

him he went nearer, and had compassion on him, did not only shake the head, and say the Lord help thee, be warmed and filled, but went nearer yet, and bound up his wounds, powring in Wine to chear him in his fainting, and Oyle to heal him of his Grief, and sets him on his beast, and brings him to an Inn, and takes care of him. In all his peoples afflictions he was afflicted; let every one of us therefore please with Sympathy his Neighbour, for his good to Edification, for even Christ pleased not himself; but as it is written, the reproaches of them that Reproached thee fell on me, Rom. 15. 2, 3.

CHAP. XVI.

Shewing that when the name of Christ, and credit to his Gospel; is not so dear to us as personal sufferings we are then surely on the dying hand: and that in estate, body, and life, we ought to submit if called to suffering: with four cause: of decay here.

SIGN XVI.

When you will rather betray the Name of Christ Jesus, and the credit of his Gospel by your silence; then appear for it to your own suffering and disparagement.

Three things may be observable as to the opening of this Sign.

First, what is meant by the Name of Jesus.

Name refers to his person, and properties, as his power, wisdom, Judgment, mercy, justice, goodness; dishonour done to all or any of these, is done to him, because this is the matter or substance he is made known by, and understood to be; tis clear that

Name

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Name in Scripture, when referred to the person of God and Christ, notes all this, *Exod.* 20. 7. *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain,* Chap. 33. 19. Chap. 34. 6, 7. *Iosh.* 7. 10. *John* 17. and *Acts* 9.

Secondly, how far if called, ought we to suffer for this Name.

Suffering is a word reduceable to three heads, all centring in man.

First, in estate there he may suffer, by having his goods spoiled, his bodily substance wasted, *Heb.* 10. 35.

Secondly, in body by persecutions, and reproaches bonds, and imprisonments, *Heb.* 10. 32, 33. chap. 11. 36.

Thirdly, in life, *Luke* 14. 26. *Acts* 21. 15. *Revel.* 12. 12. Now in what cases may we be proved guilty of this dying sign, as falling under any or all these three heads.

First, If because of our estate we comply with, or countenance any evil, or refuse to confess any good, *John* 12. 42. 2. *Tim.* 4. 10. *Nevertheless among the chief Rulers also many believed on him, but did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the Synagogue.*

Secondly, if because of our bodies, to free them from sufferings, we will comply with, or countenance any evil, or refuse to confess any good, *Mat.* 13. 21. *But when tribulation or persecution riseth, because of the word, by and by they are offended.*

Thirdly, If because of our lives to free them, we will comply with any evil, or refuse to confess any good, contrary to *Dan.* 3. 17, 18. chap. 6. 16. Under all or any of these considerations, when professors can hear the great name dishonoured, and by their silence suffer it to be betrayed, it is very evident they are dying to the things of God. No man or woman is

in a Christian profession, but one time or another, are lyable to temptations of this kind; that is, to have the Name and credit of Christ and his Gospel, come in competition with their sufferings and disparagements. And answerable to their weakness or strength, so ordinarily is their behaviour to suffer or to sin.

The wisdom of the Serpent not to run into any temptation of this kind, by going without a sufficient Call into such Company, as may villifie and set light by the Name of Jesus and his Gospel, in whose eyes he is not esteemed, nor his Gospel had in any Reputation; must be accompanied with the Innocency of the Dove, that is, if by some providential Call we are, there, it will not stand with a Doves Innocency, to hear *Christs Name* and his Gospel reproached, perhaps to the loosing some place of outward Honor, Repute or Profit, you are now it may be in the Synagogue among the worldly Rulers, feasting on their Dainties, and *John Baptist* in his Prison Fasting with his Lord. And designs on foot to take his head, and if you speak, your great Landlord will not indure you to have his great penniworth any longer, your great Kindred will be ashamed of you, and turn you out of the Synagogue, if you keep not silent, and bear with their Tauntings and Jearings at *Religion*, and hold your peace, be against them in your Heart to still Contience, but as silent, as though you sided with them, to keep their applause; mighty for *Christ* in the *Closet*, where no body else sees you nor hears you, but dumb with silence upon the *Theator*; have any of your Rulers believed on him, may not we in prudence run with this easie stream, rather then in over zeal, hazard all, and run our selves into a Jail, is it not good sleeping in a whole skin, Christ hath my Heart and shall have, and what if in such an *evil time*, I give the Ruler

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my Mouth, doth not the Scripture say, the prudent shall keep silence this time, because it is an evil time! Oh, is not this an evil time, when a Man shall be laughed out of the Market for but speaking a word on that side the way; and thus carnal reasonings are apt to take with such, who know little of the worth of *Christs Name*, and certainly it is not onely a Sign of the decay in Godliness, but a very sinful decay for any Christian professor, to have so little presence of Christ and his Gospel in his Heart, as to suffer upon mature consideration, any Storm whatsoever, to carry him like *Peter* Captive to the denial. *I never knew him*, I know not what thou sayest, where is that old spirit that was in Gods people under such temptations in time past. I will saith God smite all these people with the Pestilence, and disinherit them, what then saith *Moses* in his Honourable Estimation of Gods name, *Numb. 14, 15, 16.* Now if thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the Nations which hath heard the Fame of thee, will speak saying, because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the Land which he swore to them, therefore he hath slain them in the Wilderness; O Lord, never let my Eyes see this day, but rather blot my Name out of thy Book, then to suffer this reproach to come upon thy famous Name. what mean you to weep and break my Hart saith the Holy Apostle, I am ready not onely to be Bound but to die at *Jerusalem*, for the Name of our Lord Jesus; this blessed Name, that is in Scripture rightly Stiled, wonderful Councillor, mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of peace; these names to *Moses, Joshua, Paul, &c.* were more precious then Gold, yea then fine Gold, yea the fairest amongst ten thousand, even altogether lovely; but I shall proceed to three or four Causes of this decay, &c. which being heeded, may serve also as remedies against this decay.

First,

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First, a slavish fear of men, and things pertaining to this life; *Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings*; upon this score, either fearing men, or fearing loosing the things pertaining to this life, as *John 12. Many believed but did not confess him, for fear of loosing their place in the Synagogue.* It is much to be feared that with regard to this, many hear and bear to hear, see and bear to see, know and bear to know, that dishonour contracted to the name of Christ, and his gospel, that otherwise they would not, and certainly ought not; *have no fellowship with unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them*; that is, come not in company with them, yet if you must, then rebuke them; for any among their great friends, kindred, or any other, by whom perhaps they have great gain, to bear with swearing, blaspheming, deriding at Religion, or other vain communications, plainly argues a great slavish fear to have possessed them.

Secondly, another Cause of this, may be an impotent love; that is, your love to God proves weak or lame; *There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear*; because fear hath torment.

Thirdly, Unskillfulness in the Doctrine of self-denial, may prove a great Cause of this decay, *Whosoever doth not take up his Cross and follow me, cannot be my Disciple*; behold I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the holy Ghost witnesseth in every City, saying, bonds and afflictions abide me, but none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear to my self, so I may finish my course with joy.

Fourthly, A doubtful mind of Gods Allsufficiency, and certainty, to make up what damage may come through our care to his name and credit, both in this life, and that to come; Gods All-sufficiency is never

so seen, as in the time of greatest scarcity, or under the highest straits; *Then stand still and see the salvation of the Lord*; and as Gods sufficiency is never so seen as then, in like manner he is never so obliged as then: When persons are suffering (through his grace) for his namesake: *They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, and bring you before Rulers for my names sake; but I will give you a mouth, and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gain-say,* Luke 21. 12, 13. but I shall leave this to consideration, and proceed to the 17 Sign of Dying to Godliness.

CHAP. XVII.

Shewing, that sinning through impatience, under Offences, is a certain mark of deep decay; with Objections, and Answers, proving the degrees of anger, and three Causes why Christians are impatient unto sin.

SIGN XVII.

When at a small offence, you are usually so impatient, that you commit great sin.

It is not possible to live without offences giving, or taking, real or seeming; and such is mans frailty in common, that even under small provocations, they are apt to yield to too deep an impression. But for better understanding, it may be necessary to make some Observation upon this Sign,

First, As to the meaning of small Offences.

Secondly, As to the kind of impatience here intended.

First, By small Offences is meant, either small with respect to the little occasion that is given, perhaps but seemingly; or if real, yet so slender, as it would be wisdom to wink at it, and but folly to be moved by it.

Secondly,

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Secondly, Small as coming from the smallest occasions, viz. earthly; an error of life, as to the things of Heaven, though small, being that that is greater in many degrees, than some error that may arise from the things of this life, which by God are called the smallest matters. A Christian may be easily read more or less, strong, or spiritual, as he is more or less affected with the offences that this life minister to him; *Whereas there is envyings, debate, and strife among you, are ye not carnal and walk as men?* 1 Cor. 3. 2.

Now the kind of impatience here intended is, for small offences to be so moved or enraged, as to run beyond the bounds of Gods allowance, *Be angry but sin not; let not the Sun go down upon your wrath*; Intimating a great aptness in persons, when provoked to be so enraged as to continue and boyl in wrath, seeking for revenge, contrary to Gods Council, *be in malice as Gods Children.*

Object. But it may be objected, whether an allowance of anger, or impatience under provocation may not be.

Answ. There is an anger in good part, and in bad part, so to take offence or be angry, or impatient, as to thirst after personal revenge, or requital; surely it is not good: *He that is so angry with his brother, shall be in danger of Judgment; for in their anger they slew a man, and their wrath they digged down a Wall, cursed be their anger, for it was fierce,* Gen. 49. 6, 7. Here impatience is taken in ill part, and by Christians to be abhorred and avoided, it being not of that kind, *Exod. 32. 19. And Moses anger waxed hot; full of zealous and sore displeasure; not simply against their person, but against their sin.* Thus God is said to be angry with his people, when by their sins they provoke him, *Numb 11. 10.*

But impatience and anger in ill part, is such as runs out to the breaking the hedge of Government, running

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ning into cursing, swearing, tumults, fighting, or brawling.

Object. 2. But it may be again Objected, that the Sign it self seems to give allowance of great anger, or impatience, under great Offences; for it saith, *When at a smal offence you are so impatient, that you commit great sin.*

Ans. Doubtless under great Offences, greater displeasure may be manifested; but let the growing heaven-born Christian, set up his standard here, that at no offence small or great, he may dare at any hand to break down the wall; in a word, *Be angry and sin not*, Ephes. 4. 26. By this means we make our quarrel, Gods, to whom vengeance belongs, and he will righteously repay, otherwise, that is, when impatience carries us into the path of sinning, we make the quarrel our own, and take Gods work from him, and so incur his displeasure upon us: The good Lord give in wisdom and strength to Christians here, under all provocations, whether great or small, in Church or Family, from friend or enemy, that they *let patience have its perfect work*, rather to the suffering any wrong, then committing the least sin; How like our Head the Lord Jesus would this declare us to be? *who did not sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, yet when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered threatned not, (took it most meekly) and committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.*

Object. 3. But it may be objected again, whether by this Superiours as Governors, Parents, or Masters, may or not be angry with their Inferiours?

Ans. Yes, and correct them to, but it must be as their drinking was in *Esters* time, according to the Law of Gods allowance; Read for our rule in this case, (and let us live and die by it) *Nehem. 5. 6, 7, 9.* And

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I was very angry when I heard their cry, and these words; then I rebuked the Nobles and Rulers saying, It is not good that you do, ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of the Heathen our enemies. O let Christians make this their rule under all provocations, to keep within the fear of God, because of the reproach of the Adversary; yea, let your provocation be what it will, or from whome it will, friend or enemy, child or servant, them that have most cause or least cause, still remember and keep to this, it is better ten thousand times ten thousand, patiently to suffer, than impatiently to sin and suffer too; by the one, others do us wrong, by the other we do our selves wrong: St. Paul meets with some Christians in the Corinth Church under this Dying Sign, 1 Cor. 7. 6. Brother goeth to Law with Brother, and that before the unjust too: He prescribes the Remedy, that they rather take wrong (though from Brethren) and suffer themselves to be defrauded. The Proverb is worth our heeding in this kind, (it will not countervail our cost) better patiently take the wrong, than with sinning seek our right.

I shall now come to two or three Causes of this Decay, which being observed and avoyded, may also serve as Remedies against this decay or dying Sign.

First, the first Cause, want of Government over our own spirits.

Secondly, Too high esteem of worldly Injoyments.

Thirdly, Cumbring our selves with any business.

For the first, viz. Want of government over our own spirit; that is, not being Lords over our own Passions, having them at our Christian beck, when to be angry, and to what degree, Ignorance of our bounds here, make us Beast like; *I were envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked; saying, I have washed my heart in vain, and cleansed my hands in innocency,*

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Psal. 73. So foolish and ignorant was I, even as a Beast before thee. He that hath no rule over his own Spirit, is like a City Without Walls and broken down. Want of government over our own spirit, makes us as naked or desolate, as an unfortified City, whose Walls are broken down, *Prov. 25. 28.*

Secondly, Too high esteem of worldly Injoyments; He that will hardly be moved at a bigger thing, will not easily be moved for a pin; All offences are a kind of loss, being something that crosseth the grain of our spirit; now answerable to the estimation we have more or less of our loss, will our offences taking be; It is putting too high a value of earthly Injoyments, as Husband, Wife, Children, House or Land, Gold or Silver, that makes us so impatient at their loss or leaving; *Set your affection, saith St. Paul, on things above, not on things below; The time is short, it remaineth that they that have Wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they weep not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not, 1 Cor. 7. 29.* The Apostle would have them to carry about with them their outward Injoyments, as a Traveller carries his old Coat about with him, every day thinking to throw it of; and if he loose it, or be robbed of it, doth not much trouble himself, for he sets little value upon it: Would Christian Travellers seek to soar high in their affections, how little would this little little worldly pelf, seem to us in our getting or loosing, *1 Cor. 6. 2. Phil. 3. 8.*

Thirdly, A third cause of our Impatience, and a third Remedy against it is, to avoyd much cumbring our self with any business; that is, a filling our hands too full, over-charging our selves, taking more upon us, than we are able to manage with submission to better things, and so hinder meditation and contemplation about those lasting things of Heaven; which occasions a free-

zing

zing of the spirits, and so we sin and fall as every little trouble comes in our way; whereas a joyful spirit, that is enlarged and at liberty, *Bears all things, believes all things, endures all things, is not easily provoked*, as 2 Cor. 13. at large shews: all this while a spirit cumbred is in bondage, and quickly fretted, like a scald head soon broken; *Take heed lest at any time your heart be overcharged*, Luk 21. 34. *I would have you be without carefulness*, 1 Cor. 7. 32. *Martha, Martha, thou art troubled, and cumbrest thy self about many things; but Mary hath made choice, or busied her self about that good part that shall never be taken from her*, Luke 10. last. Consider what you read, and the good Lord give you understanding. Amen.

CHAP. XVIII.

Proving those Christians to be almost dead, that make it more their business, to get the Form than the Power of Religion; with Causes and Remedies.

SIGN XVIII.

When you are more careful to get the words of Christs People, than the spirit of Christs People; the Form than the Power.

That is, the name and out-side of Reformation, rather than the spirit and power of Reformation; when the strength and bent of all their care, lies in trimming thy self to appear before men righteous or religious. Persons may go very far in this with great self-security, resting barely upon outside performances, getting fine words, and painted expressions, making a great shew of their worship, Pharasaical like, and at the same time live under the dominion of some base lust, Isa. 1. 11, 12, 14, 14. *To what purpose is the multitude of your Sacrafices*

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Sacrifices to me, saith the Lord? I am full of the burnt Offerings of Rams, and fat of fed Beasts; I delight not in the blood of Bullocks, or Lambs, or Hee-goats: When you come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hands, to tread my Courts? Your new Moons and appointed Feasts, they are a trouble to me, I am weary to bear them, for your hands are full of blood. They were then under the guilt of sin, or dominion or both, and yet at the same time full of outward Services, and mighty busie in their Worship, Hear ye this ye men of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord, Do not trust in lying words, saying, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord; for the Temple of the Lord is this, If ye throughly amend your ways and doings; if you throughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour, and oppress not the poor, fatherless, or widow; in this I delight. Jer. 7. It is clear here also, these rested meerly in outwards, and lived under the dominion of very base lusts, at the very time they seemed so zealous for the Lord.

And it is very much to be feared, many now adayes run in the same channel, Ezek 33. 31, 32. *Come I pray you and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord; and they come before thee as my people do; and with their mouth shew much love; (but mark at the same time) their heart runs after Covetousness. These were Hypocrites in Zion, that shelter themselves in the outside of Religion, Covering Gods Altar with tears, Mal. 2. 8, 13. Yet he regards them not, seeing such to be but nominal Christians, and therefore abhors them exceedingly: The Scripture seems to intimate this as a very common overspreading weed, not rare to be found, but rather rare to be avoided in professors. Let us therefore all look to our selves, prove our own work, so shall we have rejoycing in our selves alone, Mat. 23. 14. 15.*

for

for a pretence make long prayers, Rom. 2. 18, 19, 20. *Behold thou art called a Jew, reatest in the Law, makest thy boast of God, being confident that thou thy self art a guide of the blind, a light to them in darkness; at the same time under the dominion of Sin.*

But what may be the Causes of this, that persons should take such pains in Religion, and at the same time be but meer painted Sepulchres?

Ans. First, gross ignorance } Temporal advance-
Secondly, Carnal security. } ment.

First Gross ignorance, that God did never institute Laws for Laws sake, but for his Name sake, and sinners saying; never placing happiness in them, but in him that is the author of them. O then what ignorance and madness is it, for people to content themselves with flesh-circumcision; God will punish such with the uncircumcised, Jer. 9. last. *Behold the dayes come, saith the Lord, that I will punish the circumcised with, or as truly as, the uncircumcised; for the one hath it not in the flesh, and the other not in the heart.*

Secondly, Carnal security; That is, dream they shall be accepted because great Prayers, great Preachers, great goers to Church (though this be good in it self) yet this is filthy and bad, when either it is alone or rested in; *When they shall say, peace and safety, then suddain destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape,* 1 Thes. 5. 3.

This Carnal security is like to prove the damning sin of thousands in our very Age, it appeareth in Scripture to be one of the common sins of Professors; in the time of Noah, they eat, drank bought, sold, married, and gave in marriage, that is things lawful in themselves with submission to more noble employment, was not condemnable, but this is that they were given up to these,

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these, as if they did wholly addict themselves to these, as to a Trade; it was all they bended their minds unto; the man in the Gospel was secure that went into the Marriage without the Wedding Garment; the five Virgins was secure, the five Churches in *Asia* was secure, though in danger, and threatned without speedy repentance, to be spewed out of Gods mouth; doth not this *Carnal Security* raign greatly among many Professors in our own experience (may we not fear) take up their rest and hope, for *Salvation*, upon what they have done, leaning upon a reed, have Sheets not large enough to cover them; are we not apt till our works are thormed by eminent danger and approach of *Death*, to neglect the preserving all, and all manner of diligence, to make or prove our Calling or Election sure, by going on in the daily Addition of *Faith, Vertue, Knowledge, Temperance, Patience, Godliness, Brotherly Love*; are we not as barren of true spiritual increase, and at best but, or less, lively then twenty years ago, and yet please our selves with the hopes of *Salvation*, never considering on what foundation our *hopes* are grounded, for confidence of being saved, is in many wicked livers, whose Works declare, their Faith is not a Faith of the Gospel kind, which purifieth the Soul; therefore every confidence of *Salvation* is no *Faith* of acceptance, with God, unless it be accompanied with understanding of that truth it founds his Confidence on; may not this call for wayling on all hands, to behold and hear thousands in our Land, that belch out their hellish Oathes and imprecations, upon trifling occasions, uttering vain hopes for *Salvation*, while at the same time they swear themselves into *Damnation*, and yet who so confident as they, unto whom not onely but even to the best of Professors, I humbly recommend these six Scriptures, for proof of the truth of their estate of acceptance

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tance with God. Rom. 8. 10. *And if Christ be not in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness.* 2 Cor. 5. 17. *Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new Creature, old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.* Galat. 5. 24. *And they that are Christs have Crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.* Chap. 6. 14. *But God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is Crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* 1 John 2. 6. *He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walke, even as he walked.* Chap. 3. 3. *And every man that hath this hope in him purifyeth himself even as he is pure.*

Thirdly, Temporal Advancement, although it is not an infallible Mark of Sincerity, when it is certain by the Profession of Christianity we meet with Temporal disadvantage, Loss in Trade, Reputation, yet it is a considerable Argument to ground a Charitable beliefe of the truth of Sincerity in such a person; and, indeed, was a prevailing Argument with the Primitive Christians to admit Disciples at the first Confession of their Faith into a Gospel-Church, and not much of any further Enquiry into the manner of their past-Life; for, that it could not rationally be presumed they did lightly attempt what they desired, in regard such certain loss by the Cross did attend the same; but, on the contrary, it is very evident in the Scripture, that the fear of the Cross kept many from following Christ; for, among the Chief Rulers there was not a few that believed on him, but durst not Confess, for fear they should be turned out of the Synagogue: and it is as cleare many did leave all to follow him, to take part with his hard fair, neither *Shoes* sometimes to their *Feet*, neither *Meat* nor *Money*, so that if they had not Faith enough to trust God for their Provision, without

without any visible way to Sence, must even quit *Christs* Yoak, or not come under it, and take their own way for their own supply; but on the contrary, when Temporal Advancement is as visably probable to attend the Profession of Religion, and that it is very much to be presumed in the eye of Sence, that it will advance Trade, and occasion an increase of Reputation: in such a day as this, it very nearly concernes such as are under this probable Temptation, to take considerable heed they do not run before they be sent. that is, do not leap into the outside of Profession for Professions sake, because it is so much in fashion, that they are in a very faire way to obtain the Rulers Favour by it; for, it is very certain the Rulers Favour hath proved a wofull Snare to many, to quit a good Conscience, when the contrary turned to their advantage, though at last it hath brought them to the *Weeping-Cross*, like King *Henry* the Eights Favourite, that with wofull Cries upon his *Death-bed*, told the King, Nothing now were his trouble, like this, that he had been more Faithfull to Him then to his *God*, and were now like to meet with a wofull reward, for that he had studied more to please Him then his Maker. Though extreame Poverty be no sufficient Argument to obstruct persons, being upon their Profession admitted into *Christs Fold*, because the Poor receive the Gospel in *Christs* account, yet certainly this Text hath been much misconstrued, and doth not onely intend Temporal Poverty, but Poverty of Spirit; yet, How many Carnall Empty Spiritually Poor, as well as Temporal, have in our day made more hast than Gods-speed, or for the Churches Peace; to get into the Fold more for *Loaves* then *Love*: not that this is to hinder, or suppose that none extreame Poor in Outwards can be Sincere; but, as it is a Material Circumstance,

stance, that such as are Wealthy, can have little by-end, to joyn themselves in Fellowship with that People where Weekly Charge will call for their continued assistance to Communicate the same. In a word, neither Condition of Temporal Advancement, or its contrary (as both attend our Profession in Religion, can be without their Temptations) and often, as one hath slain its Ten thousands the other hath slain its Thousands; so that there is no safety, nor season for Secularity in either Condition, but an absolute necessity of being still upon our Watch for most of the Spirit of *Christ's* People, and least of the contrary, and so I pass to the next Sign of dying in Godliness.

CHAP. XIX.

Containing in it a description of a decaying Christian, by his light trouble at Miscarriages, though known to Gods eye, while kept from Mans eye, with Three special Causes of this Decay.

SIGN XIX.

When you are not much troubled at your own Miscarriages, while they are kept from publick view.

By Miscarriages here, I would be understood, the failings and fallings of Gods Children, not wilfully nor altogether willingly, but through infirmity, being overtaken, or as it were insnared before they are aware, yet truly privy to what they have done, and not ignorant they have gone out of the way: Nevertheless if their going thus far in sight and sense of uneven walking, be found without much trouble, it is most evident then their case is very sad; *Now who is he that lives*

lives and sins not? 1 King. 8. 46. And who is he that can hide what he doth from an All-seeing-eye, *Psal.* 139. 7. And what is it that puts distinction between a good mans sinning, and a bad mans sinning? but that the one sins with all his will, the other, with scarce any of his will; to the one what he doth is matter of delight; to the other what he doth is his sickness; though it is true he doth it, yet his heart is grieved for it: now the more or less a good man is troubled upon this score, the more or less is his decay; where the awful sight of *Gods eye* is much revered, there all Miscarriages are soon discerned and much avoided; but the lesser any man is beset with this grace, lessens his fear to the greater, and heightens his fear to the lesser: that is, *Gods eye* is not so much run from as mans eye: one of the highest temptations to sin being *secretie*; and one of the greatest seasons to try whether a man hath good will to do amiss or no; it having in it no kind of let to touch his sensitive part, with care or fear to eschew it, because that visible shame that sin brings, in all probability cannot come; then Satan is at work mightily, having the highest opportunity, unless the Conscience be found very tender, to strike the heart into a trembling sense of that *piercing eye of the Almighty*; saying with *Job*, *Doth not he see my wayes, and count all my steps?* Chap. 31. 42. What else can hinder closing with temptation to a high degree? now such misdoing as this, of secret sinning, found in any, and they not much troubled because it is not made known; let the sin they have committed be never so small in account; yet a sin doth prove such very desolate of the Grace of God.

Amnon, one of *Dauids* Sons, being evil disposed towards *Tamar* his Sister, is not thoughtful at all of *Gods secret eye*, but careful how to avoid *Mans Eye*;
as

as this saying proves, *Have all Men out from me*, 2 Sam. 13. 9. none but *Tamar* must stay with him, towards whom he is wickedly designed, running into Gods eye without all fear, so he may run from Mans eye: It was not thus with good *Joseph Jacobs Son*, when he had as much if not more secrecie, and the temptation without very strong, to have drawn him into high miscarriages; at such a time in a resisting way, gives this reply, *How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?* Gen 39. 9. In like manner *Annaias and Sapphira*, that sold their Possessions, under pretence of giving the price as a Free-will Offering to the Lords use; but when required to speak the truth, whether or no they kept any thing back, in fear to Mans eye rather than Gods eye, sins at a high rate, *Lying*, as the Scripture gives it, *to the Holy Ghost*, Acts 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. But as it is the practise of decaying Christians, to be most careful to keep their Miscarriages from Mans eye: in like manner, their sorrow at the sight of sin, is distinguishable to be different from the sorrow of the growing Christian; though his miscarriage may be only known to God. saying, with *David*, *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this wickedness in thy sight, that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest*: On the contrary, as *Jeremiah* complains, *I hearkned and heard, but they spake not aright, no man repented him of his evil, saying, what have I done; every one turneth to his own course, as the Horse rusheth into the Battel*. But I shall proceed to the Causes of this decay, which may be referred to these three; *First*, Blindness in the Understanding; or *Secondly*, Want of Fear to God; *Thirdly*, Want of Love to God. (1.) Blindness in the Understanding, this may be called the Evil of Evils, for that it is the *Devils Grand Anvill*, on which he

he doth Frame the first beginnings of *all evil*; he is rightly stiled the Prince of darkness, because his works are done most of all on persons *Dark* in the *Understanding*, which makes us fit matter for him to trade with: for, whatsoever Man doth entertain as his Choice, be it good or bad, it is received by the *Understanding*, which must be satisfied with some valuable, real, or seeming worth in it, before it is accepted: As Vertue is a Jewell worth all our Labour, and fit to be purchased at any rate, because of the excellent advantage it doth ennoble and enright persons unto, and for which many have given up themselves, so valuable is its purchase; yet is it of no more worth to a depraved understanding, then the choicest Colours to a man naturally blind; in like manner, Sins and Miscarriages against God, their dreadful sting being *hid* from the *Understanding*, a Carnal Professor not seeing with those eyes what a reward is laid up in God for Vertue, and what a *Punishment* is prepared of God for *Iniquity*, proves a leading Argument with the Flesh, to call *Vertues wayes too strait and troublesome*, and the way of *Sin* at the same time as the *Stolne waters, sweet and pleasant*; this is the true cause why the All-piercing eye of God is not revered, as the greatest Tye both to avoid Sin or Miscarriages, and to be troubled for any progress in that Rode; for, a truly enlightened understanding represents the presence of God allwayes so near, as that it seates a reverence of this God in the heart, rooted, and in the life evidenced, *Psal. 16. 8. Psal. 109. O Lord, saith David; thou hast searched me, and known me, thou knowest my down sitting, and up-rising, thou understandest my thoughts a farr off, and art acquainted with all my wayes; here is an open passage in Davids understanding for the All-piercing eye of God, whom he knowes*

knows to be a *Heart searcher*, a *Vertue rewarded*, a *Sin punisher*; and therefore after he had made his acknowledgment of Gods Omnipresence, with this pertinent and powerful Application in Prayer to him; closeth all, saying, *Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting*; that is, in the Path of Vertue, which certainly centers in eternal happiness. *Psal.* 139. 1, 2, 23, 24. This was *Dauids* frame.

But when our Understandings are so depraved, that we can walk on smoothly, like the Harlot, saying, Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning; let us solace our selves with love, for the good man is not at home, he is gone along journey: Hear is the absent eye of the Husband, he is gone a long journey, what now is in the way? her Understanding is so blind as to the perceiving privy of God, he is not in her thoughts once to make answer; but God is near and seeth my ways, and counts my goings in like manner. The young Man being void of understanding goeth after her straight way, not knowing that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the *depths of Hell*.

Secondly, Want of the fear of God, is a cause of this decay, he whose heart is posselt with the *fear of God*, as knowing his greatness and goodness, his mighty power and arm to *save or destroy*. Though such an one wants no power or secrecy, to offend this God by committing actual evil against this God, yet dare not, cannot, will not do it; but were it not for the *fear of God*, could and would do what they cannor, nor dare not. The King of *Egypt* commands the *Hebrew* Midwives, that if a Son were born, they should kill him; and who then shall blame them, seeing a

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King commands them : But the *Hebrew* Midwives feared God, and did not do as the King of *Egypt* commanded them, but saved the Male-children alive, *Exod. 1. 17.* Good *Nehemiah* had as great a power to exact heavy burdens as any of the former Governors that had been before him, but acquitteth himself in these words, *So did not I, because of the fear of God.* These persons wanted neither power, nor secrecy, to have complied with the temptations before them; yet they are held by this precious Grace, *the fear of God.* When the Holy Scripture mustereth together a Tribe of Hellish actions, Mens throats an open Sepulcher, their tongues full of deceit, the poyson of Aspes under their lips, their mouthes full of cursing and bitterness, their feet swift to shed blood; as a reason of this list of black Deeds, the Holy Spirit tells us, *The fear of God is not before their eyes, Rom. 3. 18.* That is, they have not a reverential apprehension of the Majesty of God as present in all places, and at all times, always beholding both the evil and good actions of them that feareth or sweareth an Oath; so that it is the expresse charge of God, to his Heaven-born Children, in order to their certain progress in Grace, that they put on, as their cloathing, the garment of the fear of the Lord all the day long; and if we look for that priviledge of calling God Father, then to pass the time of our dwelling here in fear, *1 Pet. 1. 17.* assigning it as an essential, not onely to the well-being, but to the very being of Christianity; without which kinde of habitual fear, it is not possible to have the Root of the Matter in us. By all which it is evident, that if our secret sins, are not our deep sores, although kept from mans eye, that we are very destitute of the fear of God.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Want of love to God, is a cause of this decay; did we love him as we ought, we would not so wound him as we do? our Ignorance, what a great God the Lord Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and the Seas and Fountains of Water? that did but say, Let there be light, and there was light; that did but say to the proud Waves of the Sea be still, and they obeyed his voice; that did but command the East Wind to blow, and the Red Sea became as dry Land: And at the next voice of his word returned in its full strength, and devoured the King of *Egypt*, and all his Chariots and Horsemen, so that not one of them escaped. Our sweet Singer of *Israel*, when he comes to make this his meditation, cries out in his great sense of the Majesty of God, What ailed thee O Sea, that thou fleddest! thou *Jordan*, that thou wast driven back! ye Mountains, that you skipped like Rams, and ye little Hills like Lambs! O said *David*, I will tell thee, O my Soul, what was the matter! *The presence of the Lord was there, tremble thou Earth at the presence of the Lord; at the presence of the God of Jacob, which turned the Rock into a standing Water, the Flint into a Fountain of Water!* As if he should say, if thou didst but understand his greatness, and his goodness, thou wouldst both fear him and love him.

Now the Understanding doth not embrace Truth with desire, because it is a Truth, for so is Hell; but because it is an useful, desireable, suitable, and durable truth, so is God: Did we know him, we should love him; and the more we increase in knowledge of God, the more we shall grow out of love with our selves, and increase of love to God; for God is love, and answerable to the knowledge we have of his Loveliness. Will our affection be drawn out to him, it is

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love makes the Law easie; it was Christs love made him bear with Peter, and seek to restore him so early, after he had denied him so ungratefully. And it was the Seed of true love in Peter, that drew him upon Christs new admonition to weep so bitterly. The love of the Lord understood by a sinner, his Creation love, his Redemption love, his Vocation love, and Salvation love, being all free loves, without the least Merit, makes the Soul look back, and see its sins in its woful Die; then looks forward and sees its Lord with the Print of the Nails in his hands, and the print of the Spear in his side. And now appears Christ full of love, and now the Soul is sick of love. From hence ariseth true hatred for sin as sin; and now no need to be suspected not to weep for such miscarriages, as are kept from publick view; and here is then the true distinction between a real, growing, and but a seeming Christian; the one, his sin is his sore, because God sees; the other, his sin is his sore, because Man sees.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

Shewing the heart very bad, when under faults it cannot bear plain dealing; with three Causes of this badness; and directions for the Christian admonisher to take six Companions along with him.

SIGN XX.

When you love least those Christians that deal most faithfully with you, in the opening your sores, and tendering your Remedies.

It is a stronger evidence of a bad Spirit, when persons come to this pass, either they must be unsensible of their bad state, or else willing to continue in it through a hardened heart; but may be easily discerned in a Church, either by their itching at most plain soul-searching Doctrine, or their estrangedness to the most zealous spiritual Brethren; and if there be a luke-warm Christian in the Church, a thousand to one but he is most of their society; they may also be known by this, they are greatest strangers to the difficultest duties; 'tis hard to bring them to early duties, and as hard to hold them at late services; in a word, you may have their company, but it must be at services most easie, when some outward credit may accrue to them by their profession; then none shall seem more apt and active then themselves, and God that best knows this, greatly abhors this; and will chastise such Churches as are not careful to remove, and will also in due time, make such persons by one means or other, so manifest, that he that runs may read them; but as

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there are such that will not like them that deal faithfully with them; even so, there are some that out of personal respect to such, and for fear to lose their favour, will not tell them so nakedly of their foresh; but in love to their persons speak faintly of their sins, and so hate their Souls. In shew these are a mans greatest friends, but in truth his greatest enemies, witness the false Prophets, *1 Kings 22. 6. Shall I go against Ramoth Gilead to battel, or shall I forbear? and they said go up, for the Lord hath delivered it into thy hand.* And when a Prophet of the Lord one *Micaiah* is called for, *vers. 13.* They would fain have seduced him to speak good words, as they called it, that is pleasant promises, though they were lyes; Thus we may see the property of some false Prophets, that for an Angel will cry up a person as if he were almost an Angel, it was even so in *Jeremiah's* time, *Chap 8.* *They have healed the hurt of the Daughter of my people slightly, crying, peace, peace, when there was no peace.* When God would not, nor righteously could not, speak peace but war, because of their misdoings; yet these false Prophets make promises of peace to them; though in their sins, that as God by the Prophet *Ezekiel* complains, *Chap. 13. Some pillows under arm-holes for pieces of bread, and handfuls of barley.* Sparing what he would have destroyed, and destroying what he would have spared.

It is a very great Judgment upon a Church or people, to have such amongst them, as will speak peace to any out of the way of peace; it is as bad a judgment upon those persons, that love not those that speak war to them, when their impenitency speaks the same; yet of such the Apostle *St. Paul* complains, *Gal. 4. 15, 16. Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? Doubtless these Galathians speak*

Speak in their hearts as much, as others speak of the Prophet *Amos*, Chap. 7. 10. who say, *The land is not able to bear his words*, once this same Church could have pulled out their eyes (if it had been possible) to have done this same Apostle good. Now counts him their enemy for telling them the truth.

Before I pass to the causes of this decay, I shall offer something by way of Caution, touching the ADVISOR and the ADVISED; First to the Advisor.

I have seen in my experience many an useful and needful admonition, prove as Water spilt upon the ground, for want of *Six Companions*, that the Christian Admonisher in his faithful dealing with his Brother in the opening his Sores, and tending his remedies ought always to bring along with him; their names are worthy to be known, and their Company prized in this Case. The name of the First, is *Consideration*: the Second, is *Love*: the Third, is *Time*: the Fourth, is *Matter*: the Fifth, is *Manner*: and the Sixth, is *End*.

First, Consideration; Have I heard or seen my Brother commit a Trespass. Now what saith Consideration? It first goes to Prayer in its Closet; and then adviseth me to weigh the Trespass in Gods Balance, whether Great or Small, whether against the First Table or Second, or both, whether more Accidental or Habitual; under what Circumstances of Aggravation, less or more; whether hurried by the Strength of Temptation; and so Sin sought him: or whether the Temptation Remote, and so he sought the sin; and thus Consideration doth its office, as to the Sin; but keeps all in his own breast, till a further progress; and having considered the Sin and its Degrees. Now Consideration weighs the Constitution, and Condition of the Person; What elementary influ-

ence of the Heavens, hath most impression upon him naturally; Is he *mild* or *Chollerick*? Is this his addi-
 ed Sin, that which hath influence upon him, that
 which he is most apt to of all other to be taken with, his
 right eye sin, or his right hand sin, his *Dalilah*, his
Absolom; thus and thus having weighed, he passes
 judgement in his Spirit; and now calls for his next
 door Neighbour, L O V E and discourseth the matter
 with him; and this is the second Companion, namely
Love, that is to go along with him.

Now saith *Love*, I have heard or seen this Brother
 Trespass; but a I am fit person to deal with him for this
 Trespass? Do I with a fervent heart *Love him*, if not, I
 am not fit to go along with Consideration to him, for
 if I *Love him*, I shall do all in *Love*, and not through
 passion overdo; some Christians have shown so
 much want of *Love* in their Admonitions, that
 while they have pretended it was the Lords quarrel,
 have managed it with so little *Love*, as though it were
 their own; therefore saith *Love*, if I hate his sin, and
 love his person, I may be useful in Considerations Com-
 pany; but I am sure I do dearly *Love him*; and there-
 fore will make Gods words my rule, which hath com-
 manded me, Let all your works be done in *Love*; and
 now *Love* calls its next door Neighbour, namely,
 T I M E, and that is the Third Companion.

Now saith *Time* to Consideration, you have been
 with God at prayer in your Closet, and have weighed
 the Sin under every Circumstance, and you (mean-
 ing *Love*) have resolved your self in this question,
 that you *Love* the person with all your heart, but hate
 his sin, and your *Love* is such, that you can, and do
 greatly sympathize with him, and have been praying
 for him, and advising with Consideration about him,
 and have resolved to do all in *Love* to his Body; but
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in a most especial manner to his precious Soul; no Mother can be more troubled at the fall her Child hath got, and the wound thereby, then you are troubled at this your Brothers fall. Now saith *Time*, when shall we go and speak with him? we must *Time* our undertaking, *for every thing is beautiful in its season*; we will take him when most alone, and freest from any incumbrance of worldly business, and not chaffed in his mind about any cross or loss, affliction or provocation; and if we cannot speed, we will go again, and again, and again; not mattering our *time* so we gain the *End* of our *Time*; and having thus timed our work, we will call our next neighbour, whose name is *MATTER*, and that is the Fourth Companion.

Now saith *Matter* we must do all by rule, it is that which must be our guide; for as many in speaking and acting, as walk according to this rule, *Peace be on them, and God will prosper them*; well then, what Scripture hath he sinned against? What Law hath he broken? How shall we do to convince him of this sin? These are the precepts that he hath broken; and for these we must call him to *consideration in Love to day*, and not defer it till another *time*; and when we have had the comfortable fruit of time in this matter with success, then we must have some fit *manner* also for Comfort to our fallen Brother by way of promise: for our neighbour *Matter* bids us use these Scriptures if he be *Stubborn*, & these Scriptures if he be *Bowed* and fall under his *Sin*.

And now *Matter* calls his next door Neighbour, whose name is *MANNER*, and he is the fifth Companion who is to go along with the rest; And now saith *Manner*, be sure you having prayed and weighed his *sin*, and consulted with *Love*, with *Time*, *Matter*. Now you must use a suitable way or manner

of speaking; for I have known many a good cause
 spoyled by ill management, therefore we must
 keep down *passion*, and speak to him so mildly, that
 the *Manner* of our speech may not give him occasion
 to think that our next door Neighbour LOVE was
 absent; For I once knew an ancient Christian saith *Man-
 ner* in his *matter* and *manner* of rebuking a fault,
Spoyled the Cause, and LOST HIS END. For
 as to the *Matter*, he did use improper or scriptureless
 expressions; and as for the *Manner* he did not do it
 with that *gravity* and *seriousness* of Spirit that *Consi-
 deration* and *Love* called for; so that the *manner* of
 our carriage must be such, as that we may not loose
 our *labour*; and for that reason we will call our next
 and last door Neighbour, and that is END, who is
 the Sixth Companion, that is to go along with *Consi-
 deration*, *Love*, *Time*, *Matter* and *Manner*

Now saith *End*, What do we propose to our selves
 in this Enterprise? what is our *End*? Let us examine
 our heart? truly and thoroughly Is our *End*, to ble-
 mish our Brothers Reputation? Are we glad he is fall-
 en? Are we going now to put him to open shame, and
 make him the by-word of such as waited for his Halt-
 ing; if this be our *end*, saith *End*, then let us mourn
 over our selves, and get into another frame, or else
 chuse other persons to the work; for if our end be
 right, it is the *honour* of *God*, who is dishonoured by
 this sin, and it is the regaining our Brother by Repen-
 tance. Oh! How will it grieve us to hear the adver-
 sary say, Aha! Aha! Aha! Aha! So would we have it,
 and what shall then become of the great name of God?
 these are our *ends*, and therefore let us proceed to the
 work, and take all our Neighbours with us, and the
 good Lord be our good speed, *Amen*, *Amen*.

Now if Christians will make this way their rule, or the like way of proceeding as much better as they can, I only in my experience of the dreadful consequences that have attended the contrary, and in my intire affection to a regulation cast in this my poor mite into the Lords treasury : & now shall offer a word of caution, also to the person to whom these neighbours come ; and that is, that he would take the same heed, how he entertains this company in their coming to him, as they take in fitting, themselves to come to him, that he may acquit himself from being under this dying sign of loving least such plain-dealers. And to this end, I humbly offer my advice ; namely , that he would also take heed of *heart-rising*, and put on consideration, and go immediately into his *Closet*, and hear all in *Love*, and think charitably of the guests ; and construe their *End* with Charity, that as they have resolved before they came, to do all in *Love*, so he now resolve to *receive* all in *Love*, that when they have delivered their message, they may take their leave with the Apostles words, *We do all things Dearly Beloved for your edification* ; and he may return upon them with these words of the Apostle, *Finally, My Brethren Farewell*. Now by this means, occasion will be offered to conclude with thanksgiving to God at their return ; and no occasion offered to tempt this Brother to abate in his Love to the person ; because of any ill management of the matter, neither will this leave any Room for this dying sign to take place in the Church of God ; but will certainly tend to its preventing, or if begun to its speedy removing ; *And to these great ends, The blessing of God go along with the Adviser and Advised. Amen.*

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But I shall briefly speak of two or three Causes of this Decay, which being avoided, may serve as so many Remedies against this dying Sign.

First, A first Cause is, shaking hands again with our old sins, falling in love with what once we loathed; very burthensome to Israel was *Moses*, when once they began to grow affected with the Fish, the Cucumbers, and the Mellons, that they had in *Egypt*; not only then good, plain dealing *Moses* comes out of request, but even Gods Manna, though Angels food. Num. 11. 5, 6. *We remember the Fish which we did eat in Egypt freely, the Cucumbers and the Mellons, and the Leeks, and the Onyons, and Garlick; but now our soul is dried away, and there is nothing at all besides this Manna before our eyes, and this we lothe as light bread,* Chap. 21.

But Secondly, A second Cause may be this, a losing the relish we once had to heavenly things, Jer. 2. 23. *I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals: When thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a Land that was not sown; then thou wast holiness to the Lord; and the first-fruits of his increase; but now be astonished Oh heavens at this, and be horribly affraid yea very desolate, saith the Lord; for my people have forsaken the Fountain of living waters, and hewen out to themselves broken Cisterns that can hold no water. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast left thy first love; Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, or else I will come and remove thy Candlestick except thou repent,* Rev. 2. 11.

Thirdly, A third Cause may be this, a too too much complying with the friendship of this World: which in its latitude is enmity with God, Gal. 5. 7. *Ye did run well, who did hinder you, (or as the margin reads, drive*

drive you back) that you should not obey the truth : (or hold on your way) This perswasion comes not of him that calleth you : If any come to me and hate not his Father, and his Mother, Wife, Children, Brothers, Sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my Disciple, Luke 14. 26. Demas hath forsaken me, and hath imbraced this present World. Read and consider.

CHAP. XXI.

Proving the condition of the rich as well as the poor, to be a condition of trouble ; and that whether it be common or more then ordinary, to be answerable in prayer ; with a description of the different kinds of trouble ; with profitable Objections answered ; and 4 causes of this decay assigned.

SIGN XXI.

WHen under more than ordinary trouble, afflictions, or straits, you are not more then ordinary in Prayer.

For the opening of this Sign.

First, what is meant by troubles ? It is something that in it self is not, nor cannot be pleasant ; But something that opposeth and withstandeth the desire and delight of the mind ; and therefore in Scripture called a burthen ; *Cast thy burthen upon the Lord and he shall sustain thee* ; were trouble a matter of pleasure, and profit in it self, there would not be that proper need of prayer, and calling for help from one that is stronger ; So that as the word is universal in an ordinary

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nary case, it takes in those cares, fears, and sorrows in common, that we are dayly incident to, *Job 5. 6, 7. Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward;* That is, it is as natural for man to meet with trouble, as it is for the sparks to fly upward, because there is not that ordinary common condition, but it hath its proper temptation; as I shall instance in this following: for saith the poor man, were I a rich man, how glad, how thankful, how contented should I be? But Solomon saith of the rich, *Eccles. 2. Who can come after the King? I got me this and this, yet all vanity and vexation of Spirit; and there is no profit under the Sun.*

Object Why no profit?

For these reasons; first, he is very apt to be high minded, and that will dog him, and trouble him; and as it is very hard for the poor to keep the wolf from his door, that is hunger and rags, even so the rich he is in danger of, and involved with trouble, *1 Tim. 6. 17. Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded;* when a high mind in a stately Coach, and a meek Christ on a poor Asses colt meet together, *Herods Palace, and Christs Manger;* It is well now if the high mind do not rather die than stoop, *Exod. 5. 2. compared with Dan. 3. 15. Who is the Lord that I should obey him? what God is able to deliver you out of my hand?* Here in their greatness, they challenge God, *James 5. Do not rich men oppress you, and bring you before Rulers? Is it not their common practice to use their power to oppress you;* and as Solomon saith, *Prov. 18. 23. While the poor useth intreaty, the rich answereth roughly.* Now God is pleased to establish a statute in Israel to prevent the evil of high mindedness, which the rich was incident to, *Deut. 17. 18, 19.*

But

But Secondly, The rich hath the trouble of care, as well as the poor, differing only in this, it runneth in another Channel; *For the abundance of the rich, will not suffer him to sleep;* he is so beset with fears of the robber, & cares how to secure, as holds his eyes, is as a disease upon him, *Eccles. 5. 12.* It is clear from experience also, for some rich are so beset with troubles, that they wish as a hope of deliverance, that they had been poor; Thus much for the rich. Now the poor hath his troubles also, though of a contrary kind, for as the rich are apt to be too high, so the poor too low; *Job 5. 15. But he saveth the poor from the mighty,* that is, from being crushed by him, *Psal. 113. 7. He raiseth the poor out of the dust;* they are so low, that God stands for them to uphold them, and keep them, lest they sink.

Secondly, As the rich, his abundance will not suffer him to sleep. *Prov. 10. 15. So the destruction of the poor is his poverty;* that is, it leads him to do that that will destroy. *Prov. 30. 7. Lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain;* Hunger, Cold, Fears, Cares, Poverty, and Oppression, that is their portion.

Now all these are common troubles, that are incident to every man, but more then ordinary are such as are not so common, that do not come every day, but are of such a kind as this, *Psal. 50. 15. Call upon me in the day of trouble;* This day of trouble notes something of singularity, as else-where the hour of temptation, notes something not ordinary and common; for every man is subject to be tempted daily; but this is called hour of tryal, because it is some temptation of a strange kind, not ordinary and common, as is evidenced by these Scriptures following, *Nehem. 4. 9. Nevertheless we made our prayer*

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unto our God, Isa. 37. 11, 12, 13. Luke 6. 12. Acts
12. 5. All these Texts plainly shew, that the practice
of holy men, in more then ordinary troubles, was to
be more then ordinary in prayer.

But it may be Objected, what is meant by ordinary prayer; whether once or twice a day, men ought in ordinary cases to pray.

In Answer to which I shall first premise, that men ought to pray daily in, or under ordinary or common troubles, from these Texts of Scripture, *Mat. 6. 7, 11. Give us this day our daily bread;* this day, either intends some particular day in a mans life time, or else every day; that day that we have need of daily bread, or Gods strength and help, is the day here intended; but every body will grant, that every day we have need of daily bread; therefore doubtless, the intent of Jesus Christ here is, that we should pray every day. *Luke 18. 1, 5. Men ought always to pray and not to faint, but cry day and night, Luke 21, 36. Psal. 68. 3. compared with 88. 9. Hear me O Lord for I cry to thee daily;* By this I hope all good men will conclude, that it is their duty to pray every day.

Object How often every day in ordinary cases, ought we to pray?

Ans^w. Where it hath not pleased God by way of precept, to direct to times by way of number, example doubtless may teach us something; *Psal 55. 17. Morning, noon, and evening will I pray and cry to God, and he will hear me;* as if David should say, my often importuning will be a means of prevailing, *Daniel 6. 10. Kneeled down upon his knees, three times a day, and prayed, and praised God as he did aforetime:* clearly proving, it was Daniels practice to be in that heavenly service, three times a day; these Scriptures compared

compared with *1 Thes. 5. 17.* (*Pray without ceasing*) teaching surely, either that Christians ought in ordinary troubles, to be found in prayer three times a day, or at least to be all the day in a praying frame.

Object. 3. But some may say, what if we do not pray at all some dayes, shall we fare the worse?

Ans. First, if you pray not at all, you go out of Gods peoples road; as both precept and example seems to point out; *Give us day by day our daily bread:* seeming to note as well a continuance in the duty of asking, as in the need of receiving, also *1 Thes. 5. Pray continually: Nehemiah, David, Daniel,* and *Jesus Christ*, by their daily practice seems to construe this precept, to intend daily prayer.

Secondly, not to pray at all, seems to put us out of Gods gracious protection, and so we prove self-betrayers, *Ezek. 36. 37. I will yet for all this be inquired of by the house of Israel, Luke 22. 40. Pray that you enter not into temptation. If you seek him he will be found of you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you, 2 Chron. 15. 2.*

Thirdly Not to pray at all, seems to put us out of the way of promise of being helped in troubles, *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will hear thee, and thou shalt glorifie me, Psal. 53. Seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you.*

Fourthly, Neglect to prayer, tempts God to suffer us to be lead into temptation: *Pour out your hearts before him at all times, God is a refuge for us:* but it is to such as wait upon him by pouring out their wants before him, *Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Mat. 6. Isai. 64. 5.*

What hath been said, may teach two things; First, the lamentable condition of such as neither can, nor will pray, that are as unaccustomed to it, as the Heifer
to

to the yoke; living absolute Atheists in the World, saying in their heart, if not in their actions too, *there is no God: Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen, and families that call not upon thy name.*

Secondly, This teacheth to strengthen the hearts and hands of such as fear God, to this service of prayer, it being part of their defence or Armour, *Ephes. 6, Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, watching thereunto with all perseverance, &c. When thou saidst seek my face, my heart said, thy face Lord will I seek: thou wilt hide me in thy pavilion, Psal. 27. 4. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.* Read and consider, so pass to the causes of this Decay.

When under more then, &c. But what may be the Causes of this Decay? 1. Ignorance of self frailty. 2. Ignorance that troubles, or afflictions are Gods frame-house. 3. Ignorance, what an especial help God is in a time of trouble. 4. Ignorance, that prayer to God in trouble, is the very means appointed by God to obtain help from trouble.

First, Ignorance of self-frailty, Man that is borne of a Woman, is of few days and full of trouble. His frailty saith, that he doth not last long; like the Pitcher sent to the well, and meets with a fall which breaketh it all to pieces, and it becometh useful no more; the holy Spirit in this Text gives us to understand the state of Man, he is Born of a Woman, and that is Argument enough to prove his frailty, that as such he shall Hunger, and Thirst, and be full of Infirmities and Sickneses, Dying till he Dye: This is witnessed every day; did we not shut our eyes from it? whether can we go to City or Country, and not meet with frail man, under the Burden either of Consumption, Stone, Chollick, Burning-Feaver, Tertian-ague, Tympany, Dropsie, Scurvy, Gripping, Gout, &c.

May not our dayly experience tell us this? Are we not Ebbing or Flowing continually? If at morning Joyous, at evening in Heavyness; our state not only troubled in common, but our daily accidents shooting as it were new Arrows of greater trouble at us, till we come to fulfill that doleful cry in the Morning, to say, would God it were Evening, and at Evening to say, would God it were Morning, *Deut. 28. 67.* No place of rest for the sole of the Foot. Doth not L O N D O N S houses of Hospitality witness this every day? May we not go thither and find Captives creeping to D E A T H, as it were looking gaskly, weeping bitterly, with this Sequel; *Oh that my Days were at an end, and my Nights no more!* Mortals look but round you, and behold your frailty, here lies one full of groanings, waiting to be cut for the Stone, here lies another to have a gangrenned Leg or Arm Sawn off, here lies another eaten up with the Kings-Evil, here lies another eaten up of the Cancer; In a word, we may conclude with the words of the Prophet *Isaiah, Chap. 1. 6.* *From the Sole of the Foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores.*

Doth not this bespeak us full of Trouble? No sooner is one storm gone, but another comes; and doth not this call upon us to be in Prayer continually; and is it not a certain Argument of great decay in Godliness, when ignorance of Self-frailty is great? Let us awake with *David*, to *David's* prayer, *Psa. 39. 4.* *Lord make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days* what it is, that I may know how F R A I L I am, plainly noting this as an essential means, not only to put *David* upon the work of Prayer, but fervent perseverance in the same.

But *Secondly*, A second cause may be this, Ignorance that troubles, or afflictions are Gods Frame-house; He there puts us to prove us, that he may bowe us, long absence from Health is usually attended with spiritual Wealth. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I have learned thy Precepts*; till this time I knew not my Self, I did not consider my Frailty, nor thought Health so great a Jewel as now I see it is, when *Israel* had rest from trouble, they grew settled upon their Lees: Idleness brought them to Wantonness, and being fed to the full with Butter of Kine, and Milk of Sheep, with the fat of Lambs and Rams of the breed of *Bashan*, and there drink the pure wine of the Grape: *Then Jesurum waxed fat and kicked, then he forsook God that made him; and lightly esteemed the rock of his Salvation*; a sad effect did attend his fulness.

Now in mercy comes trouble to file off this Rust, or else it will destroy and eat out like a Cancker.

All that relish, sense and habit that once was in *Israel*, in the day when God found him in a desert Land, and in the wast howling Wilderiness; then he was holiness to the Lord, stooped with his Heart, and Bowed with his Neck; Lord help and save me, and whatsoever thou commandest I will do, and whithersoever thou sendest me I will go. Where afflictions meet not with a reprobate mind, or one void of Judgment; this is the very effects of Trouble. *Isa. 26. 16. Lord in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy Chastening was upon them: they were early with God when they felt the smart of the Rod.* So that in brief this may teach us that Troubles are Gods Frame-house, and Ignorance of it an evident sign of decay in Godliness.

Thirdly.

Thirdly, A third Cause of this decay may be this, Ignorance, What an especial help God is in time of trouble, He alone brings it, and He alone Sanctifies it, and He alone removes it; Its Gods Love to afflict, He gave *Israel* into the hands of their enemies, because they soon forgot his works, and waited not for his Counsel, so they that hated them ruled over them, nevertheless he regarded their Affliction and made them to be pityed of all those that carryed them Captive. *Afflictions doth not come out of the Dust, neither doth troubles spring out of the Ground*; God is a gracious Agent in the whole course of a mans Pilgrimage, and so essentially our towre in times of trouble, that we can no way bear it or improve it without him; *David* was well skilled in this blessed Arithmetick; whatsoever others may think of Gods being a Cause or Cure of such as are in trouble; *I know O Lord that thy Judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me*, Psal. 119. 75. Thou Lord art he that both saveth from Trouble, and saveth in Trouble; this is thy testimony given of thy great Majesty, *Deut.* 32. 39. *See now that I even I am he, and there is no God with me; I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.* Ignorance of this is a great let to spiritual growth, and a great cause why Gods Altar in time of trouble is so little visited.

But *Fourthly*, A Fourth cause of this decay, namely, That when under more then ordinary Troubles, we are not more then ordinary in Prayer, may be this, Ignorance that prayer to God in trouble is the very means appointed by God to obtain help from trouble; Prayer is a Christians H A N D S, It is his working Tools, without which he cannot do any great exploit. Give any Artist never so much room and time to do

some excellent piece of work, yet deny him Tools; and it will prove like the *Egyptian* Task-masters, no Straw, no Brick; as Food and Cloathing is the means of natural Health, so Prayer mixed with Trouble is the means of spiritual health, without which neither can stand. The Ax heweth the Timber, the Hammer forceth the Nail, the Lime and Morter fixeth the Brick, and the Hands of the cunning Work-men buildeth the House, and prepareth against the storms a suitable habitation; thus Prayer is a Christians hands, without which he cannot hold God; Let me alone *Moses*, do not by Prayer hold my hands from doing some great Execution upon *Rebellious Israel*: *I will not let thee go* (saith good *Jacob*) till thou bless me. I will not cease praying till I find God coming by faith, always to pray and not faint; Is the way or Channel through which I must expect the promise, **NO PRAYER NO PROMISE**; no seeking, no finding: if I Cease to call in trouble, God will Cease to answer in trouble; *I have set Watch-men upon thy Walls O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night*: Mark that I beseech you, day nor night. You that make mention of the Lord, Keep not Silence and give him no rest, that is, cease not praying till the accomplishing the promise, till he establish, and till he make *Jerusalem* a praise in the Earth: most pertinent to this, is that blessed word in *Ezekiel* 36. 36. *I the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate; I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it.* Here is a great and gracious promise that the Land that was desolate, shall be as the garden of *Eden*, and the Cities that lay wast shall be fenced and inhabited, (but pray mark how) *verse* 37. *Yet for all this, I will be enquired after by the house of Israel to do it for them, they shall pray unto me, MY*

PROMISE to do it, is so far from being a ground to cease Prayer, that it is the very FOUNDATION OF PRAYER, they must pray for it, because God hath promised to do it; A lively example for this have we upon record in 2 Sam. 7. 27. For thou O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee a house, therefore hath thy Servant found in his heart to pray this prayer, verse 25. And now O Lord God the WORD THAT THOU HAST SPOKEN (or promised) concerning thy Servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said. Here it is plain that David was so far from presuming upon the promise to cease from the duty of prayer, that it is his very Argument that he uses in prayer, that what God had promised he would be intreated to perform; The good Lord help us to consider this, and so I shall pass to the 22d. Sign of dying in Godliness.

CHAP. XXII.

Containing in it an Assertion of the Causes of Affliction; and that without great provocation God is not wont to afflict his people; and though provoked, very unwilling to extremity: With four Objections that seem to complain against this Doctrine, Answered.

SIGN. XXII.

WHen you are mighty careless to Inquire after the spiritual cause of Affliction, and mighty careful to Inquire after the natural cure of Affliction.

The more or less spiritual any man is, may be easily discovered under this Tryal; Affliction being of that piercing kind, that other tryals are not, because of the great influence it hath upon the Sensitive part of man, where ever it comes, while sense remains, it makes the person restless, either to find out Cause, or Cure, or both. We may therefore first inquire after the word Affliction, what that meaneth to afflict, is to lay some burthen upon a person, that is not ordinary, *Gen. 15. 13. There they shall afflict you four hundred years: this is opened in Exod. 1. Israel is made to serve with rigour. Lam. 1. 4, 5. The wayes of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate, her Priests sigh, her Virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness. I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, by reason of his task-masters, Acts 3. 34. By these Texts it appears, that affliction meaneth any*
grief

grief or trouble that cometh upon soul or body, name or estate, for the punishment of sin, or the tryal of faith; so that sicknesses and diseases, as Feaver, and Ague, Consumption, Inflammation and the like, are all comprised under this word Affliction; It will therefore be necessary to open the word Spiritual cause, it being in the Sign opposed to natural cure: by spiritual cause is to be understood, some provoking God in the subject afflicted, to the procuring this affliction, noting some cause or other, why the Spirit suffers it to come upon us.

Now every body will be ready to grant, that these things before premised, may be truly called affliction, but not grant that there can be such a spiritual cause in themselves, and so make the Sign of no force.

Now to clear up this doubt, let us make this inquiry, whether any affliction, or death it self, come upon any man, but for some cause or other from the man, (active or imputative) that is, he either so acted in his particular person, or some body else in his general relation, and on him it is righteously come: For the resolution of this question, let us inquire what causes in Scripture the righteous God assigns afflictions or death unto, *Gen. 3. 9. 10, 11, 12, 13. Who told thee thou wert naked? Hast thou eaten of the Tree I commanded thee not to eat:* The things in this Chapter considerable are these, *verse 14. the Serpent must go upon his belly, eat dust, and be curst above every beast of the field, verse 16. to the woman he saith, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children: and to Adam he saith, Cursed is the ground for thy sake, Thorns, and Thistles it shall bring forth to thee; dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return;* you see in these verses, misery both upon the woman and the man, is brought

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and the reason by God assigned. *verse 17. Because thou hast done this in hearkning to thy wife, cursed is the ground for thy sake: so also Josh. 7. 7. Israel, Gods prevailing people, that by day had a pillar of a cloud, and by night a pillar of fire ministering unto them, now cannot stand before their enemies; Joshua that at another time commands the Sun, and Moon, and they obey him; now by prayer cannot prevail, for Israel Gods people, against the cursed Nation; But what is the matter? verse 11, 12. Israel hath sinned and cannot stand, neither will I be with them any more, except they put the accursed thing from among them. Lam. 3. 1, 13. I am the man that have seen affliction, verse 39. Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin? 1 Cor. II. 3. For this Cause many are sick and weak, and many sleep. 1 Thes. 2. 11. For this Cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they all might be damned that believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness: and let all the house of Israel know, that without a Cause, I have not done all that I have done, saith the Lord, Ezek. 14. 23. Much more might be said, as to afflictions that attend both the body and mind; together with the Causes: and this left to consideration.*

Whether if Hell, Condemnation, the highest of Affliction, be the fruit or reward of sin and unbelief: much rather sickness, and diseases with death itself, which are the least afflictions, must come from Creature Causes: Now if any man can assign any other Cause then God doth here assign, let him do it; if not by all this comparing of it with the eighth Sign of dying to Christ, in which I have been more large upon affliction, inward and outward, with their Causes; I shall therefore proceed to some Objections

jections, that seem to complain against this Doctrine.

Object. 1. The first Objection is grounded upon, 2 Sam 12. 14. *The Child that is born to thee shall surely dye: David* is threatned with death in the child that hath not offended, contrary to this Doctrine.

Ans. This act of God to take away *David's* Child, if considered, will be found mercy mixt with justice, *David* by the Law was to die for the matter of *Uriah*; now God in respect he bare to *David* for what good he had done, and further was like to do, being a man so after Gods own heart, goes out of the ordinary way, spares the person of *David*, and imputes it upon the relation of *David*, viz. his Child; so in *David's* seed he punished *David's* person; This is Gods usual way in Scripture, and sets His Majesty out, to be full of Mercy in the midst of Justice, he will take away the first born in *Egypt*, that had not sinned, and therein plagued *Pharaoh*, and their Fathers that had sinned: That this is mercy, consider if *David* the sinner be cut off for his sin; there was then no room left to manifest repentance either in *David* or the *Egyptians*, yet death must come that God may be just; and though nothing but Justice must take place, yet in that he will be as merciful as possible to stand with Justice; Therefore there is truly a Cause, for God to impute death to *David's* Child, for *David's* sin.

Object. 2. The second Objection is grounded upon *Job* 2. 3. which seems also to complain against this Doctrine in these words; *Thou hast moved me against Job without a Cause, he is a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God, and hateth evil,*

Ans^r. God goeth in this out of his ordinary way, as in the case of *St. Pauls* conversion, *Acts 9*. It will not be safe to imagine, that others are unconverted because God meets not others so, sometime God doth things to shew his Power and Majesty, and greatness over all, and his using instruments in an extraordinary case, as his raising *Lazarus* from the grave, and from death the widows Son, and others, is no warrant for us to allude to cases ordinary.

Secondly, Here was a cause if not in *Job*, and indeed necessity that this should come upon him, if we consider, *Chap. 1. 9*. *There is none like Job*, saith God; *doth he serve thee for nought?* saith Satan, *put but forth thy hand, and he will curse thee to thy face*. Now that *Job* did not serve God just because God had dealt so well with him, but would do it if God dealt other ways with him, shall now appear, and the accuser of the brethren be put to the worst, who complains against *Job*, as envying his prosperity.

Thirdly, In the strictest sense this carriage of God to *Job*, can hardly be termed affliction, but rather some gracious condition by God made with *Job* to this purpose; *Job* thou art an upright man, thou fearest me, and hatest evil, and Satan is still complaining of thee, because he envies thy prosperity, and tells me thou wouldst prove another man, then I take thee to be, if I should try thee by adversity, and take from thee thy prosperity. Now lets stop the mouth of this great adversary. & lend me thy Oxen, and thy Asses, thy servants and thy Camels, thy Children and all thy substance, and thy body for my service, I will pay thee with great advantage, as appears by this following: *So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more then his beginning, for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand Camels, and a thousand yoke of Oxen, and a thousand shee Asses, and had*
also

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also seven sons and three daughters; so that the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. Job 42. 10, 11, 12.

Object. 3. The third Objection is grounded upon *Isa. 57. 1.* *The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart:* Good men here are taken away by death, and no cause shewed; they have the testimony of good men, and yet taken away: It will be granted, they might have lived much longer for age, the Text implies it, and the Objection is the stronger by it; for it would be no matter of complaint, had they lived till very age had took them away, for then we know all must dye.

Ans. The time these good men lived in, was a very evil time, and God takes them away.

First, In judgment to the People.

Secondly, In mercy to themselves.

First, In Judgment, *Isa. 5. 6, 7, 10, 11, 12.* He hath called upon them by the Righteous, and warned them, but it would do them no good; now he will take away the Righteous from them, to see if they will lay it to heart.

Secondly, In mercy to themselves, they are taken away.

First, Because by long living with such, they must needs be a weary even of their lives, and their souls vexed from day to day. *Psal. 120. 5.* *Wo is me that I dwell in the Tents of Kedar.* So Jer. 4. 14 *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at my very heart, my heart maketh a noise within me, because thou hast heard in Jerusalem the sound of the Trumpet, the Alarm of war.*

Secondly, In mercy to them, because the continuance of this temptation upon them, may at last so weary them out, as they may give up all as Solomon did.

1 Kings 11. 4. *When he was old, his Wives turned away his heart after other gods.* So *Mat. 24. 21, 22.* *Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the be-*

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beginning of the world, nor ever shall be; except those days shall be shortened, there could no flesh be saved; but for the elects sake, it shall be shortened: Even as our Proverb is, A continual dropping will wear a hole in the stone: so a continual oppression may turn the wise man out of all; see for this, Jer. 20. 14, &c. He curseth the day of his birth, and the man that brought tidings to his Father, wished his Mother had been always great with him, saying, *wherefore came I forth out of the womb, to see labour and sorrow, and that my days should be consumed with shame?* Clearly noting, that any zealous heart, is sorely touched, when all he can do will not keep God from dishonour; *O blot me (saith Moses) out of thy book;* By this it may appear, that Gods afflicting men, is for some cause or other in them.

Object. 4. Fourthly, Another Scripture that seems to complain by way of Objection is, John 9. 1, 2, 3- in these words; *who did sin this man or his Father, that he is born blind?*

For answer to which Christ saith, *Neither this man nor his Father, but that the power of God might appear;* yet it is clear, the Disciples understood this affliction in common must come for sin; and Jesus Christ in his reply, notes the case more than common, saying, *He was born for this purpose, that the work of God should be manifested in him;* it was mercy he was born, and he was born that a wonder of Heaven might be shewed upon him; therefore we must distinguish between a case that is extraordinary, and one that is common.

Again, from the unwillingness that is in God to afflict; as a confirming answer to all the Objections, it appears, that high provocations in us, procure Afflictions to us; for till Justice calls so loud, that God cannot be just except he doth afflict, though in compassion

passion he mixeth all with abundance of mercy, 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16. *The Lord God of their Fathers sent to them by his Prophets, rising up betimes and sending them, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: That is, he was very pitiful, loth to grieve or afflict them, till there was no remedy, Justice called so long and loud for vengeance upon them, as Psal. 106. 54. They did not destroy the Nations, but were mingled among them, and learned their works, and served their Idols; therefore was Gods wrath kindled, insomuch that he abhorred his Inheritance: Nevertheless he regarded their affliction when he heard their cry, and did pity them.* Hosea 6. 4. compared with Chap. 11. 7, 8. *How shall I give thee up? what shall I do to thee? What less doth all this signifie then thus much? that though God be so provoked, that nothing but Judgment must come, yet like a tender Father to an unruly Child, mourns over him, while he corrects him.* We shall leave what hath been said to consideration, and pass to the Twenty third Sign of dying to Christ.

CHAP. XXIII.

Proving those Christians under great Decay, that pray more in Affliction to have it removed, then sanctified; With three Causes of this Decay.

SIGN XXIII.

When you pray more for Afflictions being removed, then sanctified.

That is. not only mindless of Afflictions Cause, but indeed mindless of Afflictions end; it is easie and ordinary