

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



come them? If you are willing, then they are but your pardoned infirmities; For thats the difference between infirmities and reigning sins: [Whatsoever sin consisteth with a greater Habitual willingness to avoid that and all other sin, then to keep them, is but an Infirmity] for it stands with present saving grace, and is always Habitually or virtually repented of, and actually, when grace, by knowledge and consideration, hath opportunity and advantage to produce the act.

3. And when once you are truly ingrafted into Christ, he is your worthiness, and your righteousness, and the treasury of your souls; and what you want in your own possession, you have in his hands; and as what you have is but his gift, so what you want he is able and ready to supply. Look not too much to your selves, as if your safety and happiness were principally in your own hand. God hath

given us eternal life, and this life is in his son.

He that hath the son, hath life, 1 Joh. 5. 10, 11. It is through him that we can do all things, so far as he strengtheneth us: and without him we can do nothing. Make

use of him therefore as the Lord of life, and joyfully acknowledge all that you receive, and stand not dejectedly lamenting that you need him. If you would have the waters of life, goe to the fountain, and do not sit down and fruitlessly vex your selves with complaining of your wants, instead of seeking for supplies. Is there not an allsufficient Physicion of souls at hand? Doth he not freely offer you his help? what though you are not suddenly cured? wounds may be caused in an hour, but they use not to be cured in an houre. Stay his time, and use his remedies, and cheerfully trust him, and you shall find the cure successfully; go on, though it will not be finished till death.

5. Consider also, that it must needs be the best and most desirable life, which is likest to our life in Heaven. And therefore as Heaven is a state of Joy, so Joy is the highest and best condition on earth. He is the best and happiest man, that is likest to the glorified Saints and Angels; And judge your selves whether a dejected

or

I. C. Scaliger Epidorp. l. 7. p. 296.

Hoc quod Valeo; Non quæo quod debeo: Quid tibi

Mensura mea, es, tu Domine, immensa potestas:

Non ego tua: Quodq; habeo, tu mihi dedisti:

Quodq; do, non do; sed accipis; hoc enim dedisti.

Tu solus tibi satis es: tu mihi, tibiq;

Nec te laudo, ubi laudo: sed ipse te ipse laudas

Me perficiens, non tua, sic laudibus ornans:

Quis me ad te trahis: haud ego te traho super me:

Me præveniens hic ades: ut mihi super sis.



or a rejoicing Christian be liker to these inhabitants of Heaven?

*Object.* But (you will say) by that rule we should not mourn at all; (for they do not;) Whereas God delighteth in the contrite soul, and Christ bleisseth mourners and weepers.

*Ans.* 1. Your resemblance of the Saints in Heaven, must be proportionable in all the parts. You must labour first to be as like them as you can in *Holiness*, and then in *Joy*. If you could be as far from *sin* as they, you need not mourn at all. But because you cannot, you must have moderate, regular sorrows and humiliation, while you have *sin*. But yet withall you must endeavour to imitate the heavenly Joyes, according to the measure of your *Grace* received.

2. And it is such a regular contrition, consisting in humble thoughts of our selves, and tending to restore us from our falls and sorrows, unto our *integrity* and *joy*, which God delighteth in: And it is such mourners as these, and such as suffer for righteousness sake from men, that Christ pronounceth blessed. But the inordinate troubles of the soul, that exclude a holy delight in God, though he pardon, yet he never doth encourage.

6. Consider also, that a great part of your Religion, yea and the most high and excellent part, doth consist in the causes, form and effects of this holy joy and chearfulness. 1. As to the causes of it, they are such as in themselves are requisite to the very being of the new creature. Faith and Love, which are the Head and Heart of sanctifying grace, are the causes of our spiritual joy. An unwilling, heavy, forced obedience, may proceed from meer Fears, and this will not prove an upright heart. But when once we Believe Everlasting Glory, and Love Christ as our Saviour, and the Father as our Father and felicity, and Love a holy frame of heart and life, as the image of God and that which pleaseth him, then our obedience will be chearful and delightful, unless accidentally we trouble our selves by our own mistakes. If you can truly make God and his will and service your Delight, you may be sure you Love him, and are beloved by him, as being past the state of slavish fear.

2. And I have shewed you that Joy in the Holy-Ghost is it self one part of that grace in which Gods Kingdom doth consist; Though not such a part as a Christian cannot possibly be without,



out, yet such *as* is exceeding suitable to his state, and necessary to his *more happy* being.

3. And without this holy Delight and Joy, you will deny God a principal part of his *service*. How can you be thankful for the great mercies of your Justification, Sanctification, Adoption, and all the special graces you have received, or for your hopes of Heaven it self, as long as you are still doubting whether any of these mercies are *yours* or not, and almost ready to say that you never received them? Nay you will be less thankful for your health, and life, and food, and wealth, and all common mercies, as doubting lest they will prove but aggravations of your sin and misery. And for the great and excellent work of *Praise* which should be your *daily* sacrifice, but specially the work of *each Lords day*, how unfit is a doubting, drooping, distressed soul for the performance of it? You stifle holy Love within you, and stop your mouthes when they should be speaking and singing the praises of the Lord, and *disable* your selves from the most high, and sweet, and acceptable part of all Gods service, by your unwarrantable doubts and self-vexations. And when all these are laid aside, how poor and lean a service is it, that is left you to perform to him? Even a few *tears*, and *complaints*, and *prayers*? which I know God will *mercifully accept*, because even in your *desires* after him there is *Love*; but yet it is far short of the service which you *might* perform. Nay your *Heavenly-mindedness* will be much suppressed, as long as you are sadly questioning whether ever you shall come thither, and it will be yours or not.

7. Are you not ashamed to see the servants of the Devil and the world so jocund, and your selves so sad that serve the Lord? Will you go mourning so inordinately to *Heaven*, when *others* go so merrily to *Hell*? Will you credit Satan and Sin so much, as to perswade men by your practice, that sin affordeth more pleasure and content then Holiness?

8. You could live merrily your selves before your Conversion, while you served sin: And will you walk so dejectedly now you have repented of it? As if you had changed for the worse, or would make men think so? I know you would not for all the world be what you were before your change. Why then do you live as if you were more miserable then before?



9. You would be loth so long to resist the sanctifying work of the Spirit : And why should you not be loth to resist its comforting work ? It is the same Holy Ghost that you resist in both : Nay you dare not so open your mouthes for wickedness, and plead against Sanctification it self, as you open them on the behalf of your sinful doubtings, and plead for your immoderate dejections. If you should, how vile would you appear ?

10. Lastly consider, that God will lay sufferings enow upon you for your sins, and suffer wicked men to lay enow on you for well-doing, and you need not lay more upon your selves. You have need to use all means for strength to bear the burdens that you must undergo : and it is the joy of the Lord, and the hopes of Glory that are your strength. And will you cast away the only supports of your soul, and sink when the day of suffering comes ? How will you bear poverty, or reproach, or injuries ? how will you meet approaching death, if you seed your doubts of your salvation and of the Love of God in Christ, which must corroborate you ? O weaken not your souls that are too weak already : Weaken not your souls that have so much to do and suffer : and that of so great necessity and importance. While you complain of your weakness, encrease it not by unbelieving uncomfortable complaints. Gratifie not the Devil and wicked malicious men so far, as to inflict on your selves a greater calamity then all their malice and power could inflict. It is a madness in them that will please the Devil, to the displeasing of God, though the pleasing of their own flesh be it that moveth them to it. But for a man to please the Devil, and displease God, even when he displeaseth his own flesh by it also, and bringeth nothing but sorrow to himself by it, this is in some respects more unreasonable then madness it self. Many cast away their souls for Riches, and Honours, and carnal accommodations ; but who would do it for poverty, sickness, or disgrace ? So though many undo their souls for fleshly pleasures and delights ; yet he is a strange man indeed that will offend God even for self-tormenting grief and trouble. O therefore dear Christians, as you have let go all your sensual pleasures for the pleasing of your Lord, do not let go the pleasures of his love, for which you have let go all. The Lord taketh pleasure in his people, even in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy, and the meek he will beautifie with salvation, Psalm 147. 11. It is meet therefore that



that his people take pleasure in the Lord : that the *Saints be joyful in glory ; that they sing aloud upon their beds, and that the high praises of God be in their mouthes, Psalm 149. 4, 5, 6.*

O let not the *Spirit of God* be thought to be like the *evil Spirit* that vexed *Saul*, that filled his mind with melancholy anguish and confusion : It is the *evil spirit* that renteth and tormenteth those that it possesseth ; though the *spirit of God* doth *humble*, and by ordinate sorrow prepare for joy : But its proper work is to *sanctifie*, and to *comfort*, and to *establish* the Believer with *Peace* that *passeth understanding*. As it is a greater sign of the operation of the *Spirit of Christ*, to restore the lapsed by a *spirit of meekness*, and to *bear one anothers burdens*, and exercise tenderness, compassion and charity, then to *censure* and *envy*, and call for *fire from heaven* : So even at *home* ( though there we are allowed to be more rigid and censorious ) it is a more sure and satisfactory discovery of the *Spirit of Grace* within us, if we are raised to a *sweet delight* in God, and quieted in his *Love*, and carryed out in chearful obedience, thankfully acknowledging the grace that we have received, and waiting in the use of means for more, then if we are only *turmoiled* and *troubled* in our minds, and tossed up and down with *unprofitable griefs* and *fears*, that *abate our Love to God*, and our holy joyes. It is the *still voice* that doth most fully acquaint us that it is *Christ the Prince of Peace* that speaketh to us : Though at first when he findeth a sinner in a state of enmity and rebellion, he often useth to thunder and lighten, and call to him as to *Saul*, [ *Why persecutest thou me ?* ] Wilt thou *kick against the pricks* ? Wilt thou fight against heaven ? Or canst thou bear the wrath of *God Almighty* ? Yet to the *humbled penitent* soul, there is none in all the world so tender as *Jesus Christ*, the *Lamb of God*, the *Churches husband*, that cherisheth them as his own flesh. O that you did but know the greatness and tenderness of his love to you, while you lie trembling under the unjust apprehensions of his wrath ! It would then so transport you with ravishing delights, that the world would see that the *Saints of the most High* have higher Pleasures then the world affordeth.



**B**UT I know you will say, [ *Alas, what need you exhort us to spiritual pleasures and consolations? Do you think there is any man in love with sorrows? or unwilling to live a joyful life? O that you could tell us how we might attain it; and you should quickly see that we are willing.* ]

*Ans.* And if you are so willing to attain it, as to be also willing to use the means, you shall quickly see that I shall certainly inform you how you may attain it; and how you may come to find a life of Holiness to be the most sweet and pleasant life. I therefore desire and require you to practise these Directions following.

*Direct. I. Make it your first and principal business to attain the fullest fixed knowledge of God in his Attributes, and Covenant-Relations to you.* ]

1. Study him in his *Attributes*. If infinite Goodness take not up the soul with Love and with Delight, it is because it is *not known*. Where there <sup>are</sup> all things that the soul of man desires to its highest felicity and content, and yet contentment and delight is wanting, it must needs be ignorance and distance that is the cause. If the Sun seem not light to you, it is because you have not eye-sight, or look not on the light. If you find no pleasure in the most pleasant food, it is because your appetites are diseased, or you do not taste it. If your most suitable and most affectionate friend seem not amiable to you, it is because you know not his suitability and love. So if the eternal God, that is infinitely powerful, wise and good, most perfect and most suitable to your highest affections, do not possess you with abundant pleasures and Delights of Love, it is because you are *unacquainted* with him. Study then his infinite perfections: and be much with him in secret prayer and meditation, where the retired soul having fewest avocations, is fittest for the most near familiar converse. And still remember that it is Love it self that you have to do with. For *God is Love*. It is the fountain of all delights and pleasures that you draw near to. It is a cold heart indeed that fire it self cannot warm: and a dead heart indeed that life it self cannot revive: Conceive of God as God, and you will delight in him: **Abhor** all unworthy diminutive thoughts.



thoughts of him : Set up his Love and Goodness in your estimation, as infinitely above all the creatures. Believe it, the Love of your dearest friends, is an inconsiderable drop to the Ocean of his Love. Think not of him as *cruel*, or an *enemy*, if you would love him, or delight in him. Love and Delight are never forced by bare commands and threatnings, but drawn forth magnetically by attractive Goodness. Were not God most amiable, and friendly, and desirous to us, it is not saying, [ *Love me, or I will damn thee,* ] that would ever have caused man to love him ; but rather to fear, and hate, and fly from him. Think but of Gods Love, and Goodness, and Fidelity, as you do of his Power, and then you will find that there are rivers of pleasure in his presence, and fulness of joy at his right hand, the fore-tastes whereof are the only delights that can quiet the troubled thirsty soul.

2. And if you say, [ *What is all this to me, any more then to the ungodly world, on whom the wrath of God abideth ?* ] I answer, Thou art in Covenant with him, and he is thine in the Covenant Relations, even thy Recenciled Father, thy Saviour and thy Sanctifier. No husband is so inviolably bound to a wife, nor will so faithfully answer his Relation, as the blessed Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier unto thee. Didst thou well know and consider, what it is to have God himself to be thine in Covenant, to all these uses, and to all the ends that thou canst reasonably desire, it would fill up thy soul with satisfying delights.

There is nothing that thou wantest, but what belongs to God to give thee, in one of these three great relations. And sooner shall the day be turned into night, and the frame of nature be dissolved, then God will violate his Covenant of Grace. Jer. 33. 20, 21. [ *Thus saith the Lord, If you can break my Covenant of the day, and my Covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season: then may also my Covenant be broken, &c.* ] Isa. 54. 4, 5, &c. [ *Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed, &c. For thy Maker is thy Husband: (the Lord of Hosts is his name) and thy Redeemer, the Holy one of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall be called: For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God: For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee: In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with ever-*



lasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth: So have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee: For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. ] And though yet we have our troublesom imperfections, it belongeth to our God, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, to make us perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ, that to him may be the glory for ever, Heb. 13. 20, 21. It is his work [ to comfort all that mourn; to appoint to them that mourn in Zion, and to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise, for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified ——— They shall be named The Priests of the Lord, men shall call them The ministers of our God ——— Everlasting joy shall be unto them ——— For the Lord will direct their work in truth, and make an everlasting Covenant with them ——— All that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed whom the Lord hath blessed: Therefore should we greatly rejoyce in the Lord; and our souls should be joyful in our God: For he hath clothed us with the garments of salvation; he hath covered us with the robes of righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth her self with her Jewels. ] Isa. 61. [ A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put into you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh: and I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgements and do them ——— and I will save you from all your uncleanness, &c. ] Ezek. 36. 25, 26, 27, 29. [ And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them; and I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me: Yea I will rejoyce over them to do them good, &c. Jer. 32. 38, 39, 40, 41. [ Happy are the people that



what are in such a case: yea happy is that people whose God is the Lord, Psal. 144. 15.

Nature doth not give you such security that the Sun shall shine, and that the streams shall run, that the earth shall be fruitful, as the covenant of the Lord doth give you of all that is necessary to you Happiness. Study therefore the mercies and riches of the Covenant.

Dir. 2. Understand and remember that it is your Covenant-consent, that it is the condition of your title to all the following blessings of the Covenant. ]

I add this as supposing you will say [What are all these benefits to me, unless I were sure that I were indeed in the Covenant?] It is not your merit, but your consent that is required: God offereth himself to be your Reconciled Father, and Christ to be your saviour, and the Holy Spirit to be your sanctifier. Do you consent to this, or not? All the question is whether you are willing? and whether your sin be not so sweet to you, that you will rather venture your souls on the wrath of God, then you will be saved from it. If you heartily consent, assuredly you are in the Covenant, and the benefits are yours; and therefore the Joy and comfort should be yours. If you do not consent; instead of despairing, presently consent; and refuse not your happiness while you lament your misery.

Object. But it is not only Covenant-making, but Covenant-keeping that must save us: and I have brook my Covenant, and therefore have no title to the benefits. Answ. What Covenant have you broken? This Covenant in question that engageth you to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? If you have broken this, you have withdrawn your Consent: For while you heartily consent, you break it not in any essential part. As it is not every breach of the Laws, that makes a man a traitor or rebel, nor every fault or falling out between husband and wife that dissolveth their relation; so is it not every sin, nor any that is consistent with true consent to the terms of the Covenant, that is a Covenant-breaking forfeiture of the benefits. If you would not have God to be your Portion, your Father, your Saviour, and your Sanctifier, you are then Covenant-breakers; And if you be so, Consent yet, and return to your fidelity, and the comforts of the Covenant may yet be yours, for all your former violation.

Dir. 3.



*Dir. 3.* Moreover, if you would find the *Pleasure* of a *Holy life*, see that the *flesh* befooled you not into an over-high estimation of any worldly thing: that so your appetites may not be corrupted with such contrary unwholsome *Pleasures*, nor your hearts be overwhelmed with worldly cares, or griefs or troubles. If you will glut your selves with other kind of pleasures, you cannot expect that *Holiness* should be your pleasure. You cannot find your delight in *God*, when you turn from him to seek it in the creature. If you sought for *less* in friends, and health, and prosperity in the world, you might have more in *God*. How should you find content in *God*, when you set so light by him, that the promise of beholding him in endless glory, will not please you, unless you may also have your *fleshy desires*, or *selfish inclinations* pleased here? This is it that perverteth your judgements and affections, and causeth you to injure *God* and your selves. You first fancie that it is an excellent thing to be *Rich* and *Renowned* and to rule over others, or to have plenty of all accommodations for your flesh: and then because *God* satisfieth not these carnal fancies, you think he neglecteth you, or deals hardly with you! As if every person in the Town should murmur because they are not *Bayliffs* or *Justices*; when if they had the wit to know it, they are but kept from a double encumbrance, and from a burden which perhaps would break their backs. When the people are thus befooled by the flesh into brutish conceits of the nature of felicity, and into an over-valuing of these worldly things, they are then always either tickled by deluding pleasures, or troubled for the crossing of their carnal wills, so that they grow out of relish and liking with the true and durable delights. Take heed therefore of this carnality.

*Dir. 4.* Study the greatness of the mercy which you have received: You abound with mercies; and yet undervalue them, and over look them, and sweeten not your souls with the serious observation and remembrance of them: you study principally your afflictions and your wants: And thus when you live in a land that floweth with milke and honey, you will not feed on the prepared feast, but keep still the gall and wormwood in your mouths; and how then should you be acquainted with the pleasures of a holy life.

Yea you must use to look more to the spiritual part of all your mercies



mercies ; and see the love of God that appeareth in them ; and taste the blood of Christ in them ; and lose not the *kernel* : and take not up with the common carnal part, which every wicked man can value and enjoy. Consider in all your mercies, what there is in them for the benefit of your *souls*, much rather than how they accommodate your *flesh*. Could you do thus, you would find the benefit of *afflictions* ; and that the *denyal* of what you have accounted your necessary mercies, is not the smallest of your mercies. And thus judging truly by the spirit, and not by the flesh, there is no condition (except that of sin) in which you might not find cause of joy.

*Dir. 5. Take heed of sinning* : Keep still upon your watch against temptation ; *sin* is the cause of all your sufferings ; when it promiseth you delight, it is preparing for your sorrow ; when it flattereth you into *presumption*, it is preparing for *despair* ; when it promiseth you *secrecie* and *security*, it prepareth for your *shame* : and be sure your sin will find you out, Numb. 32. 23. If therefore you have offended, delay not your Repentance ; and spare not the flesh in your return ; but (unless the honour of God forbid it) take shame to your selves by free confession, and make the fullest reparation of the injury that you can to God and man. If you would thus get out the thorn that vexeth you, the ways of God would be more pleasant.

*Dir. 6. Daily live in the exercise of faith, upon the everlasting pleasures* : Dwell as at the gates of Heaven ; as men that are waiting every hour when they are called in, and when death will draw aside the vail, and shew them the blessed face of God. And take heed that the *enmity* of *interposing* Death, prevail not against the Joys of faith. But look to Christ that *hath* conquered it, and *will* conquer it for you ; And if thus you could live as strangers here, and as the Citizens of Heaven, that are ready to step into the immortal pleasures, you would then taste the Pleasures of a holy life, in the first fruits and foretastes thereof. It is your *Treasure* that must *Delight* you ; As your *Heart* must be *there*, so your *pleasure* must be derived *thence*. Strangers to Heaven will be strangers to the Believers Joys ; As the pleasure of the Carnal world, consisteth in the sense of what they have in hand ; so the pleasure of Believers consisteth in the fore-apprehensions of what they *shall* enjoy *with God* for ever. If



therefore you exercise not those apprehensions ; if you look not frequently, seriously, and believingly into the world that you must live in for ever, how can the comforts of that world illustrate and refresh you in this present world ? The *Light* and *Heat*, which is the *Beauty* and *Life* of this *lower world*, proceedeth not from any thing *in this world*, but from the *Sun* which is so far above us, and sends down hither its quickning influence and rays. They are not the genuine comforts of Christianity, which are not fetcht from the world above.

*Dir. 7.* If you would have the experience of the *Pleasures* of a life of Faith and Holiness, neither *desire* nor *cherish* any *fears* or *sorrows*, but such as are subservient to *Faith*, and *Hope*, and *Love*, and preparatory to *Thankfulness* and *Joy*. Think not Religion consisteth in any other kind of sorrows. Nay if any other should assault you, be so far from taking them for your duty or religion, as to resist them, and lament them as your sin. That is true and saving Humiliation, 1. which makes you vile in your own eyes, and loath your selves for sin. 2. And maketh you more desirous to be delivered and cleansed from your sin, than to live in it, how sweet or gainful soever it may seem, and 3. which maketh you set more by a Saviour to deliver you, than by all the pleasures, riches, and honours of the world. What ever want of *Grief* or *tears* you find, if you have *these signs*, your Repentance and *humiliation* is sincere. Do not therefore refuse your *Peace* because you have not greater sorrows ; nor disturb your souls by struggling for excessive sorrow : Take not part with them, but do your best to cast them out, if they are such as would *destroy your Love and Joy*, and drive you from Christ, and hinder your Thankgivings. Know that the *Life* of your Religion consisteth in the *Holy Love of God* and of his Image and servants and holy ways. *Love* is your duty and your *felicity* and reward : Therefore let all tend to the exercise of *Love*, and value most those means which most promote it ; and think your selves best when you abound most in *Love* ; and not when you are overwhelmed with those *Fears* and *Griefs* which hinder Love. Study therefore above all, the *Love* of God revealed in Christ, which is the best attractive of your *Love to him* : and hate all suggestions which would represent God unlovely and undesirable to you.

*Dir. 8.*



*Dir. 8. Use cheerful company : Not carnal, but holy ; not such as waste their time in unprofitable frothy speeches, or filthy, or prophane or scornful jestings : But such as have most of the sense of Love and mercy on their hearts ; and are best acquainted with a Life of Faith, and whose speeches and cheerful conversations, do most lively manifest their sense of the Love of God, and of the Grace of Christ, and the eternal happiness of the Saints. There is a delightful and encouraging virtue in the converse of joyful, thankful, heavenly believers : Use it therefore if you can have it.*

*Dir. 9. In your addresses to God in holy worship, be sure that Praise and Thanksgiving have its due proportion. They are the chief and most excellent and acceptable part, and therefore let them not have the smallest room. Though your sins and wants be as great as you imagine in your complaints, it is yet your duty to Praise the Excellencies and Attributes and works of your Creator, and to be Thankful for the preparations made by Christ, and freely offered you, so that they shall certainly be yours, if you accept them. But much more Thankful should you be that have but the evidence of Desire and Consent to prove your Interest in Christ and in his Covenant.*

I would intreat poor troubled fearful souls to Resolve upon this one thing, which is reasonable, necessary and in their power, that when they are upon their knees with God, they will spend as much of their Time and words in confessing mercies and Praising God, as in confessing sin, and condemning themselves and lamenting their wants, and weaknesses, and distress. Though they cannot do it cheerfully as they should, let them do it as they can. And at last while they keep in the right way of duty, and use themselves to the commemoration of that which is sweet and grateful to the soul, Religion it self will become sweet and grateful, and chearfulness of heart will be promoted by our own considerations & expressions.

The same I desire of them as to their Thoughts ; that they will do their best to spend as many thoughts and as much time upon Mercy as upon sin and misery ; and upon the Goodness, and Love of God in Christ, as upon his threatnings and terrours.

*Dir. 10. If you would taste the comforts of a holy life, be sure that you give up your selves to Christ without reserve, and follow him fully, and place all your hopes and confidence in his*



promised rewards : Serve him with your *best*, yea with your *all* ; and not with some cheap and heartless service. Comforts are the Rewards of faithfulness : They that do God the most sincere and costly service , and save nothing from him which he calleth them to lose , are likest to be encouraged by his sweetest comforts. It is sluggish neglects , and unfruitfulness , doing no good in the world , but thinking to be saved by a dull profession , that makes so many uncomfortable professors as there be : Though I know that on the other extream, too many live in pining sadness , by not understanding the Covenant of Grace , which accepteth of sincerity, and secureth the weak and infants in the family of Christ. But yet the barren unprofitable Christians ( I mean that comparatively are such , though they be sincere ) shall find that God will not encourage any in sloathfulness by his smiles and consolations.

*Direct. 11.* If you would know the Rest and Comfort of Believers, see that you Rest in the Will of God in all Conditions, as the Center and only bottom for your souls. His will is not to be reduced to yours : strive therefore to bring yours most fully and quietly to his. Gods Will is the Universal Original and End of all things, and there is no Felicity or Rest for man, but in the fulfilling, and pleasing and disposals of *his will*. Be not too desirous of the fulfilling of your own wills, and murmur not against the disposals of the Will of God. *It cannot but be Good which proceedeth from that will which is the Spring of good.* The accomplishment of Gods Will, is the perfection of all created beings, being that End for which they are all created. If you Rest in your *own wills*, your Rest will be imperfect, disturbed and short of duration ; For *your wills* are the wills of weak and vicious men : They are frequently misguided by an ignorant mind, and perverted by a corrupt and byassed heart : But *Gods will* is never misguided ; nor ever determined of any thing but for the best. If you Rest here, you Rest in safety ; you may be sure you shall never be deceived by him : You may Rest in constant peace and quietness ; for God is unchangeable, and will not be off and on with us , as we are with him, and with our selves. As you pray that his Will may be done, acquiesce in the doing of his Will ; and whatever befall you , repose and satisfie your hearts in this.



*Direct. 12.* Lastly, let me add, that when you have all the Directions that can be given, you trust not too much to your own understanding and skill for the application of them to your selves, in any weighty difficult cases. But as you will not think it enough for the health of your bodies, to have Physick Books and Physick Lectures, unless you have also a Physician who knoweth more then you, to direct you in the application; so think it not enough that you have the best Books and Sermons, unless you have also a faithful and judicious Pastor, whose advice you may crave in particular difficulties, and who may direct you in the discovery of your own diseases, and applying the fittest remedies in their seasons and measures, with such Rules and Cautions as are necessary to the success. If God had not known that there would still be many children and weak ones in his family, that would stand in need of the instruction, support and encouragement of the strong, he would never have settled Pastors in his Church to watch over all the flocks, and to be alwayes ready at hand, for the confirmation and encouragement of such as need their help. There had been no Physicians, if there had been no diseases. Tire not your Physicians with needless consultations, for easie and ordinary cases: but be not without them in your greater straits, and wants, and doubts. And [blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we our selves are comforted of God: For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings, which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.] 2 Cor. 1. 4, 5, 6. While you are sick or infants, the stronger must support you. You cannot stand, or go, or suffer of your selves: And God is so tender of his weak and little ones, that he hath not only given strength to others for their sakes, and commanded the strong to bear the burdens and infirmities of the weak, Gal. 6. 1, 2. Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3, 4. but also established the Ministerial office much for this end. Mal. 2. 7. For the Priests lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth; for he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts.

Not.



Not that we should disclose our Consciences, and depend for guidance on every ignorant or ungodly man, that hath the *name* and *place* of a Priest; Even among the Papists, men have leave to choose such Confessors as are fittest for them. If the Priests [*depart out of the way, and cause many to stumble at the Law, and corrupt the Covenant of Levi, the Lord will make them contemptible and base before all the people, according as they have not kept his wayes, but been partial in the Law.*] *Mal. 2. 8, 9.* But use those that are qualified and sent by the Spirit of God; who [*in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the Grace of God, have had their conversation in the world, especially to you-wards.*] *2 Cor. 1. 12.* Such as [*you have acknowledged in part, that they are your rejoicing, as you also are theirs in the day of the Lord Jesus.* *vers. 14.*] Not using them as such as have dominion over your faith, but as those that by office, qualification, and willingness and disposition are *Helpers of your Joy.* *vers. 24.*

In the faithful practice of these *Directions*, you will find that *Holiness* is the most *Pleasant* way; and that the *Godly* choose the better part; and that the ungodly sensualists do live as **BRUTES**, while they unreasonably refuse to live as **SAINTS**.

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F I N I S.

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