

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*

if they joyn with them in the *inwards* and *vital actions* of religion, they will then be quickly of another mind, and not go back for all the pleasures or profits of the world. In the works of Nature, (and sometimes of Art) the *outside* is so far from shewing you the excellencies, that it is but a comely vaile to *hide* them. Though you would have a handsome cover for your watch, yet doth it but *hide* the well ordered *frame*, and useful motions that are *within* : You must *open* it, and there observe the parts and motions, if you would pass a right judgement of the work. You would have a comely cover for your Books : but it is but to hide the well composed letters from your sight, in which the sense and use and excellency doth consist. You must *open it*, if you will *read it* and know the worth of it. A common spectator when he seeth a *Rose* or other flower or fruit-tree, thinketh he hath seen all, or the chiefeest part : But it is the secret unsearchable motions and operations of the vegetative life and juice within, by which the beauteous flowers and sweet fruits are produced, and wonderfully differenced from each other that are the excellent part, and mysteries in these natural works of God. Could you but see these *secret inward causes* and *operations*, it would incomparably more content you. He that passeth by and looketh on a *Bee-hive*, and seeth but the *Cover*, and the laborious creatures going in and out, doth see *nothing* of the admirable *operations within*, which God hath taught them : Did you there see how they make their wax and honey, and compose their combs, and by what laws, and in what order their Commonwealth is governed, and their work carryed on, you would know more then the out side of the hive can shew you. So it is about the life of Godliness: If you saw the *inward motions* of the *quickening spirit* upon the soul, and the order and exercise of every grace, and by what laws the thoughts and affections are governed, and to whom they tend, you would then see more of the beauty of Religion, then you can see by the outward behaviour of our assemblies. The *shell* is not *sweet* ; but serves to *hide* the *sweeter part*, from those that will not *storm* those *walls*, that they may possess it as their prize. The *kernel* of Religion is covered with a *shell so hard* that flesh and blood cannot break it ; *Hard sayings*, and *hard providences* to the Church, and to particular believers, are such as many cannot break through, and therefore never taste the sweetness. The most admired feature
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and beauty of any of your bodies, (which fools think to be the most excellent part of the body) is indeed but the handsome well-adorned case, that God by nature doth cover his more excellent inward works with. Were you but able to see within that skin, and ~~that~~ ^{but} once to observe the wonderful motions of Heart and Braine, and the course of the blood in the veins and arteries, and the several fermentations, and the causes and nature of chylifications, and sanguifications, and the spirits and senses and all their works: and if you saw the reason of every part and vessel in this wonderful frame; and the causes and nature of every disease; much more if you saw the excellent nature and operations of that rational soul, that is the glory of all; you would then say that you had seen a more excellent sight, then the *smooth and beauteous skin* that covers it: The *invisible soul* is of greater excellencie then all the *visible beauties* in the world. So also if you would know the excellencies of Religion, you must not stand *without the doors*, or judge of it by the *skin and shell*, but you must *come neer*, and look into the *inward Reasons* of it, and think of the *difference* between the high employments of a Saint, and the poor and sordid drungery of the ungodly; between walking with God, in desire, and love, and in the spiritual use of his Ordinances and creatures, and conversing only with sinful men, and transitory vanities: between the life of faith and hope, which is daily maintained by the foresight of Everlasting Glory, and a life of meer nature and worldliness and sensuality, and idle complement and pompe, which are but the progenitors of sorrow, and end in endless desperation. Come neer, and try the power of Gods Laws, and of the workings of his spirit; and think in good sadness of the place where you must live forever, and the glory you shall see; and the sweet enjoyment and employment you shall have in the presence of the eternal Majesty, and think well of all the sweet contrivances and discoveries of his love in Christ; and how freely all these are offered to you; and how certainly they may be your own; peruse the promises and sweet expressions of Love and Grace; and exercise your souls in serious meditation, prayer, thanksgiving, and praise; and withall remember, that none but these will be durable delights; and then tell me, whether a life of sport and pride, and worldliness, and flesh-pleasing, or a life of faith and Holiness, be the *better, the sweeter, and more pleasant life.*

Direct. 3. If you would taste the Pleasures of a Holy life, you must apply your self to Christ in the use of his appointed means, for the renewing of your natures: that his Spirit may give you a new understanding and a new heart, to discern and relish Spiritual things: For your old corrupted minds and hearts will never do it. They are unsuitable to the things of God, and therefore cannot Receive them, nor savour them, nor be subject to the holy laws, 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15. Rom. 8. 5, 6, 7, 8. The appetite and relish of every living creature is agreeable to its nature. A fish hath small pleasure in the dry land; nor a bird in the deeps of water; grass and water is sweeter to an Ox than our most delicate meats and drinks: Corruption and Custom have made you so vitious, that your natures are not such as God made them at the first, when he himself was mans desire and delight: but they are now inclined to sensual things, being captivated by the fleshly part, and have contracted a strangeness and enmity to God. And therefore those Hearts will never relish the sweetnesses of a life of Faith, and Holiness, till Faith and Holiness be planted in them, and they be born again by regenerating grace: For that which is born of the flesh is flesh, (and but flesh; and therefore doth reach no higher then a fleshly inclination can move it); and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; and therefore will relish and love things Spiritual.

Direct. 4. Lastly, if you would taste the pleasures of a Holy life, you must forbear those sinful fleshly pleasures, which now you are so taken up with. For these are they that insatuate your understandings, and corrupt your appetites, and make the sweetest things seem loathsome to you. As the using of vain sports, and filthy lust, abroad, doth make such persons awearry of their own relations, and families, and business at home; so also the glutting of the mind with vanity, and using your selves to sinful pleasures, is it that turns your hearts from God, and maketh his Word and Wayes unfavoury to you. You must first with the Prodigal, Luke 15. be brought into a famine of your former pleasures, and be denyed the very husk, and then you will remember that the meanest servant in your Fathers house is in a far better case than you, having bread enough, while you perish through hunger. And hence it is that God doth so often promote the work of Conversion by Affliction; and by the same means carryeth on the work of Grace in most that he will save. Cannot you tell how

to leave your *sensual pleasures* ? What will you do when sickness makes you *weary* of them ? *Weary* of your *meat*, and *drink*, and *bed* ; weary to hear talk of that which now doth seem so sweet ? and to say, *I have no pleasure in them* ? Cannot you spare your friends, your sports, your bravery, your wealth and other carnal accommodations ? What will you say of them, when pain disgraceth them, and convinceth you of their insufficiency to stand you in any stead ? These things that you are now so loth to leave, may shortly become such a load to your souls, as undigested meat to the stomach that is sick, that you can have no ease till you have cast them off.

Away therefore with these luscious Vanities betime, which viciate your appetites, and put them out of relish with the things that are truly pleasant. O what a shame it is to hear a man say [*I shall never endure so godly, and spiritual, and strict a life ;*] when he can endure and take pleasure in a life of sin ! You may wisely lie down in the dunghill or the ditch and say, [*I shall never endure a cleaner place ;*] or feed on carrion, and say, [*I shall never endure a cleaner dyet ;*] or accompany only with enemies and wild beasts, and say [*I shall never endure the company of my friends.*] What ! is *God worse* then the creature, and Heaven then earth ? and *so much worse*, as not to be *endured* in your thoughts and affections in comparison of them ? You will never know your friends till you forsake these *deceivers* ! Nor ever know the *Pleasures* of a Holy life, till you will let go the poysonous Pleasures of sin : And then you may find that Sanctification *destroyeth not*, but *changeth* and *recovereth* your *Delights* : and giveth you safety for the greatest peril, health for sickness, friends for enemies, gold for dross, life for death, and the fore-taste of Rest for tiring vexation.

2. **T**HE second sort that are hence to be Reproved, are, *Those weak and troubled servants of the Lord, that live as sadly as if they found more grief then pleasure in the wayes of God.*

Indeed it is to be lamented that few of the heirs of life do live according to the happiness and dignity of their Calling ; nor are the great things that God hath done for them so apparent in the cheerfulness and comforts of their lives as they should be : But
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some that are addicted to dejectedness, do in a greater measure wrong Christ and themselves; being alwayes feeding upon secret griefs, and torturing themselves with doubts and fears, and acquainted with almost no other language but lamentations, self-accusations and complaints. These poor souls usually discover honest hearts, that are weary of sin, and low in their own eyes, and long to be better, and do not disregard the matters of their salvation as dead-hearted ungodly sinners do. Their *complaints* shew what they *would be*: and what they *would be sincerely*, that they *are* in Gods account. But yet they live so far below the sweet delights which they might partake of, and so far below the provisions of their Fathers house, and the riches of the Gospel, that they have cause to *lament* their *excessive lamentations*, and more cause to *reform* this sad distemper, and no cause to indulge it, as usually such do. And though with the most of them some natural passions and weaknesses, and some melancholy distempers are so much the cause, as may much excuse them, yet because it is an evil which *must be disowned*, and Reason must be the *means*, where people have the *free use* of Reason, I shall lay down some of the great inconveniences of this sad distemper, and beseech those that tender the honour of God, and would do that which is most pleasing to him, and love not their own calamity, that they will soberly consider of what I say, and labour to regulate their minds accordingly.

I. I desire the dejected Christian to consider, *that by his heavy and uncomfortable life, he seemeth to the world to accuse God and his service*, as if he openly called him a rigorous, hard, unacceptable master, and his work a sad unpleasant thing. I know this is not your thoughts: I know it is *your selves* and not God and his service that offendeth you; and that you walk not heavily because you *are holy*, but because you *fear you are not holy*, and because you are *no more holy*: I know it is not *of grace*, but *for grace* that you complain. But do you not give too great *occasion* to ignorant spectators to judge otherwise? If you see a servant alwayes sad, that was wont to be merry while he served another master, will you not think that he hath a master that displeaseth him? If you see a woman live in continual heavyness ever since she was married, that lived merrily before, will you not think that she hath met with an displeasing match? You are *born and new born* for Gods honour: and will you thus *dishonour* him

him before the world ? What do you (in their eyes) but dispraise him by your very countenance and carriage, while you walk before him in so much heaviness ! The child that still cries when you put on his shoes, doth signifie that they pinch him : and he dispraiseth his meat that makes a *sower face* at it : And he dispraiseth his friend, that is alway sad and troubled in his company ! He that should say of God [*Thou art bad, or cruel and unmerciful*] should blaspheme. And so would he that saith of Holiness [*It is a bad, unpleasant, hurtful state.*] How then dare you do that which is so like to such blaspheming ? when you should abstain from all appearance of evil ? 1 *Thes.* 5. 22. Canst thou find in thy heart thus to dishonour and wrong the God whom thou so much esteamest, and the grace which thou so much desirest ? For a wicked man that is far from God, to go heavily or roar in the horror of his soul, is a shame to his sin, but no dishonour to God and Holiness. But for you that are near him, in relation, engagement, and attendance, to walk so heavily, reflects on him to whom you are Related, and from whom you look for your Reward.

2. Consider also, *What a lamentable hinderance you are hereby to the conversion and salvation of souls ?* Your countenances and sad complainings do affright men from the service of the Lord, and as it were call to them, to keep off and fly from the way that you find so grievous. You gratifie Satan, the enemy of Christ, and Holiness, and souls, and become his instruments (though against your wills) to affright men from the way of life. As the Papists keep their deluded Proselytes abroad from Truth and Reformation, by giving them odious descriptions of the Protestants, as if they were Hereticks, proud, frantick, mad, and scarcely men, and when they burn them, they adorn them with pictures of the Devil ; even so doth Satan keep poor souls from entertaining Christ and Truth, and entering the holy pathes, by making them believe that the servants of Christ are a company of distempered melancholy souls, and that Godliness is the way to make men mad ; and that he that will set his heart on Heaven, must never look more for a merry comfortable life on earth. Hence comes the proverb of the Malignant Formalists and Prophane, that *A Puritane is a Protestant frightened out of his wits.* And will you confirm this slander of the Devil and his instruments ? Will you entice men to believe him ? Will you

make yourselves such pictures of unhappiness? and wear such a Vizor of calamity and misery, as shall frighten all that look on you and observe you, and discourage them from the way which they see accompanied with so much sorrow? As you hang up *dead crows* in your field to frighten the rest from the *Corn*, and as *murderers* are hanged in irons to terrifie all that see them from that crime, or as the heads of Traytors are set up to the same end, as proclaiming to all passengers, [*Thus must you be used if you will do as they:*] Just so would Satan fill you with terrors, and overwhelm you with grief, and distract you with causeless doubts and fears, that you may appear to the world a miserable sort of people; and then all that look on you will be afraid of Godliness, and think they see it as it were written in your fore-heads, [*Such drooping pitiful creatures must all be, that will lead so precise and heavenly a life.*] Do you think your carnal neighbours and acquaintance will not be deterred from a holy life, when they see that since you turned to it, you do nothing but complain, and droop, and mourn, as if you were worse then you were before? And was it not enough that you hindered their conversion *before*, when you were in your ignorance and sin, by your wicked examples and encouragements, but you must hinder it *still* by your dejected discouraging countenances and conversations? Yea perhaps your later excessive troubles may do *more* to hinder their conversion, then your persuasions and examples did before. And can you find in your hearts to lay such a stombling block as this in the way of your miserable acquaintance, to keep them from salvation? Will it not grieve you to think that you should have so great a hand in mens damnation, even since you are returned to God your selves? I know by your sorrows and complaints, that the perdition of a soul is no small matter in your eyes: O therefore take heed of that which may procure it. The use that Satan would have you make of *these very words* is, to go away with more dejection, and to say, [*What a wretch am I? even unmeet to live, that by my griefs am not only miserable my self, but also hinder the salvation of others:*] And thus he would draw thee to grieve over all thy griefs again, and because thou hast exceeded in thy sorrows, to be *more excessive*: and so to add one sin unto another; and to do *more*, because you have done *too much*: So that grief is all that he can allow thee; and one grief shall

shall be made the reason of *another*, that thou maist run thus in a round of misery, and stop in *grieving*, and go no further: Whereas thou shouldst so *grieve* for *such* grief as may *call thee off*, and *stay* thy grieving: and thy repenting should be the *cure* and *forsaking* of thy sin, and not the *renewal* of it.

But on the other side, if thou couldst live a heavenly joyful life, that the glory of thy hopes might appear in thy countenance, thy conference and conversation, how many might hereby be drawn to Christ, and caused to think well of the ways of God? Did the Godly but exceed the rest of the world, in *holy joy* and *cheerfulness* of mind, as much as they exceed them in happiness and in the *causes* of true joy, what an honour would it be to Christ and holiness? and what an attractive to win the ignorant to embrace the motions of salvation? How easily would they let go their sinful pleasures, their gluttony, and drunkenness, and filthiness, and gaming, if they did but see by the *carriage* of believers, that they were like to exchange them for *much greater joys*? You cannot expect that ignorant men, that never tryed a holy life, and have a natural enmity against it, should see the excellency of it immediately in it self; But they will judge of Religion by the persons that profess it: *That* shall seem to them the best Religion, that hath the best and happiest professors: And those seem to them the happiest and best, that have the greatest comforts, and conquer most the troubles of their minds. You can expect no other, but that countrey people, that know not the nature of medicines themselves, should judge of them by the success, and think that he followeth the best advice, who is most healthful, and of longest life. And so will the ignorant judge of the holy doctrine and commands of God, by the lives of those that seem to follow them. O therefore behave yourselves in the Church of God, as those that remember, that they live in the presence of a world of men, whose happiness or misery hath much dependance on your lives. If you were *debating* the case with a sensual wretch, would you not *tell him* that Holiness is a state of greater pleasure then his sin? *Tell him* so then by your *example* as well as by your *words*: Let him see as well as *hear* of the confidence and comforts of true believers. Were Christianity *exemplified* in the lives of Christians, how excellent a state would it appear? were we but such as the holy doctrine

and Christian pattern requireth us to be, even the blind malicious world would be forced to admire the attainments of the Saints: Though they might hate them, yet they would admire them. Were we such as *Stephen*, that was full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and could stedfastly look up to heaven by faith, and see there the Glory of the living God, and Jesus standing at his right hand, till we were raised to his boldness in defence of the truth, and his quiet submission to the greatest sufferings, the world would not then be able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which we speak, but the faces of believers would sometime appear to the terrour of their persecutors, as the faces of Angels; as *Act. 6. 5, 10, 15. & 7. 51, 55, 56, 60.* They are high and glorious things that are assured to us in the promises of the Gospel. Did but these things appear, in the stedfast faith, the confident hopes, desires, and joys of us that do expect them, believers then would be the wonder of the world; and our joys would so shame their dreaming, childish, brutish pleasures, that doubtless multitudes would flock in, to see what it is that so delighteth us, that they might be made partakers of our joys. Even as *Simon Magus* himself when he saw the Miraculous guift of the Holy Ghost, would fain have bought that guift with money; so men that are yet carnal, in the gall of bitterness and bond of their iniquities, will yet see a desirable excellency in the Joy of the Holy Ghost, and wish they were partakers of such joys, though yet they are unacquainted with the way to attain it.

I do therefore intreat you all that believe and hope for an everlasting Crown, that you will shew the poor deceived world the preciousness of your faith and hopes, and the high prerogative of the Saints, in your answerable cheerfulness and joy, and live not with as dead and uncomfortable hearts as those that have nothing but a vexatious transitory world to comfort them: much less to be *more dejected* then these wretched souls. Do you not desire the conversion of your carnal friends, and all about you? would you not be glad if you could further it? O that you could try this pleasant way! and shew them that you have found the unvaluable treasure! And as the Rich live in greater pompe, and at higher rates then the poor, so you that speak of the Riches of Grace, and live in the family of the Lord, O shew the world the dignity of your state, by
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your holy courage and comfortable behaviour, and by your living above the pleasures and griefs of unbelievers ! When *they* glory in their *prosperity*, do *you* Glory in the *Lord* : When *they* boast themselves in their riches or reputation, do *you* imitate holy *David* who professeth, Psal. 34. 1, 2, 3. [*I will bless the Lord at all times : his praise shall continually be in thy mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord : the humble shall hear thereof and be glad : O magnifie the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.*] And Psal. 44. 8. [*In God will we boast all the day long, and praise thy Name for ever.*] By such spiritual joyfulness your lives would be a continued Sermon ; and you might thus preach home more souls to Christ, then the most excellent preacher by bare persuasions. Poor sinners would begin to pity themselves that live so far below the Saints ; and they would think with themselves [It is not for nothing that these men rejoyce, and are comfortable even in the loss of all those things that we take all our comfort in !] For the honour of your dearest Lord, and for your own felicity, and for the sake of the miserable souls about you, I beseech you Christians do your best to reach this sweet and joyfulest life, and to avoid those inordinate troubles and despondencies which are like to cross these blessed ends. And pray for me and the rest of his servants, that the Lord will forgive us our dishonouring of his name, our wronging our own souls, and our discouraging the world from living unto God, by our living so far below his mercies, and so unanswerable to the unspeakable treasures of his Saints : and that for the time to come, we may lay this duty more to heart, and by the comforting spirit may be elevated to the performance of it.

But I suppose some will say [*To tell me how I should live for the encouragement of others is but to draw me to an hypocritical affectation and counterfeiting of joy and courage ; as long as I am unable inwardly to rejoyce, and can see no sufficient cause of my rejoycing in my self.*]

Ans 1. I shall by and by shew you that you have sufficient, yea unspeakable cause of joy. 2. And now I shall only say that you are not to suspend and forbear your comfort, till you have full assurance of your own sincerity : your probabilities, and weakest faith, and hope, will warrant a more comfortable life then you can live. And it is not hypocrisie, but a necessary duty.

duty to do the outward actions that are here commanded us, though we cannot reach to that degree of inward comfort that we desire: For we do not hereby affirm our selves to have the joy which we have not: (I am not perswading any man to lye:) but only we express as fully as we are able *that little which we have*: And a little indeed, a very little of such a high and heavenly nature, grounded on the smallest hopes of everlasting life, will allow you in the expression of it, to transcend the greatest delights of the ungodly: And also we do perform the external part, both as a *commanded duty*, and as a *means* to further the inward rejoicing of the soul. So outward solemnity and feasting in dayes of Thanksgiving, are as well to further inward Joy, as to express it: Even as mean attire, and fasting, and humblest prostrations before the Lord, on dayes of Humiliation, are as much to further inward Humiliation as to express it. The behaviour of the body hath an operative reflexion on the mind: and therefore should be used not only for the discovery, but for the cure of the soul. If you cannot restrain your anger as you desire, it is no hypocrisie, but your duty to hide it, and to refrain from the sinful effects. And if you can but use your selves some time to behave your selves in your anger, as if you had no anger, in meekness of speech and quietness of deportment, anger it self will be the quicker subdu'd, and in time will be the easier kept out. If you cannot restrain your inordinate appetite to meat or drink, for quality or quantity; it is yet no hypocrisie, but your duty, to hold your hands and shut your mouths and refrain the things to which you have an appetite. And if you will but use your selves a convenient time to forbear the thing, you will subdue the appetite. If the drunkard will forbear the drink, and the glutton his too much desired dish, and the sportful gamesters their needless and sinful recreations, they will find that the fire of sensuality will go out, for want of fuel. As the too wanton Poet saith concerning wanton Love,

Intrat amor mentes usu: dediscitur usu:

Qui poterit sanum fingere, sanus erit.

Use kindleth it: and use quencheth it: He that can but live as a sound man, shall at last become a sound man. If you cannot overcome your inward Pride as you desire, you must not therefore speak

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speak big, and look high, and swagger it out in bravery, and accompany with gallants, to avoid *Hypocrisie* : But you must *speak humbly*, and be *cloathed soberly*, and accompany with the humble; And 1. this is the performance of one part of your duty; 2. and it is the expression of your *Desires* to be *more humble*, and consequently of *some humility* contained in these desires; 3. and it is the way to *work* your hearts to that humility which you want; or the way in which you must wait on God for the receiving of it : So if you cannot overcome the *Love of the world* as you desire, do not therefore forbear *giving to the poor*, for fear of *Hypocrisie* : But give *the more*, that you may perform so much of your duty as *you can*, and may the sooner overcome your worldly love. Some trees will be *killed* with often cropping : But if they will not, it is better that a poysonous plant should live only in the root, then sprout forth and be fruitful.

Even so, if you cannot overcome your *inward doubts*, and *fears*, and *sorrows*, as you desire, yet let them not be *fruitful*, nor cause you to walk so dejectedly before the world, as to dishonour God and your holy profession : And if you have not the *inward comfort* you desire, express your *desires*, and the *hopes* and *smallest comforts* that you have, to the best advantage for your Masters honour : And you will find that a holy *cheerfulness* of countenance, expression and deportment, will at last much overcome your inordinate disquietments, and much promote the joys which you desire. But yet that you may see cause for the cheerfulness to which I now exhort you, I next adde.

3. If thou have but one spark of saving grace, it is not possible for thee now to conceive or express the happiness of thy state, and the cause thou hast to live a thankful joyous life. If thou have no grace, thou art not the person that I am now speaking to. If thou have no grace, whence is it that thou so much desirest it? What is it that causeth thee to lament the want of it, and walk so heavily, but because thou art so much in doubt of it? If thou truly *Love it*, thou *hast it*, (for it is only grace that causeth an unfeigned *Love* of grace). And if thou *love it not*, why canst not thou more quietly be without it? Why dost thou make so much ado for it? But if thou have it in the least degree, and so art born again of the spirit, thou hast with it an unspeakable treasure of delights : The God of Life and Loye is thine : The Lord

Lord Jesus Christ is thine : The Spirit is thine : The promises are thine : and Heaven it self is thine in title, and shall be thine in full perpetual possession. The *God* that made and ruleth all things, is *Reconciled to thee*, and is thy *Father*, having by grace in Christ adopted thee to be his *Son*; *Rom. 5. 1, 2, 10, 11. & 8. 1, 16, 17. Gal. 4. 6. 2 Cor. 6. 18.* The *Son of God* is become thy *Head*, and thou art become a *member of his body*, as *flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone*, (which no man ever yet hath hated) *Ephes. 5. 23, 27, 29, 30.* Thou art become the *Temple and residence of the Holy Ghost*. Thy *title to Heaven* is incomparably more sure, then any mans humane title to his possessions or inheritance on earth : And what rejoycing can be too great for a man in thy condition ? O what a Life should that man live ? with what sweet delight should he be transported, that hath the Spirit of Christ now living in him, to prepare him and seal him up for an endless life with Christ ? He that shall be *shortly so full of joy*, should not be *empty now* when he remembreth what he must shortly be. Doth it be seem him now to dwell in grief, and refuse consolation, that must in a few dayes be swallowed up with Joy ? If thou that sittest here in heaviness, wert assured that shortly thou shouldst be with Christ, and made a blessed companion of Angels, and possessed of thy Masters joy, a joy that hath no bounds or end, would not thy Conscience then tell thee, that thou greatly wrongest such abundant mercy, in that thou art no more affected with it ? and that thy want of joy doth expresse thy too much want of thankfulness. Dost thou sit there like a child of God, and like an heir of Heaven, and a co-heire with Christ ? (*Rom. 8. 16, 17.*) Doth that sorrowful heart, and that dejected countenance become one that must live with Christ for ever, in such resplendent glory as thou must do ? and that hath but a few more dayes to live, till thou take possession of these endless joyes ? The Lord pardon and heal our unbelief. Did Faith more effectually play its part, as it is the evidence of things not seen, and withdraw the veil, and shew us, though but in a glass, the glory which we must see with open face, it would be wine to our hearts, and oyl to our countenances, and make our poverty, sickness and death, more comfortable then the wealth, and health, and life of the ungodly.

I know you will say still, that you could rejoyce if you were sure all this were yours : but when you rather think you have no part in it, it can be but small comfort to you.

Ans.

Ans. 1. But who is it long of that you have still such fears? Have you not in your souls that *Love to Holiness*, that desire after it, that hatred and weariness of sin, that *Love to the searching discovering use of the Word of God*, that *Love to the Brethren*, which are the evidences of your title, and to which God hath plainly promised salvation? If then you have your *Title* in the *Promise*, and your *Evidences* in your hearts, and yet will be still questioning whether you have them or no, and whether the Kingdom shall be yours, your weakness and inconsiderateness causeth your own sorrows: And when you have sinfully bred your doubts, will you insist on them to excuse your following sins?

2. Are you not *sure* that Christ and his benefits are yours? I am *sure* they are yours, or *may be if you will*: and nothing but your continued refusal can deprive you of them. For this is the very tenor of the promise: And if you will not have Christ and his offered benefits, why do you so dissemble as to take on you to mourn because you have them not? But if you are *willing*, they are yours.

Object. But (you will say) if we had nothing but cause of comfort, we could rejoyce: but we have cause of sorrow also: How can we live comfortably under so much sin and suffering?

Ans. By this account you will never rejoyce till you come to Heaven, for you will never be free from sin and suffering till then. Nay it seems you would have no man else rejoyce, and so would banish all comfort from the world: For there is no man without sin and suffering.

But what can there be of any weight to prohibit a sincere Believer from seasonable spiritual rejoycing? Have you *sin*? It is not gross and reigning sin: And sinful infirmities, the best of the Saints on earth have had. As your sin must be your moderate sorrow; so the pardon of it, and the degree of mortification which you have attained, and the promise you have of full deliverance, should be the matter of your greater joy. Are your Graces weak? Be humbled in the sense of that your weakness; but rejoyce more that they are sincere and will be perfect. Are your afflictions great? Be humbled under them: But rejoyce more that they are but Fatherly chastisements, proceeding from Love, and tending to your greater good; and that you are saved from the consuming fire,

and shall live in everlasting rest, where affliction shall be known no more. Is it possible for that man that hath the love of God, and shall have heaven for ever, to have any sufferings that should weigh down *these*, and be matter to him of greater sorrow than this of joy? Can you imagine that there is more evil in your infirmities and sufferings, then there is good in God, and happiness in Heaven? Is it reason and equity that you should look at *sin* only, and not at *grace*? and at what you *want* only, and not at what you *have received*? Seeing you have more cause of joy than sorrow, should you not distribute your affections proportionably as there is cause? I dissuade you not from *seasonable moderate sorrows*: But should not *your joy* be much greater, as long as the cause of it is much greater?

4. And here I would intreate you to consider well of the *tenour of Gods commands concerning this matter in the Gospel, and of the examples of the Saints there left on record*: And then tell me, *which course it is that God is best pleased with*. Your *cheerful* or your *dejected* course of life: I find that though I pitty the *sad and miserable*, yet I had rather my self have a *cheerful*, then a *drooping, grieving, troubled* companion and friend: Because I desire one suitable to my self in the state I *would* be in; and I *delight* in the *welfare*, and not in the distress and misery of my friend. And surely God that is Love it self, and hath created Joy in man to be his Happiness, and hath placed so much of misery in sorrow, can never be so delighted in our *distress* and *trouble*, as in our *content* and *joy*. As he hath sworn that he takes no pleasure in the *death of the wicked*, but rather that they *repent and live*; so we may boldly conclude that he takes no pleasure in the *anguish* and *dejectedness* of his children, but rather that they walk in Love and cheerful Obedience before him. But his Word will fully and plainly tell you, what temper it is that is most pleasing to him. It is a *light and easie burden* that Christ doth call us to bear; and it is his office to *ease us* and *give us rest* that *labour* and are *heavily laden* with *burdens* of our own. *Mat. 11. 28, 29.* He was *anointed to preach the Gospel*, or glad tidings of salvation to the poor; and sent to *heal the broken-hearted*; to *preach deliverance to the captives*, and *recovering of sight to the blind*, and to *set at liberty them that are bruised*, and to *preach the acceptable year of the Lord*, *Luke 4. 18, 19.* When he was to leave the world, how carefully did he provide for the comfort of his *Disciples*? Commanding them
not

not to let their hearts be troubled, Joh. 14. 1. and promising to send the comforter to them, and that he would come to them, and not leave them Comfortless, *vers.* 16, 18, 26. Repeating it again, v. 27, 28. [*Peace I leave with you: my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you: Let not your heart be troubled, neither be afraid*] Nay, he engageth them as they Love him to rejoyce, even because he went unto the Father: He engageth them in the deereſt Love to one another that their lives might be the more comfortable; He foretelleth them of his ſufferings and of their own, leſt being ſurprized, their ſorrow ſhould be the more. He promiſeth them that their ſorrow ſhall be turned into joy, Joh. 16. 20. and that in him they ſhall have peace, when in the world they have tribulation, v. 33. directing them to prayer, and promiſing to bear them that their joy may be full, v. 24. and promiſeth that none ſhall take it from them, v. 22. telling them of the manſions that he prepareth for them, and that it is his will, that they be with him, and behold his glory, that nothing might be wanting to their joy, Joh. 14. 2, 3. & 17. 23, 24. When he appeareth to them after his Reſurrection, his ſalutation is, [*Peace be unto you*] Joh. 20. 19, 21, 26. The abounding and multiplying of this holy Peace, is the deſire and ſalutation of Paul to the Churches in all his epiſtles, Gal. 6. 16. Ephes. 6. 23. Rom. 15. 33. 1 Cor. 1. 3. Rom. 1. 7. Gal. 1. 3. Phil. 1. 2. Col. 1. 2. 2 Theſ. 1. 2. 1 Tim. 1. 2. Tit. 1. 4. Philem. 3. So Peter 1 Pet. 1. 2. & 2. 1, 2. & 2 Joh. 3. & 3 Joh. 14. The Goſpel it ſelf is a meſſage of glad tidings Luk. 8. 1. Act. 13. 32. And it is the work of the miniſters of Chriſt, to preach Peace to the ſinful world through him, Act. 10. 36. and to beſeech them to be reconciled to God, 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20. and to bring Peace to the houſes where any of the ſons of Peace abide, Matth. 10. 12, 13. Luk. 10. 6. Triumphant joys and proclamations of Peace were the entrance of Chriſts Kingdom: This Angels proclaime, Luk. 2. 14. [*Glory be to God in the higheſt: on Earth Peace: Good will towards men*] This the new inſpired Diſciples proclaim, Luk. 19. 37, 38. [*The whole multitude of the Diſciples began to rejoyce, and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had ſeen, ſaying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: Peace in heaven, and Glory in the Higheſt*] what abundance of commands for Rejoycing are in the Scripture? Pſal. 31. 1. [*Re-*

joyce in the Lord O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright. Psal. 97. 11, 12. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Rejoyce in the Lord ye righteous, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness] 1 Thes. 5. 16: Rejoyce evermore. Phil. 3. 1. Finally my Brethren, Rejoyce in the Lord; Phil. 4. 4. Rejoyce in the Lord always, and again I say rejoyce. 6. Be careful for nothing: but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God] And thus are the godly ordinarily described, even in their deepest sufferings and distrels; Rom. 5. 1, 2. Being justified by faith we have peace with God — and rejoyce in hope of the glory of God: And not only so, but we glory in tribulation —] Phil. 3. 3. It is the description of a regenerate man [to worship God in spirit: to rejoyce in Christ Jesus: to have no confidence in the flesh] 1 Pet. 1. 6, 8. It is the description of believers [to Rejoyce greatly in a Christ not seen, even with joy unspeakable and full of glory: though for a season if need be, they may be in heaviness through manifold temptations, 1 Pet. 4. 12; 13, 14. even in the fiery tryal we must rejoyce, as being partakers of the sufferings of Christ, that when his glory shall be revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding joy] when all manner of evil is spoken of us falsely, for the sake of Christ, and when we are hated of all men and reproached, we must rejoyce and be exceeding glad, and leap for joy, as knowing that our reward in heaven is great, Luk. 6. 22, 23. Matth. 5. 11, 12. The Apostles were [as sorrowful, yet alway rejoycing: as having nothing, and yet possessing all things] 2 Cor. 6. 10. rejoycing in their suffering for believers, Col. 1. 24. even when they were beaten, rejoycing: that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ, Act. 5. 39, 40. The rich must Rejoyce in that he is made low, as well as the brother of low degree in that he is exalted, Jam: 1. 9, 10. The Eunuch when he was but newly converted, [went on his way rejoycing] Act. 8. 39. There was great joy in Samaria when they had received the word of God, Act. 8. 8. The voice of rejoycing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous. The statutes of God are the rejoycing of their heart, Psal. 119. 111. & 19. 8. All those that trust in God should rejoyce, and shout for joy, and all that love his name should be joyfull in him, Psal. 5. 11. & 33. 21. [Let the righteous be glad: let them rejoyce before God, yea let them exceedingly rejoyce, Psal. 68. 3. Let us therefore de-

fire

fire [to see the good of his chosen, and rejoyce in the gladness of his nation, and glory with his inheritance, Psal. 106. 5. [Sing unto the Lord: sing Psalms unto him: talk of all his wonderful works:] Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoyce that seek the Lord] Psal. 105. 1, 2, 3. The Saints shall shout aloud for joy, Psal 132. 9, 16. [Be glad in the Lord, O ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart] Psal. 32. 11. [Behold my servants shall rejoyce; but ye shall be ashamed: Behold my servants shall sing for joy of heart: but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howle for vexation of spirit, Isa. 65. 13, 14.]

Abundance such passages tell you what manner of persons it is that God delighteth in, and what he would have you be and doe. These I have recited to shame the godly out of their undecent troubles and dejectedness, as you would shew a child his face in a glass when he cryeth, that he may see how he deformeth it. The very Kingdom of God consisteth in righteousness, and Peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. If you would live as is most pleasing unto God, and as becometh those that are indeed believers, let the joy of believers be (as far as is possible) your ordinary frame: And if by sin you wound your souls, and bring smart upon your selves, dwell not in that wounded smarting state; but go to your Physicians, and beg of God that he will restore to you the joy of his salvation, and make you to hear the voice of joy and gladness, that your broken heart and bones may rejoyce, Psa. 51. 8, 12.

And take notice throughout all the Scripture, whether you find the servants of God so much complaining of their want of assurance, and of their frequent doubtings of their own sincerity and his love. I think you will find this a very rare thing in the ancient Saints. They were sensible of sin as well as we; and they were as sensible of Gods afflicting hand, and oft (as Job, David, Hezekiah, &c.) complained under it, perhaps with some excess, and too much questioning Gods favour to them as if he had forsaken them. But (besides and without any such affliction) to live in ordinary trouble of mind through the doubting of their sincerity, and of Gods special love, and to be exercised in the complaining and disconsolate way as now abundance of Christians are, this I find little of the Scripture Saints. The reason was not because they had more holiness and less sin than many that now are thus cast down: For the Gospel

time excelleth theirs in *degrees of grace*; and I think the *greater care* that Christians have of their hearts, and of inward rectitude, and communion with God, and their *fuller apprehensions of the life to come*, and so of their *greatest hopes and dangers*, is one great cause. But yet there are worse concurring causes. The Love of God, and his readiness to shew mercy, should not be more questioned now, when it is so abundantly revealed by Christ, then it was in times of darker revelation. The servants of God did formerly conceive, that nothing but *sin* could make man miserable; and therefore when they had *sinned*, they *repented*; and instead of *continuing doubts* and fears, they bent their *resolutions* against their *sins*; and having *cast away* their *gross and wilful sins*, and *continuing the conflict* against their *unavoidable infirmities*, which they *hated*, they knew that the door of mercy was still open to them; and that *if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, who is the propitiation*. The time that is now spent in *doubting* and complaining, and asking How shall I know that I sincerely repent, was then spent in *Repenting*, and *reforming*, and using the means that God hath appointed for the *conquering of sin*; and then trusting to his grace and Covenant in the blood of Christ for pardon. And it would be *better* with us if we did thus. Judge now by all these Scriptures, and by the course of former Saints, how God would have you behave yourselves. Do you not read an hundred times of their *joy*, and *thanks*, and *praising God*, and calling upon others to praise him, for once that they perplexedly question their sincerity?

But perhaps you'll say, that your *strength is so weak*, and your *sins and enemies so strong*, and all your duty so imperfect and unworthy, that having such continual cause of trouble, you cannot choose but walk in heaviness, and in fears.

I answer you, 1. But why do you not tell what you *have*, as well as what you *want*? Have you not greater cause to say [My sins being mortified at the root, and all forgiven, and my soul renewed, and reconciled unto God, and I being made an heir of Heaven, how can I choose but live in joy?]

2. Are you heartily *willing* to forsake your sins, and overcome the things of which you so complain? or are you not? If you are not, why do you complain of them? and why will you not consent to let them go? and use Gods means to overcome