to tell them from God of the pardon of their sins, and of his favour to them in Christ: and to heal the broken-hearted, and preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, &c. *Luke* 4. 18. To have a deputed Officer of Christ to *absolve the penitent*, and *deliver them pardon in the name of Christ*, and to pray for them, and direct them, and resolve their doubts, and shew them the promises that may support them, and help to profligate their temptations, must needs be much to the comfort of believers: As the care of a father is the comfort of the child; and the care of the Physician is a comfort to the sick.

8. They have all the *Ordinances* suited to their comfort: the Word read, preached and meditated on: the Sacraments and the public praises of God, and Communion of the Saints (of which before.)

9. They have *multitudes* of *Mercies* still about them, and every day renewed on them, to feed their comforts.

10. They have a promise that *all things shall work together for their good*; and so that all their *afflictions themselves* shall be their *commodities*, and *death it self* shall be their *gain*, *Rom.* 8. 28. *Phil.* 1. 21. and all their *enemies* shall be subdued by Christ the Prince of their salvation.

So that from this much you may see, that for *Joy* and *Pleasure*, there is no life that hath the advantages that a holy life hath. *As for the ungodly, they are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away*, *Psalms* 1. 4. These pleasures grow not in their wicked way, nor do such *strangers* know Believers joys.

III. **L**ASTLY, I should also have shewed you the Pleasure of Holiness by the *Effects*: But here also to avoid prolixity, I will but name a few.

1. *Holiness is Pleasing to God himself*; and therefore it must needs be pleasant to the *Saints* that have it: For it is their end and chiefest Pleasure to please God. They know that this is the end for which they were Created, Redeemed, and renewed: and therefore that is the most *Pleasant life* to them, in which they find that God is best Pleased. And therefore they labour, that whether *present or absent, they may be accepted of him*, *2 Cor.* 5. 9. They are



are an holy Priest-hood, to offer up Spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 2. 5.

2. Holiness must needs be Pleasant to the soul, because it is the spiritual health of the soul, and the means and certain evidence of its safety. And Health is a constant sensible delight : And to know that our souls have scapt the danger of the wrath of God, and everlasting misery, must needs be a greater Pleasure then any the matters of this world can afford. One serious thought of the salvation, which Holiness is the earnest of, may give that true contentment to the soul, that all the wealth and glory of the world can never give.

3. Holiness removeth fears and troubles, and therefore must needs be a Pleasant state. It removeth the fears of the wrath of God, and of damnation : and the fears of all destructive evils : It tends to heal the wounded soul, and pacifie the clamorous conscience, and abate all worldly and groundless sorrows ; for which the wicked have no true cure.

4. Holiness is the destruction of sin : and sin is the cause of all calamities : and therefore Holiness must needs be Pleasant.

5. Holiness doth consist in rejoycing Graces, that are exceeding pleasant in the exercise ; as Faith, Hope, Love, Patience, &c. yea it consisteth in Joy it self, Rom. 14. 17.

6. It fits the soul for Communion with God, who is the fountain of Delights ; and it brings us near him, and acquaints us with him as a God of Love : and therefore must needs be a Pleasant state.

7. You see by experience, that when once men have tryed a Holy life, they think they can never have enough of it : The more Holy they are, the more Holy they would be. He that hath most, would fain have more : And the weakest desireth no less then to be perfect. And do you think men that have tryed it, would so long after more and more, if it were not pleasant ?

Judge also by the labour and diligence of the godly, who seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and make it the principal business of their lives : Would they make all this ado for nothing ? Or for that which is a matter of no delight ?

Judge also by the delights which they voluntarily forsake, when they let go all their sinful pleasures, and renounce all the glory of



the world; would they make this exchange, if they had not found a more pleasant course, and that which tends to everlasting pleasure?

8. You see also that the truly Godly, when once they have tryed a holy life, will never go back again to their former pleasures, but loath the very remembrance of them: It is not all the honours, and riches, and pleasures in the world, that can hire them to forsake a holy life. Sure therefore they find it the most pleasant course; if not in sensible delights, yet at least in easing their consciences, and securing their minds from the terrors that sinful pleasures would produce. If they found that Godliness answered not their expectation, they have leisure enough, and temptations too many, to turn back into the state from whence they came. But how would they abhor such a motion as this?

9. If Holiness were not a Pleasant thing, it could not help us to bear up under all afflictions, nor make us rejoyce in tribulation, as it doth. That which can sweeten gall and wormwood, must needs be very sweet it self. That which can make reproach, and scorn, and poverty, and imprisonment, either sweet or tolerable, is sure it self a pleasant thing.

10. Lastly, if Holiness were not pleasant, it could not make Death it self so easie, nor take off its terrors, nor cause the Martyrs to suffer so joyfully for Christ: Death is the King of terrors, and so bitter a cup, that it must needs be a pleasant thing indeed, that can sweeten it.

BESIDES all this that hath been said, let me briefly have some general aggravations, of the *Delights of Holiness*. And compare it as we go with the *Delights of the ungodly*.

1. The *Delights of Holiness* are the most Great, and Glorious, and Sublime delights. They are fetcht from the most Great and Glorious things. It is God, and his Grace, and everlasting glory that feed our pleasures. Whereas the *Delights of sensual men*, are fed with trifles: What do they rejoyce in but the fooleries of sin, and the filthyness of their own transgressions! What is it that contenteth them, but a dream of honour, or the good will and word of mortal men, or a brutish sportfulnesse, or the pleasing of the itch of lust, or the provision that they have laid up for the flesh?

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The treasures of a Kingdom excell not the treasure of a child's pin-box the thousandth part so much as Heaven excels the treasure of the ungodly. Judge therefore by the *matter* that feeds their pleasure, which of the two is the more pleasant life: to sport in their own shame, and laugh at the brink of misery, with the ungodly; or to delight our selves in the Love of God, and joyce in the assured hope of Glory with the true believer?

2. The Delights of *Holiness* are the *most rational, well-grounded, sure delights*. They are not delusory, nor grounded on mistakes or fancies. They are warranted by the *truth* and *All-sufficiency* of God, and the *certainty* of his *promise*, and the *immutability* of his counsels, and the *sure Reward* prepared for his Saints. None but a lying malicious Devil, or his instruments that participate of his nature, or a blind, corrupted, partial flesh, will ever go about to question the foundations of our faith and comforts. The hopes and comforts that are built upon this Rock, will never fall, nor make us ashamed.

But the ungodly joyce in their own delusions: It is ignorance and error that they are beholden to for their mirth. They laugh in their sleep, or as mad men in their distraction. Did they know that Satan rejoiceth in their joyes; and that an offended God is alwayes present, and how poor a matter it is that they joyce in, it would marr their mirth. If they saw the Hell that they are near, or well-considered where they stand, and what a case their souls are in, they would have little list to play or laugh. If they knew aright the shortness of their pleasures, and the length of their sorrows, and in what a doleful case their wealth and fleshly delights will leave them, it would turn their laughter into mourning and lamentation. So that they joyce but (as a sick man in a phrensie, or as a fool upon some good news to him that is false;) upon *meer mistake*.

3. The Delights of *Holiness* are the *most pure Delights*, and *most entire and compleat*. There is no *Evil* in it, mixed with the *Good*, and therefore nothing to interrupt the joy. Our joyes indeed are too much interrupted: but that is not from any hurt that is in a *holy life*; but by the *contrary sin*, which *Holiness* must work out. If men take poyson, let them not blame nature that strives against it, if they are sick; but let them blame themselves, and the poyson, that puts nature to expell it. In *Holiness*



it self there is nothing but Good, and therefore nothing that should grieve us.

But it is far otherwise with sensual delights : As they are *sinful*, they are *wholly evil* : As they are *natural*, feeding upon the creature alone, they are as it is, a mixture of *Vanity* and *Vexation*. Every creature hath its unsuitableness and imperfection, by which it *disturbeth* even where it *pleaseth*, and *troubleth* where it *comforteth*, and *frustrateth* and *disappointeth* more then it *satisfieth*. The more we *Love* it, usually the more we *suffer* by it. That thing which we most *excessively* love, is ordinarily our *sharpest scourge*. That friend whom we most *excessively* love, is usually our *greatest sorrow* : either by *their failing* our *expectations*, or by *our failing theirs*, or *our insufficiency* to accomplish the good which we desire of them. If they prove *unkind*, it is more grievous then the unkindness of many others : If they prove *faithful*, how deeply do we suffer with them in all their sufferings ? *Their wants* do pinch us as our own : *Their reproaches* are our *shame* : *Their losses* take as much from us : Their sickness paineth us : Their death half killeth us : And he that is so *happy* as to have *many such friends*, is so *unhappy* as to have more burdens, fears and griefs to suffer, and more deaths to die then other men. But especially to *ungodly men*, these earthly comforts are uncomfortable, because *they* have none of the Divine delights that are the *kernel* and the *spirits*, but take up with the *shell* or *husk* : And because their mirth is mixt with their own misery, which conscience sometime gripes them for with such deep remorse as cools their comforts : And some *thoughts* of the *shortness* of their pleasures will be stepping in, and ending them before their time : So that the *bitterness* of *worldly things* surpasseth the *delight*.

4. The *Delights of Holiness* are *Deep and Solid*, and therefore do *stablish and corroborate* the *Hearts*. But *sensual delights* are like childrens laughter : they are *flight*, and *outside*, and *flitting* and *vain* : As children laugh in one breath, and cry in the next ; so worldly joys are followed at the heels by sorrows ; For they lie not deep, and fortifie not the heart against distresses, as the delights of faith and holiness do.

5. The *Pleasures of the Saints* are the gift of *God*, and allowed of by him ; commanded by his word, and promoted by his promises and mercies, and are but the fruits of his Everlasting

Love :



Love: And being so *Divine*, they must needs be excellent.

But the *Pleasures* of *ungodly* worldly men are partly forbidden and condemned by God, and partly contradicted and confounded, by his terrible *threatnings*, and the discovery of his wrath. *There is no Peace saith the Lord, to the wicked, Isa. 48.22. & 57.21.* God doth disown and protest against their peace. If they will keep it, and make it good, it must be against his will. He forbiddeth joy to a rebellious people, *Hos. 9.1. Rejoyce not O Israel for joy as other people: for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God.* He calleth them to weeping and mourning, and renting of the heart, *Joel. 2. 12, 13.* Hear what God saith to them in their greatest pleasures, *Jam. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.* Go to now ye rich men, weep and howle for your miseries that shall come upon you: Your riches are corrupted and your garments moth-eaten: Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire: yee have heaped treasure together for the last days: ——— Yee have lived in pleasure on earth, and been wanton: Yee have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter ———] A man would think it should either Turn them, or Torment them, and fill their hearts with continual horroar, to find God thus solemnly protesting against their peace, and sentencing them to woe and sorrows.

6. The *Pleasures* of the *Godly* are *clean and noble, and honest and honourable.* They delight in things of greatest worth, for which they had their *Natures*, their *Time* and all. But the *Pleasures* of *sinners* are *base and filthy*: They Delight as swine in wallowing in the mire: and as the dog to eat his own Vomit, *2. Pet. 2. 22.* They delight to wrong the God that made them, and by whom they live, and to cross the ends of their lives and mercies; and to drive away all true delights, and to undo themselves. This is the matter of their delight.

7. The *Devil* is a great enemy to the *Delights* of *Holiness*; which is a sign that they are excellent. He doth what he can to keep men from the *Holy State*, lest they should meet with the *Happiness* that attends it. And if he prevail not in this his chief design, he doth what he can to fill up the lives of believers with calamities. All the enemies that he can raise up against them, shall by temptations, scorns or injuries, assault their comforts; All the storms that he can raise shall be sure to fall upon them.



How busie is he to fill them with *fears* and *doubtings*? and to cast perplexing thoughts into their minds? or to *mislead* them into some *perplexing ways*? and fasten on them *entangling doctrines*, or *disquieting principles*? How cunningly and diligently will he argue against their peace and comforts? and seek to hide the Love of God, and dishonour the blood and grace and covenant of Christ? and cross the comforting workings of the spirit? How subtilly will he question all our Evidences? and extenuate all Gods comforting mercies? and do all that he can, that the godly may have a *Hell on Earth*, though they shall have none hereafter. It is sure an excellent Joy and Pleasure, which Satan is so great an enemy to.

8. The *Delights of Holiness* do make us better; They are so far from disordering the mind, and leading us to sin, that they compose and purifie the mind, and make sin much more odious to us, then before. No man hates sin so much as he that hath seen the pleased face of God, and tasted most the sweetness of his grace, and tryed the pleasant paths of life. And therefore it is, that when a believer comes from fervent prayers, or from heavenly conference or meditation, or from hearing the blessed word of life, laid open plainly, and applyed powerfully to his soul, he would then abhor a temptation to sensual delights, if they were set before him. Till we lose the *relish of Holy things*, and suffer our *Delight in God* to fade, we are seldome taken in the snares of any *fleshy vanities*. Money is dirt to us, and honour a *smoak*, and *lust* doth *stink*, as long as we maintain our *delight in God*. He is the best and highest Christian, that hath most of these *spiritual delights*.

But *fleshy Pleasures* make men worse; They intoxicate the mind, and fill it with vanity and folly; They are the snares to entrap us; and the harlots that do bewitch us, and defile the soul that should be chaste for God; The noise of this sensual foolish mirth, doth drown the voice of God and Reason, so that in the needfullest matters they cannot be heard. In their hunting and hawking, dicing and carding, drinking and revelling, feasting and dancing how little of God or heaven is on the sinners mind? seldome is the soul so unfit for duty, so incapable of instruction, so hardened against the word and warnings of the Lord, as in the depth of sensual delights. Then it is that they are [*foolish, disobedient, and deceived,*] when they are

[*serving*



[*serving divers lusts and pleasures*] as *Paul* that had tryed both ways, confesseth, *Tit. 3. 3.* None so unlike to be the servants of *Christ*, as they that are clothed in purple and fine linnen, and that fare sumptuously or deliciously every day, *Luk. 16.* To live in rioting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness, in strife and envying, and to make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof ] is the description of one that walks not honestly, and is far from a Christians life and hopes, *Rom. 13. 13, 14.* It is those voluptuous sensual sinners, that most obstinately shut out all reproofs, and refuse him that speaketh to them from heaven, and will not so much as soberly consider of the things that concern their everlasting peace ; and therefore are oft so forsaken of grace, that they grow to be scornors of the means of their salvation, and [ *being past feeling do give themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness* ] *Eph. 4. 19.* Which then is most desirable ? the healing or the wounding pleasures ? the quickening or the killing mirth ? the wholesome or the poisonous sweet ? the delights that mend us and further our salvation, or corrupting pleasures that drown men in perdition ?

9. The Delights of Holiness are kin to Heaven : They are of the same nature with those that Saints and Angels have with God (though we must acknowledge an unconceivable difference ) It is the same God, and the same Glory that now delighteth us as seen by faith, which shall then delight us, when seen by intuition with open face. We are solacing our selves in Love and Praise, with the same employment that we must have in Heaven. And therefore if Heaven be the state of Greatest joy and pleasure, the state of Grace, and work of Holiness, that is likest to it, must needs be next it.

But sensual pleasures are beastial and fordid, and so far unlike the Joys of Heaven, that nothing more withdraws the mind, or maketh it unmeet for Heaven.

10. Lastly, the delights of Holiness are durable, even everlasting. The further we goe, the greater cause we have of joy. It is not a mutable good that we rejoyce in, but in the immutable God, the antient of days, and in that Christ that loveth his spouse with an everlasting love ; and in the sure and faithful promises ; and in the hopes of the Kingdom that cannot be moved. The spring of our pleasures is in Heaven : and our rejoycing is but  
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the beginning of that which must there be perpetuated. Death cannot kill the joys of a believer : the grave shall not bury them : millions of ages shall not end them! Here they may be interrupted, because the pleased face of God may be eclipsed, and sin and Satan may cast malicious doubt into our minds ; and the neighbourhood of the flesh will force the mind to participate of its sufferings. But still God will keep their comforts alive, at least in the root ; and help them in the act, as we have need of them and are fit for them : And in the world of Joy for which he is preparing us, our Joy shall be perfected, and never have interruption or end. Holy-Festivals, and Ordinances, and sweetest Communion of Saints, and dearest Love of truest friends, and perfect health and prosperity in the world, and all other comforts set together, that this world affords, are but short emblems and small fore-tastes of the Joies which the face of God will afford us, and we shall have with Christ, his Saints and Angels, to all eternity.

But *sensual Pleasures* are of so short continuance, that they are gone before we feel well that we have them. The drunkard, the glutton, the fornicator, the gamester are drinking but a sugered cup of poyson : and merrily sowing the seeds of everlasting sorrow : Satan is but scratching them (as the butcher shaves the throat of the swine) before he kill them. One quarter of an hour ends the pleasure and leaves a damp of sadness in its room : He that hath had 40. or 50. years pleasures, hath no relish of it when it is past ; but it is as if it had never been : and much worse. He that hath spent a day, or moneth, or year in Pleasure, hath no more at night, or at the years end, when it is gone, then he that spent that time in sorrow. The bones and dust of thousands lie now in the Church-yard, that have tasted many a sweet cup and morsel, and have had many a merry wanton day : And are they now any better for it, then if they had never known it ? And are not the poor and sorrowful there their equals ? And doubtless their souls have as little of those pleasures as their dust. In Heaven they are abhorred : In Hell they are turned into tormenting flames, and remembered as fuel for the devouring fire. There are *Gluttons*, but no more good cheer : There are *Drunkards*, but no more drink : There are *Fornicators*, but no more *lustful pleasures* : There are the playful wasters of their time, but no more *sport and recreation* : There are the vain-glorious,