

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,



ous, proud, ambitious souls, but not in glory, honour and renown; but their aspiring hath cast them into the gulf of misery, and their pride hath covered them with utter confusion, and their glory is turned to their endless shame. Those that are now overwhelmed with the wrath of God, and shut up under desperation, are the souls that *lately* wallowed here in the *delights of the flesh*, and enjoyed for a season the pleasures of sin; and now what fruit have they of all their former seeming happiness? He that is feasted and gallantly adorned and attended to day, is crying for a drop of water in vain to morrow, *Luk. 16. 23, 24, 25, 26.* Christ tells you the gain of earthly riches, and the duration of earthly pleasures, to the ungodly, *Luk. 6. 24, 25.*

[*Woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation: woe to you that are full, for you shall hunger: woe to you that laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.*] that is, You that live a sensual life, and take up your pleasure and felicity here, shall find that all will end in sorrow. But [*blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled: blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh,* v. 21. that is, You that are contented to pass through sorrows and tribulation on earth, to the Kingdom where you have placed your happiness and hopes, shall find that your sorrows will end in joy; and therefore you are blessed while you seem miserable to the world, *Joh. 16. 20.* [*Ye shall weep and lament; but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.*] v. 22. [*Now you have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you*] We have a constant interest in the Fountain of all Joy; and if our sun be clouded, it is but for a moment. [*Our maker is our Husband: the Lord of hosts is his name: and our Redeemer the holy one of Israel; the God of the whole earth: — For a small moment may he forsake us, but with great mercy will he gather us: In a little wrath he may hide his face from us for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will he have mercy on us,* saith the Lord our Redeemer. As he swore that the waters of Noah should no more goe over the earth, so hath he sworn that he will not be wroth with his people, nor rebuke them. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills shall be removed; but his kindness shall not depart from us, nor the covenant of his peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on us] *Isa. 54. 5, 10, 19.* [*For his*



anger endureth but for a moment : in his favour is life : weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. ] Psal. 30. 5. Storms may arise that may affright us : but how quickly will they all be over ? [ Come my people (saith the Lord, Isa. 26. 20.) enter into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee : hide thy self as it were for a little moment, untill the indignation be overpast. ]

And as the momentary sorrow of the Godly is forgotten in everlasting Joy, so the Joy of the wicked is but for a moment, and is drowned in everlasting sorrows. Job 20. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. [ Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth, That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment ? Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds ; yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung : They which have seen him shall say, Where is he ? He shall flie away as a dream, and shall not be found : Yea he shall be chased away as a vision of the night : the eye also which saw him, shall see him no more ; neither shall his place any more behold him. ] Job 21. 12, 13. [ They take the Timbrell and Harp, and rejoyce at the sound of the Organs : they spend their daies in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. ]

It would grieve a considerate believer to look on a worldly sensual gallant, in the midst of his vain-glory, or any un sanctified man in his mirth and pleasure, and to think where that man will shortly be, and how the case will be altered with him, and where his sport and mirth will leave him. As it would sadden our hearts to see one of them struck dead in the place, or to see the Devil fetch them away, and spoil the game ; so should it grieve us to fore-see the stroak of death, and the condemnation of their souls to everlasting misery. And can that man much value the pleasure of ungodly men, that doth fore-see this end ? Would you not laugh at him that were a Prince but for a day, and must be the scorn of the world to morrow ? or that would choose one day of mirth and pleasure, though he knew it would fill the rest of his life with pain and misery ? If folly and stupidity were any wonder, it were a wonder that ungodly men can be merry, when their consciences tell them that they are not sure to stay one hour out of Hell ; nor to hold on their mirth till the end of the game : But while they are saying, [ Soul, take thy ease, eat, drink and be merry : ] they may suddenly be told from God, [ Thou fool, this night



night shall thy soul be required of thee ] and then whose is thy wealth? and then where is thy sport and mirth? *Luke 12.19,20.* As the tender flowers and Roses of the Spring, do fall before the nipping Frosts, and will not live in Winter storms; no more will your fading mirth endure the frowns of God, the face of death; nor scarce a *serious fore-thought* of the day that you are near. And such matter of horror is *continually before you*, while you are under the wrath and curse of God, in a carnal unregenerate state, that you are beholden to folly, security and stupidity for that *ease* which hindreth your *everlasting ease*.

So that all things considered, I must seriously profess, that (however the ungodly have some pleasant dreams, and may live a while in carelesness and stupidity, or sleere in the face, while the beginning of hell is in their consciences, yet) I must judge, that a life of Faith and Holiness are unspeakably sweet, if it were but for this, that they *save the Conscience* from the gripes, and fears, and terrible thoughts, that either sometime feed on the ungodly, or are ready to devour their mirth and them. So sad and frightful a thing it is, to be unsanctified; and in a state of sin, that it is an high commendation of the *delights of Holiness*, that they so much *deliver us* from those grievous terrours, and are so powerful an Antidote to preserve the heart from the wicked pangs and desperation. Believe it, when *conscience*, *death*, and *judgement*, are the messengers to declare your endless sorrows, you will then wish, and ten thousand times wish, that you had some of the Faith and Holiness of the Saints, to be a Cordial to your sinking hearts; and then you would take it as a matter of unspeakable joy, to be found in such a state as you now count sad and melancholy. Ask but a *dying man*, whether *fleshly pleasure* or *Godliness* be the *sweeter thing*? Now when the delusions of prosperity are gone, which do men most relish? and which is it that they would own? By the consent of all the wise men in the world, I may well conclude, that a *Holy life* is *incomparably* the most pleasant.

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BUT I know there are many things that seem to crosse all this that I have spoken, which will be the matter of the *Objections* of ungodly men, and therefore must have an answer, before we pass any further. And the principal *Objection* is from the too



common case of those that fear God, who walk so sadly, and doubt, and complain, and mourn so frequently, and shew little cheerfulness and joy, when many of the ungodly live in mirth, that you will think I speak against *experience*, when I say that a life of *Holiness* is so pleasant, and therefore that it is not to be believed. You will say, [*Do we not see the contrary in the sadness of their faces, and hear it in their sad lamenting words?*]

To this I must give many particulars in answer, which when you have laid together, you may see, that all this makes nothing against the *Pleasantness* of the waies of God.

And, 1. You must difference between the *Entrance* into holiness, and the *Progress*: and between a new beginner, that is but lately turned from his ungodliness, and one that hath had time to try and understand the wayes of God. Those that are *entering*, or but *newly come in*, must needs have sorrow. But what is the cause of it? Not their *Godliness*, but their *ungodliness*. I mean, It is their *ungodliness* which they lament, though it be *godliness* that causeth them to lament it: Can you expect that an ingenuous man should see his sin, and look back on so many years transgressions, and not be *grieved*? To see that he hath so long abused God, and lost his time, and neglected his salvation, and that he hath lain so long in so miserable a state, must needs cause remorse in the conscience that hath *any feeling*. And will you say that *Godliness* is *unpleasant*, because it makes a man sorrow for his *ungodliness*? If a man that hath killed his dearest friend, or his own Father, be *grieved* for the *fact* when he cometh to repentance, will you blame his *Repentance* or his *Murder* for his *grief*? Will you say, [*What a hurtful thing is this Repentance?*] or rather [*What an odious crime was it that must be so repented of?*] Would you wish a man that hath lived so long in sin and misery, to have *no sorrow* for it at his return? Especially when it is but a *healing sorrow*, preparing for remission, and not a sorrow joyned with despair, as theirs will be that die impenitently? Observe the complaints of penitent souls, whether it be their *present Godliness*, or their *former ungodliness*, which they lament? Will you hear a man lament his *former sinful careless life*, and yet will you lay the blame on the contrary course of duty, which now he hath undertaken? You may as wisely accuse a man for landing in a *safe harbour*, because he there lamenteth his *loss by shipwrack*, while



while he was at Sea. Or as wisely may you blame a man for *rising*, that complaineth how he hurt himself *by his fall*. And as honestly may you accuse the *chastity* of your wife, because she lamenteth her *former adultery*; or the *fidelity* of your friend or servant, because he lamenteth his former *unfaithfulness*.

But though the pangs of the *New birth* be somewhat grievous, and we come not into the world of Grace without some lamentation, yet this is not the *state* of the *Holy life*, into which we enter; nor are those pangs to continue all our daies.

2. You must distinguish between the *weaker* and the *stronger* sort of Christians: and consider, that *children* are apt to cry; but it is not therefore *better* to be *unborn*: *Sickness* is *querulous*; and the *weak* are *froward*; but it is not therefore *better* to be *dead*. The *godly* are not *perfectly godly*: They are *sinners* while they are *Saints*: They have *Holiness*; but they have *corruption* with it: Their sin is *conquered*, but yet not *totally rooted out*. The *relicks* do remain, though it do not *raign*. And it is the *remnant* of their *unholiness* that they lament, and not their *holiness*: They grieve not that they are *godly*, but that they are *no more godly*. It troubleth them not that they are come home to Christ, but that they have brought so much of their *corruption* with them. Hearken whether they complain of their *Humility* or their *Pride*? of their *Faith*, or their *unbelief*? their *confidence* or their *distrust*? their *repentance* or their *hardness of heart*? It is not their *heavenly-mindedness* that troubleth them, but their *earthly-mindedness*. Nor is it their *spirituality*, but their *carnality*: Nor is it the *Duties*, but the *weakness* and *faultiness* of their souls in duty: Not that they *do it*: but that they *do it no better*. It is *more holiness* that they beg for, and lament the want of. And will you say that *Holiness* is *unpleasant*, because men would so fain have *more* of it? You would reason with more wisdom in another case. If a man that hath tasted meat or drink, complain because he hath *no more*, you would not blame *his food* for that; nor gather from thence, that it is *unpleasant*, or that *famine* is *more delightful*.

3. You must distinguish between those Christians that have *fallen since their conversion*, into any great and wounding sin, or *nourish* some *vexations distempers*; and those that *walk more uprightly with God*, and maintain their integrity and peace. No wonder if *David* after *his sin*, complain of the *breaking of his bones and heart*: and if *Peter* go out and weep bitterly. The



servants of Christ do know so much of the evil of sin, that they cannot make so light of it, as the blind and obdurate world that are past feeling. That sin which hath cost them *formerly* so dear, and hath cost *Christ* so much dearer on their behalf, must needs cause *some smart* in the penitent soul. *Sickness* is felt, because it supposeth the subject to be *alive*: but the *dead* feel not that they are *dead* and *rotten*: And it doth not follow that therefore *death* is more desireable then *sickness*. It is because they are so *liketo the ungodly*, that the servants of Christ do grieve and complain. But so far as they feel the healthfulness of their souls, and are conscious of their sincerity and upright conversations, they have greater comfort then the world can afford them.

4. You must distinguish between those Christians that by *misapprehensions* are *unacquainted with their own felicity*, and those that better *understand their state*. If a man be never so holy, and *know it not*, but by temptations is brought to doubt, whether he be not yet in his unsanctified state, no wonder if this man be grieved with these fears. But his grief is not because he is *sanctified*, but because he is afraid lest he be *unsanctified*. And this shews that *Holiness* is most lovely in his eyes: or else why should he be so much troubled, when he doth but doubt whether he be Holy or not? If a Rich man by a false report should believe that he is rob'd of his goods and treasure, or that his houses are burnt, when it is not so, he will mourn or be troubled till he know the truth. And will any be so foolish as to conclude from thence, that Riches are more uncomfortable then beggery? Had you not rather be rich, though for a time you know it not, then to live in certain continual want? If a man that is in *health*, be perswaded by mistake that he is in a *Consumption*, he will be troubled by his *mistake*: But will you thence conclude that *sickness* is more comfortable then *health*? Is it not better to have *health* with those *mistaken fears*, then to live in *sickness*? Methinks you should rather argue on the contrary side, [How sweet is Health, when the fear of losing it is so troublesom? and how bitter is sickness and death, when the *very fear* of them is so grievous?] And so you should say, [How sweet is *Holiness*, when it is so troublesom to those that have it, so much as to fear lest they have it not? and How miserable a life is it to be *ungodly*, when it is so grievous to the servants of Christ, even once to fear lest they are *ungodly*?]

But



But go to those Christians that *know themselves*, and are truly acquainted with their *sincerity* and their *privileges*, and see whether *they* walk so uncomfortably as those *mistaken doubting* souls; You will find *them* in another case, and hear other kind of language from their mouths; even the joyful praises of their Redeemer, and the thankful acknowledgements of his abundant love. How sweet unto their souls is the remembrance of kindness? and how delightful a work is it from day to day to magnify his name?

5. You must also distinguish between those weak mistaken Christians, that *understand not the extent of the Covenant of grace*, and those that *do understand it*. If a believer by mistake should think that the grace of the Gospel extendeth not to *such as he*, because he is *unworthy*, and his sins are great, no wonder if he be *troubled*: As you would be if you should conceive that your lease were not made to *you*, but to *another*: or as a malefactor would be if he thought his pardon belonged not to *him*, but to *another man*. But hence you should rather observe the riches and excellencies of the Gospel, and the happiness of the heirs of promise, then dream that its better be strangers to the holy Covenant still. They are better that *have a promise of life and understand it not*, than they that *have none*. But those that know the freeness and fulness of the promise, and study with all Saints to comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, (*Eph. 3. 18, 19.*) do use to walk more comfortably according to the riches of that grace which they do possess.

6. Consider also, that most of these complaining Christians are glad that they are in *any measure* got out of their former state, and therefore apprehend their cause to be *better* than it was *before*: Or else they would turn back to the state that *they* were in; which they would not do for all the world! And therefore they take a godly life to be far more pleasant to them than do attain it.

7. Moreover, the *sorrow of believers* is such as may consist with *joy*. At the same time while they are grieved that they are no better, they are gladder of that *measure of grace* which they have received, than they would be to be made the rulers of the world. While they are *mourning* for the *remnant* of their *sins*,



*sins*, they are glad that it is *but a remnant* that they have to mourn for. Yea while they are *troubled* because they doubt of their sincerity and salvation, they are more sustained and comforted with that *little discerning* which they have of their *evidences*, and with their *hopes* of the everlasting love of God, then they could by all your sinful pleasures. Try the most *dejected mournful Christian*, whether he would *change states* and *comforts* with the best and greatest of the ungodly. The soul of man is so *active* and *comprehensive*, that it can at once both *rejoyce* and *mourn*. While they mourn for sin, and feel affliction, believers can have some rejoycing taste of Everlasting Life.

8. Yea the *godly sorrow* of a *believer* is the *matter* of his *joy*. He is gladder when his heart will melt for sin, then he would be to be *your partner* in your *carnal pleasures*. He would not change the *comfort* that he findeth in his *penitent tears* for all your laughter.

9. The Joy of a believer is intimate and solid, as I said before, according to the object of it, and not like the fleeing of a fool, or the laughter of a child, or the sensual mirth that *Solomon* called *Madness*. And therefore it is not so *discernable* to others as carnal mirth is. And therefore you think that the servants of Christ are void of pleasure when they have *much more* than you. It is little ridiculous accidents and toys that make men *laugh*; but *great things* give us an *inward sweet content* and *joy*, which scorns to shew it self by *laughter*. And what can be a fitter object of such *great content*, then to be a member of Christ, and an heir of heaven?

10. Moreover, this sorrow of the Godly is but *medicinal*, and a preparative to their *after-joys*: It doth but work out the poison of sin, which would marr their comforts, and drive them to Christ, and fit them to value him, and tast the sweetness of his love and grace.

11. And as it is not the *state and life* of a Christian, but his *fasting days*, or time of *Physick*, so the *comforts* of the godly ordinarily do far *exceed* their *sorrows*, at least in *weight*, if not in *passionate sense*. They have their hours of sweet access to God, and of heavenly meditation, and delightful remembrance of the experiences of his love, and perusal of his promises, and communion with his people; and of the exercise of faith, and hope,



hope, and love. And with those Christians that have attained stability and strength, these *comforting graces* are predominant : and their life is more in *Love* and *Praise*, then in vexatious fears and sorrows: And it *should be* so with all believers : Love is the Heart of the new creature. It is a life of *Love* and *Joy* and *praise* that Christ calls all his people to ; and forbids them all unnecessary doubts and sorrows ; and keepeth them up so strictly from *sin*, that he may prevent their sorrows. And if you will judge whether *Holiness* be a pleasant course, you must goe to the *prescript*, and consider the *nature* and *use* of Holiness, and look at those that live according to the mercies of the Gospel ; and not look at the dejections and sorrows of those that grieve themselves by *swerving* from the way of Holiness: as if you would judge that Health is unpleasant, because you hear a sick man groan. And yet even these weak and mournful Christians usually have more joy then you. The very *preservation* of their souls from that *despair* which sin would cast them into if they had not a Christ to fly to, and the little taste of mercy which they have felt, and the revivings that they find between their sorrows, and the hopes they have of better days, are enough to weigh down all your pleasures and all their own sorrows.

12. Lastly, consider that *this* is not the *life of perfect joy*, and therefore *some sorrows* will be intermixt. *Comfort* will not be perfect till *Holiness* be perfect ; and till we arrive at the place of *perfect joy*. Whats wanting now while we live in a troublesome malignant world, shall shortly be made up in the *Heavenly Jerusalem*, when we have admittance into our *Masters joy*. And then all the world shall be easily convinced, whether *sin* or *duty*, a *fleshy* or *Holy* life, hath the greater *Pleasures* and contents.

Object. But it is not only the *weakness* of professors, but the *very way* that is prescribed them, that must bear the blame : For they are commanded to *fast*, and *weep*, and *mourn*.

Ans. 1. That is but with a *medicinal necessary sorrow*, for preventing of a *greater sorrow* ; as bitter medicines and blood-letting, and strict diet, are for the prevention of death. God first commandeth them to *take heed of sin*, the cause of sorrow : But if they will fall and break their bones, they must endure the pain of setting them again.



2. And doth not Christ command his servants also to *Rejoyce*? and *again Rejoyce*, and *always to rejoyce*? Phil. 3. 1. & 4. 4. 1 Thes. 5. 16. Doth he not command them to live in the most delightful works of *Love and Joy* and thankful mention of his mercies? I tell you, if Christians did but live as God requireth them, and by his plenteous mercies doth encourage them to live, they would be the wonder of the world for their exceeding joy; they would triumph as men that are entering into rest, and make the miserable ungodly Princes and great ones of the world observe their low contemptible condition, and see by the comforts of believers, that there are far higher joys then theirs to be attained. Did Christians live as God would have them, according to their dignity and felicity, they would make the world admire the spirit, and hopes and comforts that do so transport them; They would be so taken up in the Love and praise of their Redeemer, that they would scarce have leisure to observe whether they be rich or poor, or to regard the honours or dishonours of the world. These little things would scarce find room in their affection, they would be taken up so much with God. If they were sore with scourging, and their feet were in the stocks, they would there sing forth the praise of him that hath assured them of deliverance and everlasting joy, as *Paul and Silas* did, *Act. 16*. They would rejoyce in poverty, in disgrace, in pain, and nothing would be able to overcome their joy. They would pity the tyrants and sensual Epicures that have no sweeter pleasures then those that the flesh and this deceitful world affords. O the joy that believers would have in their secret prayers! in their heavenly meditations! in their holy conference! in their reading of the promises! and much more in their publike praises and Communion, if they did but follow more fully the conduct of that spirit that hath undertaken to be their Comforter! What makes believers slight this world, and take all your pleasures to be unworthy of their entertainment or regard, but that they have had a taste of sweeter things, and by faith are overgrown these childish vanities? If God and his favour be better then such worms as we; and the heavenly Glory be better then these transitory toys, you may well conceive that the believers joy, that is fed by these, must be greater, (at least in worth and weight) then all the pleasures of this sublunary world. If therefore you  
love



love a life of *pleasure*, come over to Christ, and live a holy heavenly life; and believe one that hath made some tryal, yea believe the Lord himself, that *Holiness* is the only *Pleasant* life.

And now as we have seen it plainly proved, that *the life of Holiness* is the *most Pleasant life*, so from hence we may see two sorts *reproved*, that (in different measures) are found to be transgressors.

The first is, Those blind ungodly wretches, that can find no *pleasure in a holy life*, when they can find pleasure in their worldly drudgery, and in their sensual uncleanness, and their childish vanities. They have the *God of infinite Goodness* to delight in; but to their impious hearts he seemeth *not delightful*. They have his *Power*, and *wisdom*, and *holiness*, and *truth* to love, and *admire*, and *trust* upon, and his *excellent works* to behold him in, and his *holy laws*, and *gracious promises* to meditate on; but they have small delight in any such employment. They have *leave* as well as any others to open their hearts to God in secret, and in prayer and praise to *recreate* their souls, and to hold communion with the *Saints of God*, and to be exercised both in public and private in his worship, and to order their families in his fear, and to manage their affairs according to his word: but they find *no pleasure* in such a life as this, but are as backward to it as if it were a toilsome and unprofitable business, and are weary of that little outside worship which they do perform. They have *Heaven* set before them to seek after, and to make their portion and delight, but they have small delight to think or speak of it. Their *hearts* are *unsutable* to these high holy and spiritual things. They are matters that they are *strange to*, and have no firm and confident *belief* of, but an uncertain wavering weak *opinion*: and therefore they are *too far off*, to be *their delight*. [They say to God, *Depart from us*; for we desire not the knowledge of thy way; What is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto him? Job 21. 14, 15.] If they do come to the public Assemblies, and joyn there in the outward part of worship, they find little life and pleasure in it, because they are strangers to the *reward and spiritual part* which is the kernel. They look more



at the *Preachers gifts*, and the *manner* of his doctrine and delivery, then at the spiritual necessary *matter* that is delivered. They have some pleasure in a neat composed speech, that seemeth not to accuse them any more then others, and grateth not on their tender ears with plain and necessary truth; but suffers them to go home as quietly as they came thither. But if the Preacher touch them to the quick, and endeavoureth faithfully to acquaint them with themselves, or if he have no eloquence or accurateness of speech to please them with, but be guilty of any unhandsonness of expression, or modall imperfections, they are weary of hearing him, and think it long till the glass be run, and perhaps instead of *tasting the sweetness* of *wholsom truth*, they make it the matter of their derision and contempt.

But let them be at Cards or Dice, at Hawking or Hunting, at any idle sports and vanities, and they can hold out longer with *delight*. At drinking, or feasting, or idle talking, they are not so weary. Yea in the labours of their calling, when their *bodies* are weary, their *minds* are more unwearyed; and in their fields and shops they have *more delight*, then in the spiritual holy service of the Lord. They are never so merry as when there is least of God upon their hearts and in their ways. And it is *one* of the *reasons* that hindreth their *Conversion*, lest it should deprive them of their *mirth*, and cause them to spend the remainder of their dayes in uncomfortable heavyness. If *sin* were not *sweet* to them, *conversion* would be more *ease*. The *Pleasure* which they find in creatures by their sin, is the prison and fetters of their souls captivity. If this be *thy* case that readest these lines, I beseech thee lay to heart these following aggravations of *thy* sin.

1. How *blind* and *wicked* is the heart that can find more *pleasure* in *sin* than *holiness*? Is the creature *pleasant* to thee, and God *unpleasant*? What a shame is this to thy *Understanding* and thy *Will*? It proclaimeth thy pernicious *Folly* and *Impiety*. If thou hadst no more wit then to be *Pleased* more with stones then gold, with dung then meat, with shameful nakedness then cloathing, thou wouldst not be judged wise enough to be left to thy own dispose and government. But the folly which thou dost manifest, is unspeakably greater. *Darkness* is not so much worse then *Light*, and *Death* is not so much worse then *Life*; as *sin* is worse than *Holiness*, and the world than God. And is the *Worst* more *Pleasant* to thee then the *Best*? It is a *fool* indeed, to whom



it is a sport to do mischief, Prov. 10. 23. and so great a mischief as sin is : and yet hath no delight in understanding, Prov. 18. 2. Delight is not seemly for such fools, Prov. 19. 10.

And how wicked is that Heart as well as Blind, that is so averse to God and Holiness? Doth not this shew thee, 1. The absence of Gods holy image, 2. And the presence of Satans image upon thy soul?

Nothing doth more certainly prove what a man is, then the complacency and displacency of his Heart. If you know what it is in your selves or others, that pleaseth and displeaseth most, you may certainly know whether you have the spirit and grace of Christ or not. This is the durable infallible Evidence, which Satan shall never be able to invalidate, and which the weakest Christians can scarce tell how to deny in themselves : Could they be more Holy, it would please them better then to be more rich : Could they believe more, and Love God more, and trust him more, and obey him better, it would please them more then if you gave them all the honours of the world : They are never so well pleased with their own hearts, as when they find them nearest Heaven; and have most of the Knowledge of God, and impress of his attributes, and sense of his presence. They are never so well pleased with their lives, as when they are most holy and fruitful, and may fullyest be called *A walking with God*. They are never so much displeased with themselves, as when they find least of God upon their hearts, and are most dark, and dull, and undisposed to holy Communion with him. They are never so much weary of themselves, as when their lives are least fruitful, holy and exact. And this is a certain Evidence of their sincerity : For it shews what they Love, and what it is that hath their Hearts or Wills. And it is the Heart or Will that is the man, in Gods account. God takes a man to be what he sincerely would be. As he is, so he Loveth and Willeth : and as he Loveth and Willeth, such he is. His complacency or displacency are the immediate sure discoveries of his bent or inclination : This certain Evidence poor doubting souls should have oft recourse to, and improve.

And on the contrary, it is as sure an Evidence of your misery, when you savour not the things of the Spirit, Rom. 8. 5, 6, 7. and when it pleaseth you more to be great, then to be good; to be rich, then to be religious and righteous; to serve your lusts, then to serve the Lord : When you set more by the applause of men, then



by the *approbations* of God: and had rather be far from God then near him, and be *excused* from a holy life then *used* to it, and constant in it: When you take the world and sin for your recreation or delight, and a godly life for a melancholy, wearisom, and unpleasant course: This certainly shews that you have yet the old corrupted nature, and Serpentine enmity against the Spirit and Life of Christ, and are yet in the flesh, and therefore can no more please the Lord, then his holy wayes are pleasing unto you, *Rom.* 8. 6, 7, 8. and it proveth that you are yet in the gall of bitterness, and the bonds of your iniquity, and that your hearts are not right in the sight of God, and that you are the slaves of Satan, whose nature you partake of, by which you are thus *alienated* from the Lord.

Didst thou *know* God as Faith doth know him, his *Loving kindness* would be better to thee *then* life it self, *Psalms* 63. 3. If thou didst *Love* him (as it is like thou wilt pretend thou dost) it would be meat and drink to thee, to enjoy his Love, and do his Will. And if thou *know* him not by *Faith*, nor *cleavest* to him by unfeigned *Love*, how canst thou pretend to have his Image?

How would you judge of that mans heart, that were no better affected to his friend, to his parents, or children, or other relations, then you manifest your selves to be to God? If he can take *no pleasure* in the company of his wife or children, but is glad when he is far from them, in the company of strangers, or harlots, or prodigals, would you not say this man had a base unmanly disposition? Express but such an inclination in plain words, and try how honest sober men will judge of them. Much more would it be odious to Christian ears, if you should tell God plainly, [We can find no pleasure in thee, or in thy holy wayes; thy Word and Service are unfavoury and wearisom unto us: We had rather be talking or busied about the matters of the world: We have far more pleasure in recreations and sensual accommodations, then in remembering thee and thy Kingdom, and then we find in the life that is called holy.] Would not such words as these be called *impious*, by every Christian that should hear them? And is not that an *impious heart* then, which speaketh thus, or is thus affected, and that an *impious life* that manifesteth it? though disssembling lips are ashamed to profess it?

If God be not most to be loved and delighted in, then any thing  
or



or all things else, he is not God. If Heaven and Holiness be not sweeter then all the pleasures of earth and sin, let them have no more such honourable names. Let *sin* and *earth* then be called *Heaven*; but wo to them that have no better.

2. What *monstrous ingratitude* is that man guilty of, that when *God* hath provided, and *Christ* hath purchased such high delights, and freely tendered them to unworthy sinners, will say, I find no pleasure in them, and take them for no delights at all? When the Lord beheld thee wallowing in thy filth, and laughing in thy misery, and making a sport of thine own perdition, he pittied thee, and provided and offered to thee the most noble and excellent delights, that thy nature is capable of enjoying: And wilt thou cast them back unthankfully in his face, and say, They are unpleasant tedious things? If your child did so by his meat or cloathes, yea or a beggar at your door did so by his alms, you would think it proved his great unworthyness: If he throw away the best you can give him, and say, [It is naught, there is no sweetness in it] would you not think it fit that *want* should help to mend his *relish*, and cure his ingratitude? And will you do so your selves by *Christ* and *Holiness*, and say as those, *Mal. i. 13.* What a weariness is it? Take heed lest you provoke the Lord to cast you into a state in which you shall have more cause to be weary. If you are weary of reading, and praying, and hearing, and other holy exercises, and weary of heart-searching, penitent meditations, will you not be *wearyer* of *Hell-fire*, and of the dolorous reviews of this your folly, and of the endless, easeless, remediless sense of the wrath of God, and gripes of your own self-tormenting consciences! How just is it with God to give those men somewhat that they have cause to be weary of, that will be thus weary of his sweetest service, and reject the greatest mercies he can offer them, as if they were some burdensome worthless things!

3. Will you have any pleasure at all, or will you have none? If any, in what then will you place it, and whence will you expect it, if not from God in a holy life? If God be thy trouble, what then is fit to be thy delight? Darest thou say in thy heart or with thy tongue, that sin and sensuality is better? Darest thou say that a good bargain, or other worldly gain, or cards, or dice, or other sports, or ease, or good chear, or an Ale-house, or a Whore, are *pleasanter* things then walking with thy God in faith and holiness?



*lines*, and expectation of the everlasting joyes? Heaven and earth shall bear witness against thee, and common Reason shall bear witness against thee, for this inhumane, impious folly and ingratitude, if ever thou appear at the barr of God, with the guilt of such unreasonable sin. What! is God *no better* in thine eyes, then a filthy brutish sinful pleasure? and is the Love of God *no sweeter* a work, then the Love of sensual delights! Saith blessed *Augustine*, *He that will sell or exchange his soul for transitory commodities, doth censure Christ to be a foolish Merchant, that knew no better what he did, when he gave his Life for those souls, that you will not lose a sin for.* So I may say here: Hath Christ bought for you Holy and Everlasting pleasures, at the price of his own most bitter pains, and precious blood, and do you now think them no better then your fleshly bestial delights? Is it Christ or you, think you, that is mistaken in the value of them? Did he shed his blood to purchase you that which is not worth the parting with a cup of drink for, or the parting with your pleasure, or unjust commodity for? Sure he that judgeth thus of Christ, is far from believing in him, with any true Christian saving Faith.

4. If you can find *no pleasure in God* and in a *holy life*, you may be sure that *he will have no pleasure in you*. Wonder not if you find in your greatest need, that you are *abhorred and loathed* by the Lord, when you *loathed* the very thoughts and mention of him, in the day of your visitation. Marvail not if the most Holy God do take *no pleasure in a loathsome sinner*, when the sinner is *so ungodly*, that he takes *more pleasure* in the most sordid fading trifles then in God. You may offer the sacrifice of your heartless hypocritical prayers and praises unto God, and he will count them *abomination*, and cast them back as dung into your faces, and tell you that he *hath no pleasure in the sacrifice of such fools*: Read it in his own words, *Prov. 15. 8. & 21. 27. Isa. 1. 13. Eccles. 5. 4.* As you are *wearry of serving him*, so he is *wearry of your services*, and it is a *trouble to him to bear them*, and when you *spread forth your hands*, he will *hide his eyes from you*, yea when you *make many prayers* he will *not hear*, *Isa. 1. 14, 15.* When the Jews offered their lame deceitful sacrifices, and said, [*Behold what a weariness is it?*] God sends them word, that he *hath no pleasure in them*, nor would regard their persons, nor accept a sacrifice at their hands, *Mat. 1. 8, 9, 10.* and their *solemn feasts* he counteth [*dung*];



[*dung*]: And *dung* would be no acceptable present or feast to your selves, if it were offered you instead of meat, *Mal. 2. 3.* [*My soul* (saith the Lord) *loathed them, and their soul abhorred me*] *Zech 11. 8.* As he that despiseth him, shall be lightly esteemed by him, *1 Sam. 2. 30.* So he that loatheth him, shall be loathed by him. [*If any man draw back*, saith the Lord, *my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*] *Heb. 10. 38.* For he is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him: the foolish shall not stand in his sight: he hateth all the workers of iniquity, *Psalms 5. 4, 5.* And little do you now imagine what a horreur it will be to you in the day of your extremity for God to tell you that he hath no pleasure in you: When you look before you into an eternity of woe, which you have no hope to escape but by the mercy of the Lord, and he shall dash that hope by telling you that he hath no pleasure in you, it will give your souls the deadly wound that never shall be healed. In vain then shall you wish that you had chosen in time the durable delights, and not the pleasures of filthy sin for so short a season: and to your torment you shall know, whether God or the world was more worthy of your sweetest affections and delights: and how deservedly they are [*all damned that obeyed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*, *2 Thes. 2. 12.* Who knowing the judgement of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them, *Rom. 1. 32.* If you will count it your pleasure to riot in the day-time, rather then to walk and work by the light, you must look to receive the due reward of such unrighteousness, *2 Pet. 2. 13.* If it be your sport to sin and to do mischief, (*Prov. 10. 23.*) you shall have small sport in suffering the punishment of your willful folly.

5. If God and Holiness seem not pleasant to you, then Heaven it self cannot seem pleasant to you, if you consider it truly as it is. For the Heavenly felicity consisteth in the perfection of our Holiness, and the perfect fruition of God himself, by Sight, and Love, and Joy for ever. If the little Holiness be unpleasant and irksome to you, which appeareth in the imperfect Saints on earth, what pleasure could you take in that supereminent Holiness which is the state and work of the celestial inhabitants? If the thoughts and mention of God be unpleasant to you, and his holy praises do seem to you as matters of no delight, What then would you do



in heaven where this must be your everlasting work? And if Heaven seem a place of toyle and trouble to you, how just will it be that you are everlastingly shut out? How can you for shame beg of God to glorifie you, when you take the *Glory* that he hath promised for a *misery*? If you think that there is a Heaven of such sensual pleasures as you desire, or that any shall be saved that only choose Heaven as a less and more tolerable misery then Hell, you will shortly find your expectations deceived.

Lay all these five considerations together, and you may perceive what miserable souls those are, that can find pleasure in perishing trifles of the world, and none in a Holy and Heavenly life. Be assured of this, whosoever thou art, that if God and Heaven and a Holy life, be not a thousand times sweeter and more delightful to thee, then any thing that this world can afford to thy contentment, it is not for want of matter of superabundant delight to be found in God and in his holy ways; but it is for want of reason, or faith, or consideration, or a suitable Heart in thee, which may make thee fit to know and taste the pleasures which now thou art unacquainted with. And is it not pitty that such infinite delights should be set before men, and they should lose them all for want of a Heart and appetite to them? and should perish by choosing the lowest vanities before them?

I do therefore earnestly beseech thee that readest these words, if thou be one of these unhappy souls, that canst find no pleasure in God and Holiness, that thou wouldst speedily observe and lament that blindness and wickedness of thy heart, that is the cause of this insatiation and corruption of thine apprehension and rational appetite: and that thou wouldst presently apply thy self to Christ for the cure of it; To which end I advise thee to these following means.

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*Direct. 1.* **I**F you would taste the pleasure of a holy life, bethink you better of the necessity and excellency of it; and cast away your prejudice and false conceits, which have deceived you, and turned your minds against it: A child may be deluded to take his own Father for his enemy, if he see him in an enemies garb, or be perswaded by false suggestions that he hateth him. A  
man



man may be perswaded to hate his meat, if you can but make him believe that it is *poysen* : or to hate his cloaths, if you can make him believe they are infected with the *plague*. If you will suffer your *understandings* to be deluded, so far as to overlook the amiable nature of holiness, and to think the image of God is but a *fancie*, or that a heavenly life is nothing but *hypocrisie*, and that it is but pride that maketh men seek to be holier then others, and that makes them they cannot goe quietly to Hell in despite of the commands and mercies of the Lord, as others do ; I say, if the Devil the great deceiver, can possess you with such frantick thoughts as these, what wonder if you hate the very name of *Holiness* ? How can you find pleasure in the greatest good, while you take it for an *evil* ? If you will believe all that the Devil and his foolish malicious instruments say of God and of a holy life, you shall never love God, nor see any loveliness, or taste any sweetness in his service.

*Dir. 2. Come neer and search into the inwards of a holy life, and try it a little while your selves, if you would taste the pleasure of it : and do not stand looking on it at a distance, where you see nothing but the outside : nor judge by bare hearsay, which giveth you no taste or relish of it. The sweetness of honey, or wine, or meat is not known by looking on it, but by tasting it. Come neer and try what it is to live in the Love of God, and in the belief and hope of life eternal, and in universal obedience to the laws of Christ ; and then tell us how these things do relish with you. You will never know the sweetness of them effectually, as long as you are but lookers on. It was the similitude which Peter Martyr used in a Sermon, which converted the Noble Neopolitane Marquess of Vicum, Galeacius Caracciottus, ( who forsook wife, and children, and honours, and lands, and countrey, and all for the liberty of the Reformed Religion at Geneva :) saith he, [ If you see the motion of dancers afar off, and hear not the Musick, you will think they are frantick : but when you come neer and hear the musick, and observe their harmonical orderly motion, you will take delight in it, and desire to joyn with them. ] So men that judge at a distance of the truth and holy ways of God, by the slanderous reports of malignant men, will think of the godly as *Festus* of *Paul* that they are beside themselves. But if they come among them, and search more impartially into the reasons of their course, and specially*