

*Job* 4. 10. *Psal.* 56. 6. but what though they should destroy your Substance, is not your *Soul* worth more than all the *World*? *Matth.* 26. 26. Come, go back again with me, and I will dwell with you, and be a sure Defence to you, so that you will not be hurt, let *Lions, Wolves* and *Devils* too, do what you can: My Name is *true Godliness*. Sir, I have saved many Thousands from Ruine, in as great Danger as you can be in.

*Apost.* Sir, there will be no safe living for me, I must quit the Place, the Town is Besieged.

*Godli.* What though it is Besieged, God is able to defend it, and will be a Wall of Fire about it; but why, Sir, do you chuse that great *City* you speak of for your Habitation? I perceive you intend to go far enough.

*Apost.* Sir, don't mistake me, I do not intend to go so far, but to return again when the Danger is over, at present I will go but a little way out of Town.

*Godli.* Sir you shew your self to be a naughty, a traitorous, and hypocritical Person, will you leave this Town in its *Distress*? if the Danger be great which attends it, you had the more need to abide in it, to strengthen and encourage the poor Inhabitants. Pray, Sir, do not shew so *base* and *cowardly* a *Spirit*: What is this less, than to *betray* the Town to the Enemies? is not the Strength of any Place the *People*? Besides, your *flying* mightily encourages the Adversaries; for by this means they may think to frighten all out, and then with much ease take the Town, and utterly destroy it: Also you weaken the Hands, and sadly grieve the Hearts of all true *Protestants*, whose

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chief Treasure lies in the Town, and cannot be removed out; and it being also their Spiritual native place, they resolve to abide in it to the last, let what will come. You say you intend to return again when the Danger is over. What Dangers you see above others, to move you to quit the Town, I know not; but let me tell you, few who leave this Town, out of fear of Humane Loss or Danger, do return again.

You say you intend to go but a little way; alas! you can't tell where you shall stop; when once you leave the *true Religion*, you desert God's gracious Protection; you may not only cleave to *Papistry*, but *Atheism*, or any thing: Come go back, let me save you from a Fall: Why will you leave that Religion you have been so long established in?

*Apost.* Sir, I retain the same Principles that I formerly held, and my Love is the same to the Town as it was.

*Godli.* Poor Wretch, you own the Principles of the *true Religion*, and yet cleave to *Idolatry* and *Superstition*. The three Worthies of Old, by your Example, might have retained Faith and right Principles in their Hearts, of the true God, and yet have bowed down to the Golden Image, and so needed not to have exposed themselves to a hot fiery Furnace.

Nay, by this Doctrine, who needs suffer Persecution? Besides, it renders all the Martyrs of old to be meer Fools and Mad-men. What do you say? will you return? my Company, one would think, might allure you.

*Apost.* No, Sir, I have formerly had your Company, and I don't find you so pleasant a Companion: Besides, the Town is sadly divi-

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divided amongst themselves, those who love you, do not agree.

*Godli.* Nay, Sir, now you are out, for you and I never dwelt together yet, for had I ever took up my Dwelling with you, I would have kept you from this great Fall: You will prove your self a meer Hypocrite, one that never loved God nor the Town *Religion* in your Heart. Sir, Uprightness and Sincerity of Heart preserve from Apostacy: And what though the Town is divided, it is my great Grief to see it, but you had the more need to abide in it, to do what you can to perswade them to Love and Union, however to unite in Affection. Come humble your self before God for this great Sin, and let us dwell together now, and thou shalt abide secure, notwithstanding the Divisions within, and Troubles without, and have most sweet Peace, and inward Joy: yea, such as thou never hadst in all thy Life. What dost thou say.

*Apost.* Sir, hold your Peace and say no more, I am resolved to be gone.

*Godli.* Well since I see I cannot perswade you to return, but that you are resolved to leave *true Religion*, and not receive *true Godliness*, I will tell you what your present State is, and what your future Portion is like to be for ever hereafter.

*Apost.* Sir, pray be silent, I do not love to hear it.

*Godli.* I do not care whether you do or no, I will shew it.

*First,* It appears (as I hinted before) that you were never truly converted, being no part of that good Ground Christs speaks of, *Mat. 13.*

*Secondly,*

Secondly, You are ( it appears ) forsaken of God ; he hath left you, or else you would never think of cleaving to *Mystery Babylon*.

Thirdly, Either God will let *Conscience* out against you, to torment you, ( as he did upon *Francis Spira* ) or else wholly give you up ( as he did *Israel* of old ) to your own Hearts Lusts, to walk in your own Counsel.

Fourthly, Your Sin tends towards the Sin against the *Holy Ghost*, that shall never be forgiven, neither in this World nor in that which is to come ; for you have been a Person ( I hear ) much enlightned, and now wilfully cast off God and Religion ; pray read these Scriptures, *Heb. 6. 4 5. Heb. 10. 26. 28.*

Fifthly, Jesus Christ will be ashamed of you at the last day, when he comes in the *Glory* of the *Father* with all his *Holy Angels*, *Mark 8. 38.*

Sixthly, *Those who set their Hands to the Plough, and look back ( remember ) are not fit for the Kingdom of Heaven*, *Luke 9. 62.* nor will God's Soul take pleasure in them.

Seventhly, Without you return back, you are like to have the hottest place in Hell, *Rev. 14. 10.*

Eighthly, The place you are a going to, is like suddenly to be destroyed. Do you not read how, just at the time when her Judgments come upon her, she saith in her Heart, *I sit a Queen, and shall see no sorrow, nor no Widowhood nor loss of Children any more.*

Ninthly, Remember the fearful End, and what dreadful Judgment, God hath many times in divers Ages, brought upon such false and traitorous Persons as you are. Besides, who will trust you ? for you that are false to

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your God, and to your own Soul, will never be faithful to Men. Come, that very Way you think to save all, you may lose all. Besides, Sir, let me tell you, *Light is sown, for the Righteous*, (though it is a dark time now) *and Joy for the Upright in Heart*. Nay and this precious Seed is sown (as I could shew you) in this present *Dispensation*; but I am in haste. What do you say to these things? will you return?

*Apost.* I dare not, Sir, at present.

*Godli.* Well then, I see you love the World above Christ. I have but little more to say unto you; but Sir, what Man in his right Mind would, to prevent a few Sparks, leap into the Fire, or to save his Hat, lose his Head? Alas! whilst you seek to save your Estate, you are like eternally to lose your poor Soul.

*Apost.* Well. Sir, trouble not your self, I will talk no more with you; Farewel.

*Godli.* Adieu then, poor deceived Soul.

Away he went as fast as he could go, towards the great City *Babylon*.

*Godliness* having thus parted with him, at last he met a Man travelling into the Town of *Religion*, being not very rich nor very poor, but in a middle State between both, and he lookt as if he had a mind to take up his Dwelling in this place, for he inquired where he might have a convenient House? *Godliness* was much pleased with this Person, because when others were hasting to leave the Town, he was hasting into it; besides, he had a very serious Countenance.

Now, he had no sooner settled himself in a Habitation, but *Godliness* knock'd immediately

at his Door, not doubting now but he should find his sweet Friend *Consideration*; yet *Godliness* first bewailed the *Apostate's* Condition.

*Farewel, Farewel, thou Monster of Mankind,  
Look East and West, see, see if you can find  
A Man who may with this sad Soul compare:  
Will he return? or if he does, is there  
A ground to hope Repentance he may meet,  
Who treads the Truth, nay Jesus under feet?  
Can any Man on Earth e're come to be  
A full, compleat and just Epitome  
Of Sin and Wrath? O then, Sirs, this is he  
Who turns his Back on Christ, to Babel flies,  
He unto Falshood cleaves, the Truth denies.*

## C H A P. XII.

*Shewing how Godliness coming to one Thoughtful's House, found there his Friend Consideration, whom he had a long time sought for; also the great Opposition Consideration met withal.*

**G**odliness being not without hopes of finding *serious Consideration* (for so sometimes he is called) in or near this place, chanc'd to knock (as you heard before) at a Man's Door, who was newly come to dwell in the Town Religion. Now, this Person formerly (as it appears) had been a very great Enemy to *true Godliness*, having liv'd a grievous loose and profuse Life, and like the poor Prodigal, wasted all his cheifest Substance. *Godliness* had not long knock'd and call'd at his Door, before he listned to him, and speak within himself to this purpose:

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pose: Who is this that is come to my Door? sure, said he, this is a Voice different from any I ever heard in my Life; and he doth not knock also as others use to do: At last he cried out Who is there? who is it that is at my Door? your Name, Sir?

*Godli.* Soul, Christ is at the Door, and I his noble and renowned *Off-spring*, true *Godliness*. Dost thou remember that Word, *Behold I stand at the Door, and knock, &c Rev. 3. 20.* Sir, now I will ask you the like Question, Pray what is your Name? I hope I am come to the right Door?

He told him his Name might very well be called loose and ungodly *Prodigal*; for (said he) I have hitherto lived a very wicked Life: But some call me of late *Thoughtful*, because I am blessed be God) newly come to my self, by thinking upon my latter end, and the evil of my former ways.

*Godli.* But why dost thou chuse to take up thy Dwelling in this Village now, when so many are going out?

*Thoughtful*, Sir, 'tis because I hear it is the best Town in all the Country to secure a Man from Danger in evil times, provided I can but get a place in one of its strong Holds in the Heart of the Town; for I have heard there is no safe Dwelling at the Towns end, no, nor any where in the Suburbs.

Besides, I was told lately, that *Babylon*, where I have dwelt till now of late, will suddenly be destroyed: I do it indeed to save my own Soul; I am Sir, desirous to find out (if it may be) where true Peace, Happiness and eternal Felicity is to be had; for I see they are not to

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be found in those Paths I *formerly walked*; I mean, in the *Ways of Riches, Honour, and the Pleasure of this World.*

*Godli.* I commend thee, honest *Thoughtful*; thou hast done *wisely*, and like a considerate Man; prithee let me come in and dwell with thee, and thou wilt find this poor Town the most safest and most secure place in these dangerous times, in all the World. Sir, I have wandred about a long time, travelling from place to place, to seek for one whom I bear much good will to, but hitherto I have not found him; his Name is *Consideration*; and many things more he said, to make him in love with *true Godliness.*

Upon this, *Consideration*, who it seems was within, whispers *Thoughtful* in his Ear, and said, This is he that can alone make thee happy, if he be readily, sincerely and heartily embrac'd and entertain'd. Is it not good for thee to muse upon the *Worth* and excellent *Nature* of thy Soul? thou art made a Man, and therefore for a nobler and higher *End* and *Employment* (sure) than *Eating* and *Drinking*, *Sleeping* and *Playing*, and wholly to mind thy Trade and secular Affairs, and to enjoy sensual Pleasures, (a Happiness which Beasts arrive to as well as thee) for this glorious Soul which lies in thy Bosom, is capable of knowing God, and of enjoying Union and Communion with him for ever; so that all those who suffer the Honours, Profits and Pleasures of the World to take up and engross their Hearts, go astray, and err from the great End of their Creation. Alas, there is nothing doubtless can fill the Desires of thy Soul, or be its

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*Summum Bonum*, but God himself: Thou hast hitherto suffered thy Affections and Desires to run after whatsoever thou couldest think might yeild thee true Felicity; but it is evident there is nothing thou canst find here below, that can satisfy thy thirsty and ever craving Soul. *Riches* which sometimes thy Heart hath been so much set upon, cannot be thy *Summum Bonum*, or chief Happiness; for they are uncertain, fleeting and variable things; and let a Man have never so much of them, yet he is still craving and desiring more, so that 'tis as *Solomon* says, *He that desireth Silver, shall not be satisfied with Silver.*

*Secondly*, *Honours* are of like Nature; and besides their Vanity, they depend on the Minds will and Humors of Men, who are changable and unconstant.

*Thirdly*, *Pleasures* and *Voluptuousness*, they are common (as I told thee) with Beasts as well as Men, and also have annexed their Sting and Discontention when they are past.

Besides all this, *Consideration* to enduce him to open to *true Godliness*, bid him ask his Soul in what State it now was? what it was a doing? and whither it was a going?

*First*, He endeavouring to shew him, that his Soul was in the Gall of Bitterness, and in the Bond of Iniquity, being under the Law and Curse of God, both in respect of original and actual Sin; he having not yet closed with Christ, nor received *true Godliness*.

*Secondly*, Then as to what he was a doing, he bid him see if he did not neglect that one thing needful. Have you, said *Consideration*, made Religion your chief Business, since you

came to live in this place? have you not rather spent too much of your time about Notions and airy Speculations?

*Thirdly.* Whither are you a going? said he; are you fit (being well prepared) to Die? are you a going the way to Heaven? sure that cannot be, unless you receive *true Godliness*; for I have heard that it consists in a right Faith, as well as in a holy Life. Oh what Cost, Labour, Pains, Means, Motives and Arguments, hath God used to make Men sensible of the everlasting Interest of their Souls, and to engage them to a serious Preparation for another World.

And this serious Preparation must necessarily be a thorough Work of Regeneration, Faith and spotless Conversation; for the Nature of the Means (saith he) must ever be suitable and agreeable to the Nature of the End. And Heaven being a Holy place, nothing but perfect Holiness reigning there, so it was impossible to enter into it hereafter, without a considerable Progress was made in Holiness here; and that it was not to be thought a Man could reach to the highest step of a Ladder without ascending the lowermost first. Who (saith he) ever hoped for a Crop of Corn without sowing any? or expected to reap Wheat and sowed nothing but Tares?

He laid also before him the Nature and Holiness of God, his infinite Hatred of Sin, and great Severity against all unbelieving and impenitent Souls, together with the perfect knowledge he had of the Hearts, Thoughts and Ways of the Children of Men; likewise his dreadful Judgments, Commands, Threats, and precious Promises.

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He brought to his Mind also the Evil of Sin, shewing him what an abominable thing it was for Man, to seek to please, obey, and do the Will of the Devil, and offend, disobey and cross the Will of God. Nay, and he began to speak of the Excellency of *true Godliness* also, and what he should gain by embracing him, and letting *Christ* and the *Spirit of Christ*, *Christ* and the *Grace of Christ*, *Christ* and *true Godliness* reign in his Heart. Nay, he had so much to say, that had he not been opposed and basely obstructed, (with some other help) *Thoughtful* had presently opened the Door to *true Godliness*: But, alas, on a sudden there was great Disturbance in the House, and poor *Consideration* went to the Walls, and was almost utterly expelled his Tabernacle.

Now the Enemies he met with was these; *Difficulty*, *Sloth*, *Deficiency*, *Security*, *Danger*, *Worldly-Cares* and *Carnal-Company*: These and many other Enemies appeared to obstruct and hinder *Consideration* about this great and Important Business of opening to *true Godliness*.

*First, Difficulty* speak after this manner: Sir, do not trouble your self to study to find out these great Mysteries of *Religion* and *Godliness*, for it is a Work too hard and difficult for you to understand, there is nothing in the World that is more abstruce and mysterious; therefore to muse upon them, would be lost Labour.

*Sloth* told him, it was laborious and toilsom Work, and 'twould be great Wearisomness to him, if the *Difficulty* did not make it impossible.

*Deficiency* said, he was a Man of a weak Understanding

derstanding, and those things were Matters for the Learned and most knowing Men of all to study, nay, and that many of them too, notwithstanding all their profound Learning, Proficiency and Skill in the Tongues, could hardly attain to the right knowledge of them.

*Security* endeavoured to make it appear his Condition was very good and safe now, and that he had *Religion* and *Godliness* enough, without troubling himself farther, and that he exceeded in Holiness many Men that had lived long in the Town. Moreover, he told him, that he had followed the Counsel of *Consideration* too much already.

*Danger* too spoke several things: 1. That to give place to him, would let in his Enemy *Melancholy*, which might endanger his Life. Do you not see (saith he) how uncomfortable this Fellow *Consideration* has made many brave Men, causing them, by thinking on their latter Ends, to hang down their Heads like a Bull-rush, fold their Arms, and spend their days in Tears and Weeping; hearken not to him, for he will certainly infuse sad Thoughts into your Mind, and give you nothing but Gall and Vinegar to drink.

2. He said moreover, *Consideration* had made many Men go besides themselves; and if he did adhere to him about this Affair, he would be Distracted.

3. He insinuated also, That if he did seriously muse upon this Matter, or give place to *Consideration*, so that *Godliness* came to be let in, he would be undone, and utterly ruin'd, the Times are such.

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*Consideration* as any of them, for he could not seriously muse, nor think upon Eternity, or the present Condition his poor Soul was in; he was so hurried in his Mind about the Affairs of this Life: nay, no sooner at any season that he set himself to ruminare or ponder them in his Mind, but *Wordly-cares* would expel and drive such thoughts away.

Old Companions and Carnal Company did greatly abuse *Consideration*, by endeavouring to make him out *Evil Companions* of love with a virtuous Life: *nions*.

These laboured to fawn him into Misery, and to tickle him into an Eternity of Torment; they turn'd *Religion* and *Godliness* into a Jest, and made the Precepts of the Gospel matter for Raillery, and told him, that those Men that seemed most serious, were the most seditious, and that their Profession favoured of nothing but of Pride, Singularity, and Hypocrisy.

Now, after they had spoke their Pleasure, and almost silenced, nay, quite routed poor *Consideration*; his mind was so filled and hurried about many things; which *Godliness*, though not yet let in, over-heard, and presently took them all up, and answered them one by one.

And first, he speak to this purpose: Honest *Thoughtful*, I would not have thee to be discouraged by those ill-bred Fellows thou hast within, to slight poor *Consideration*, for he is thy very good Friend, and as able a Counsellor as most in this Town: Moreover, very great Inconveniencies also have always followed those who have unadvisedly gone about to slight and contemn him: Nay, I must tell thee,

most of all those great Miseries and heavy Judgments that have befallen Nations, Cities, Towns, Churches, and particular Souls, hath been occasioned through their great neglect to hearken to *Consideration*. This was the cause of *Israels* Ruine of old; God by his merciful Providence, sent to them by his Prophets, to advertise and warn them of their perilous Estate and Condition, by reason of their Sins, and not only told them of their imminent Danger thereby, but also revealed the true Causes thereof, and how they might easily provide Remedies for the prevention of it; but they refused to lay it to Heart, or give way to *Consideration* about it, which made *Jehovah* to bewail their future Misery after this manner; *O that they were wise, that they understood this, That they would consider their latter end!* Deut. 32. 29. Among other Causes of their dismal calamities, none is more general or oftener alledged in the lack of *Consideration*, and 'tis through this means, as by a common Snare and Deceit of the Adversary, most Men fall into Sin, and reject me, and are holden also perpetually in Satan's Bonds, to their Destruction and Perdition, Men go on in their abominable Lusts, Pride, Oppression, excess of Riot, Drunkenness, and all manner of Debauchery, without considering what the end of these things will be: *Wo unto them* (saith the Lord) *that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow Strong Drink, and continue until night, till Wine inflame them, and the Harp and Viol, the Tabret and Pipe, and Wine are in their Feasts, but they regard not the Work of the Lord, neither consider the Operation of his Hands,* Isa.

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§. 11. Their cursed Lusts, and beastly Sensuality brought them to neglect *Consideration*, and *Inconsideration* brought them to the Pit side, or brink of Hell. *Propterea captivus ductus est populus meus quia non habuit scienciam*, saith God in the same place, by the Prophet, Therefore, and for this cause is my People led away Captive, &c. for they have no Knowledge, no Understanding of the Time to come, no Consideration of their Danger: He that will not lend an Ear to *Consideration*, renders himself little better than a Brute: And what follows this Folly and Madness? therefore (saith the Holy Ghost) *Hell hath enlarged her self, and opened her Mouth without measure, and their Glory, and their Multitude, and their Pomp, and he that rejoiceth shall descend into it*, Isa. 5. 13, 14. *A brutish Man knoweth not, neither doth a Fool understand this, when the Wicked spring as the Grass, and when all the Workers of Iniquity do flourish: It is that they should be destroyed for ever*, Psal. 92. 6, 7. *The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Ass his Masters Crib, but Israel doth not know, my People doth not consider*, Isa. 1. 3.

Negligence, Carelesness, Ignorance, and want of *Consideration* as it brought Jerusalem down wonderfully, Lam. 1. 9. so it hath been the Bane and common Perdition of unthinking and wretched Man from time to time, and will be yours, if you hearken to these evil Enemies of your Soul, and suffer *Consideration*, to be expelled your Tabernacle: Why at this day are there so many People, who drink up Iniquity as the Fish drinks Water? that commit all manner of Sin, all Outrages, all Injustice, all Turpitude, treading down the Poor, and

contemning (me) *true Godliness*, without remorse of Conscience, or dread of God's Wrath and fearful Vengeance that doth persue them; but for the lack of *Consideration* of that which is like to be their Reward and Punishment for all their abominable Doings in the end? *Thus saith the Lord, Consider your Ways; Consider your Doings*, Haggai 1. *Consider this ye that forget God, lest he tare you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you, Psalm 50.* Aye, but they will not *consider* it, nor lay it to Heart, they will not know in this their day the things that belong to their Peace, but inconsiderately put the evil day far away, and harden their Hearts against God, provoking him to draw his Sword, and cause his Hand to take hold of Judgment; for nothing doubtless can be more intolerable in the presence of the Almighty, than this Iniquity, sith he hath published his Law, declared his Pleasure against *Ungodliness*, charging all to bear it in their Minds, to ponder it in their Hearts, to study and meditate upon it, both day and night at home and abroad, when they rise up, and when they lie down to make it their Cogitation and Ruminati-  
*on continually, &c.* And O that Men should ever, notwithstanding all this, contemn it, and make it no part of their Thoughts, but rather flee the knowledge thereof, God makes his Complaint, and denounceth Judgment, but no Man (as the Prophet *Jeremiah* sheweth) will enter into *Consideration*, nor mind why the Land Mourns: none cry out, *What have I done?* All Men, alas! are upon their own Courses, and run on the same with as great Vehemency and fierce Obstinacy, as

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a fierce armed Horse into the Battle, when he hears the Trumpet sound.

Come *Thoughtful, Consideration*, if thou adhere to him, will help thee to learn to know God and thy self, and to find out the miserable Condition thou and all Men are in by Nature: He is the Key that openeth the Door for me to enter the innermost Room of thy Heart; though it is true, he cannot open it without help: Nay, farthermore, he is the Looking-glass, or rather the very Eye of thy Soul, whereby thou maist view thy self, and see what a Condition thy Soul is in; hereby thou maist espy thy Debts, thy Danger, thy Duties, thy Defects, thy Safety, the Course thou dost follow, the Company thou doest keep; finally, the place and end whereunto thou drawest; nay, he will give thee a veiw of all God's Proceedings and Dealings with Men ever since the creation of the World, the Reason why God sent his Son, his Gospel, his Spirit, his Servants, and takes so much Pains to bring Men to Salvation. Nay, and thou also, by his help, maist find that all the Means God uses to bring thee to a true sight and sense of Sin and Wrath, and to recover thee out of thy fallen Estate, will prove vain and ineffectual to thee; let therefore the *Consideration* of the Danger thou maist escape through hearkening to him on the one hand, and the great Advantage thou maist receive on the other; together with the absolute necessity of nourishing and cherishing of him, and standing up for him; if thou would'st be happy, engage thee not to be discouraged to incline to him, nor regard what any speak against him, for he will

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cause thee to hear glad Tidings; nay, and be in part an Instrument to let me in; which if thou doest, I will bring thee acquainted with God and Jesus Christ; nay, help thee to a Room in his Heart, and lead thee into Union and Communion with him, and give thee much Glorious Light, yea, and help thee to *Pardon for Sin, Peace of Conscience, and Joy in the Holy Ghost*, and make thee a *Son of God*, give thee a place in the *Heavenly Family*, feed thee with the *Bread of Life*, cloath thee with *glorious Robes*, which sparkle like *Diamonds*, yea, make thee *Rich*, rich in *Faith*, in *Knowledge*, in *Experiences*, truly *Rich*, always *Rich*, eternally *Rich*; yea, and set a *Crown of Glory* upon thy Head, make thee an Heir of Heaven and Earth; thy Renown also hereby will be great, thou shalt have Angels to guard thee, Christ to serve thee, God to honour thee. O love him, who would lead thee into Christ's Bosom, and cause thee to sit in Heavenly places, make thee to triumph with *Seraphims*, and sit down with thy glorified Redeemer upon the Throne of God for evermore. It is impossible such a Friend should fare better than my great Master, who had no place where to lay his Head. Alas! Men deal with me and my poor Friend *Consideration*, as the Inhabitants of *Sodom* did deal with the three Heavenly Messengers that entred into *Lot's House*, viz. Quarrel with us, Abuse us, and offer Violence to us, shew their Spleen against us, who seek to preserve them from being consumed, and who, whilst we are with them, stay the Hand of Heaven from falling upon them, the Hand of the destroying Angel, that they perish not, and endeavour to  
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make them for ever happy, possessing all true Felicity, and free them from all misery. Does not every Man desire after that which is good? Was ever any Man in love with Torment? Is it not every one's Interest to study how to prevent it? Why then sure *Thoughtful, Consideration* cannot but have thy affection, unless thou dost contemn Rivers of Pleasures, inconceivable Glory, even the inexhaustible Riches of both Worlds, and chuseth rather Anguish, Death, Hell, and sulphurous Smoak and Flames for my Portion. And now to take off what *Difficulty* *The Difficulty* says against entertaining of *Con-* *of Consideration answered.* sideration, he basely insinuates, that to muse and ponder upon the great Concerns of *Godliness* and another World, is a hard and difficult Work.

Whereas to undertake great and hazardous, and dangerous Atchievements, for Worldly Advantages, this is notwithstanding presently undertook; Men do not care how difficult the Work is, if it be but profitable; and shall this be a Stumbling-block in thy way? What will not Man call difficult, if they have no mind to it; How should some Houses be built, Bridges over great Rivers be made, Fields be sowed, and dangerous Voyages to Sea be undertaken? Shall the Carpenter say, *O 'tis difficult!* and the Husbandman say, *O 'tis difficult!* and the Mariner say, *'tis difficult!* and so lay it all aside? Nay, is it not sad, that bloody *Papists*, and other wicked Enemies of the Gospel, should not think any thing too hard and difficult to undertake, to suppress and destroy *Godliness*? and yet many who profess

a love to me, do not care to encounter with small Difficulties about *Consideration*, how to entertain and embrace me, tho' it be their only Business and chief Interest in all the World.

Were a Man's House on fire over his Head, and he like to be Burn'd, would he not think of ways to get out, because it was a difficult Work to do?

'Tis not because *Considerations* about Heaven and Happiness are so hard and difficult, but because Men have no will nor love to these things, other things are more in their Affections. Besides, the rarest things are not obtain'd but through great difficulty. What Hazards do Men often run for Honour and worldly Riches? Oh! what Projects and Contrivances do they find out? and wilt thou desist this Work, because it is difficult?

'*Consideration* (saith one) that spotless Virgin, that Joy of Angels, that D. Horneck. that Envy of Devils, that Off-spring of God, the Ladder whereby Men climb to Heaven is thought hard, though nothing be more easy, 'tis a thing portable, and 'tis always to be had, its always in Season, always at hand, always in call, no Burden in a Journey, no Load in a Voyage, Men may carry it with them where-ever they go, when they Travel abroad, when they stay at home, when they sit down, when they rise up, they need not go beyond Sea to fetch it, or involve many Books, to be Masters of it, they need not sail to the *Antipodes* to compass it, nor dig under Ground to find it? they need not Ranfack the *Indies* to enrich themselves with it, they need not sell their

6 their Lands and Houses to purchase it, nor  
 6 run the hazard of Sword and Fire to secure it;  
 6 they need not clamber Mountains to possess  
 6 it nor wade through Rivers to inherit it-----  
 Strange Stupidity! Men do not think it hard  
 to carry Talents of Lead, or Mountains of Sin  
 on their Backs, and yet they think *Consideration*  
 difficult, who, like a faithful Friend, would  
 tell them how to be rid of that load that will  
 (except they get Faith in Christ, or receive *true*  
*Godliness* into their Hearts) sink them down  
 into the lowest Pit; they do not think it hard  
 to dig into Hell, yet they think *Consideration*  
 hard, who would teach them a way to quench  
 that Fire; they do not think it hard to be  
 oppressed by a bloody Usurper, and yet they  
 think *Consideration* hard, which would help  
 them to shake him off. O Fools and slow of  
 Heart! they that have Courage to meet an  
 Army in the field, and have Confidence to  
 Laugh at the glittering Spear and Shield, they  
 that have Courage to Plow the Sea, to face the  
 mouth of a Cannon, to stand a Volley of Shot,  
 to fight Duels, to endure the noise of Guns,  
 to hear the clashing of Swords and Spears, and  
 lie on the cold Ground many Nights together,  
 to have an Arm or Leg cut off; have they  
 Courage to do all this; and shalt thou think  
*Consideration* about these great things too hard  
 for thee; Contemn the thoughts of being  
 overcome by this deceitful and timorous Fel-  
 low *Difficulty*.

*Secondly*, As to what *Deficiency* says, That  
 thou art a Man of a weak Understanding:  
 Alas! thou canst perceive that Gold is better  
 than Glasse or Rattles, and that Pearls are bet-

ter than Pebbles; thou art able to perceive thou art Mortal, and must Die, and dost know when a bone is broke, 'tis good to have it Set; and that Food is good for thee when thou art hungry; and that 'tis good to get Clothes on to hide thy Nakedness, and art not able to *con-*  
*sider* the need there is of Food to feed thy Soul, and Clothes to cover the nakedness of thy Soul, and that it is good to get Grace, to enrich thy Soul. Art able to find out how grievous 'tis to be cast into a Furnace of Fire, and canst not think that 'tis worse to be cast into a Fire that cannot be quenched; Nay, and have not weak and simple ones in their own Eyes, and in the Eyes of others too, attained to the Skill of *Consideration* about their *Eternal state*? nay and have wonderfully out-done the wise and learned ones of the World in it too? *Knowledge is easy unto him that hath Understanding, Prov. 14. 16. Wisdom gives Subtilty to the Simple, and young Men Knowledge and Discretion, Prov. 1. 4. When Wisdom entreteth into thine Heart, and Knowledge is pleasant to thy Feet; Discretion shall preserve thee, and Understanding shall keep thee, Prov. 2. 10, 11.*

*Thirdly*, As for what *Sloth* saith, thou hast cause to abhor him, for he is a beggarly Villain, and deserves to be drove not only out of thy House, but out of the Town and World too, for he never did no Man the least good, cast him out as a Vagabond! How now, *Thoughtful*, wouldst thou not take pains; Remember, the slothful person shall beg at Harvest, and have nothing through his means; and *Idleness* his Brother: Thy House is ready to fall through, and thy Vineyard is grown all over with  
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Thorns and Nettles, and yet he would not have thee consider thy Danger, till 'tis too late to escape it. Oh how many have lost their Souls by this bloody Wretch! What good comes of *Idleness*? Besides, do not you see how the Men of the World hate him? they will not hearken unto him, but will in despite of him, consider of fit ways and means to get Bread to eat, and Cloaths to put on, nay, and seek out through great Industry, rare Projects to get store of Riches; and wilt thou be drawn away by him, from thinking on the ready way to be made Rich, Great and Renowned for ever? 'Tis the diligent Hand that hath the Promise; Thou must *seek for Wisdom as for Silver, and search for her as for hidden Treasure*, Prov. 2. 4. Nay, and do not think neither, I put too great a Burden upon thee, for thou may'st perceive thou needest not to take greater Pains about this inestimable Jewel than the Men of the World take to get the perishing things of this Life; nay, if Men did bestow half the *Labour* about the *Good* of their *Souls*, as they bestow about getting the *World*, and providing for their *Bodies*, what happy Creatures might they be?

*Fourthly*, As touching what that timorous faint-hearted Fellow, *Danger*, laid before thee, in respect of letting in *Melancholly*; this is a meer Deceit, for there is a vast difference between *serious Consideration* and *destructive Melancholly*; a Man is not therefore sad, because he will not Swear, Rant, Whore, and be Drunk. *Consideration* will let thee see, that those Men, who are taken so much with vain Sports and Merriment, have the least cause

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to rejoyce, of any Men in the World. Jollities are, as one observes, much like *Attila's* Nuptials, whose Wedding-day proved his Funeral. Who would hazard an Eternity of Joy for a moments time of vain and empty Pleasures? None can rejoyce so heartily as he that hath God for his Portion, and hath his Name written in Heaven.

*Consideration* will let the see, that whatsoever vain Men may say, prate and boast of, touching Joy and Pleasures, yet there is no Delight and Felicity like that which is found in the ways of true Virtue; that *Godliness* is the best Security, and that the Joy of the whole Earth is *Mount Sion*, that in this Garden are the sweetest Roses, the most odoriferous Flowers, the most fragrant Plants, Roses which have no Prickles underneath, (nor like Carnal Delights) whose Flowers fade and wither away; nor like the frothy Mirth, which the Laughter of Fools affords.

*Consideration* would let the see, that those serious Persons, who look dejected and melancholy to a Carnal Eye, have Joys within, which no Stranger intermeddles with; and as little as they make of Chearfulness, yet they carry in their Breast that which can make their Life a perpetual Jubilee.

2. They are Fools that account the Life of a Christian, Madness, and his inward Peace an airy Fiction; none is such a Phanatick as he who cherishes a Serpent in his Bosom, that will certainly sting him to Death, who never sows, yet thinks to reap a good Crop at Harvest; that may have glorious Robes to cloath him, and yet values his own nasty Rags above them,

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them or else chuses to go naked; who hates, and seeks to destroy his best Friends, for the sake of whom he is not destroyed; who thinks to go to Heaven, and yet walks the direct way to Hell. Can there be greater Madnes than to prefer a Stone before Bread, or feed upon Husks with the Swine when there is all good things to be had, if they would but seek out for them? Can there be greater Madnes than to value a base Lust above God, Christ, and eternal Glory?

3. Whereas *Danger* tells thee (to obstruct *Consideration* from opening to thee) of the evilness of the times, and that if I am let in, thou wilt be undone; know then, If I am kept out, there is no way to escape, but ruin'd thou wilt be? no danger like Soul-danger? he can never be undone that hath God for his Portion, and Heaven for his Inheritance; lose thy Soul, and what hast thou more; and unless thou consider the sooner, and open to me, thou canst not save it, for without *Holiness* no Man shall see the Lord.

Fifthly, *Worldly-care*, I know, hinders my dear Friend *Consideration* as much as any thing; he would perswade thee thou hast no time to think on God nor *Godliness*, having a Trade to follow, a Family to provide for, &c. But shall those things hinder thee from thinking of any thing else? Is there not one thing more needful, viz. to make much, or seriously think on me, and of the Concerns of thy Soul, when thou art at work, or about thy secular Affairs, when thou goest out, and when thou comest in, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up; thy Heart may be with God, when

when thy Hand is otherwise employed : True, if the World is got into thy Heart, there can be but little room for *Consideration* or *true Godliness* ; a continual hurry of Business puts out the Eye whereby it should reflect upon it self : But shall the Earth keep out Heaven, and the Prince of Darknes shut out the Prince of Light, and Briers and Thorns choak the good Seed? Shall *Worldly-cares* and Business be thy chiefest Guests, whom thou biddest welcome, and shall Christ stand at thy Door as a neglected Stranger. Shall *Thoughts* be cherished about getting the World, and serious *Consideration* be crushed, who would put thee in a way how to get Heaven? But remember this, he that has no time to open to Christ here, Christ will find no time to open to him hereafter. Can the World help thee to Peace and Pardon on a Death-bed, or Riches deliver thee in the day of Wrath.

*Sixthly*, As what thy *old Companions* lay before thee, to render me odious, if thou mind or regard them, adieu for ever : They that hate Seriousness themselves, must needs dislike it in others : These are the Devils Agents, whom he sends abroad into the World to deflower Virtue, these are his Factors, by whom he draws Men into eternal Chains of Darknes ; these strive to put me (*true Godliness*) into a Wolves Skin, that set all the Dogs in the Town upon me. This Age hath bred more Monsters of Wickedness than many Ages before it. *Shun* keeping Company with these *Scoffers* and *Contemners* of *true Godliness*, for the Lords sake. As thou art come into the Town of *Religion*, so let the truly Religious be thy

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Companions, who will, instead of hindring, help serious *Consideration*. What Ground is there to think a Man should mind the true Interest of his Soul, that keeps Company with Persons who make a Sport and May-game of *serious Consideration*? He that would keep his Garden and precious Flowers securely, must be sure, what ever he does, to keep out the Hogs. What is he that keeps company with Sinners, but a Companion of Sinners? and Society in Sin strangely takes off from the Heinousness of it: Also Men may judge of a Person by the Company he keeps; as is a Mans Company, such is the Man, and as is his Company here, such it is like to be hereafter. O how do Sinners harden one another in ways of Wickedness! They think there is some Comfort in having Associates in Misery. They dare to Sin more freely (as one observes) when they are in company, being afraid their single Valour will never be able to Duel Gods Wrath; they hope God will not damn a multitude of his Creatures together; as if the number of Sinners could move the Almighty into Compassion; and if they perish, they think, nay, sometimes speak it, they shall fare as well as their Neighbours, 'tis a hard thing indeed, *Thoughtful*, to be serious in such a Lascivious Age as this is; a wicked Man, as he poisons the Air in which he breathes, so he pollutes the Age in which he lives; 'tis bad Lodging in the House where God himself refuses to dwell; with the Froward thou wilt soon learn Frowardness: Who can touch Pitch and not be defiled? But 'tis better to be contemned for Virtue by Men

Dr. Horneck.

on Earth, than to be condemned for Vice by the God of Heaven?

*Consideration*  
overcomes all  
his Enemies.

What say'st thou now, *Thoughtful*? shall *Consideration* prevail with thee to open the Door to me? He stood and paused a while, and had a great mind to embrace him: *Conscience* being quite brought over to join in with him, and now *Consideration* was hugg'd by *Thoughtful* with great Joy, and all those other Enemies seem'd quite vanquished; but lo on a sudden new Enemies rose up in his House, and made strong Opposition, and strove to keep *Godliness* out, though *Consideration* was kindly embrac'd; for he, like *David*, thought on his ways, and began to turn his feet to keep God's Testimonies, *Psal.* 119. 59. and with the Prodigal, being come to himself, resolved to go home to his Father's House.

## C H A P. XII

Shewing how poor *Thoughtful*, though he had embrac'd *Consideration*, and was resolved to receive *Godliness* into his House, was hindered by one Old-man, Wilful-will, Carnal-affections and Apollyon; also shewing how he met with his good Friend *Laborious*, who did what he could to help him, but had not prevailed, had it not been for another, who came into his Assistance.

**T***Thoughtful* having with much Joy and Gladness embrac'd *Consideration*, and most bravely

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bravely overcome the Snares and Impediments those Adversaries (we mentioned before) laid in his way, was now resolved to receive *true Godliness*, and speedily close with Jesus Christ; but lo on a sudden other Enemies (that seem'd to lie still in his House before) rose up and made strong Opposition against his entertaining this new Guest: But, as he met with fresh Opposition from other Enemies, whose Names were *Old-man*, *Carnal-affections* and *Willful-will*, all stirred up by the envious and black Prince *Apollyon*, and other Powers of Darkness, so he had by the means of *Consideration* and the light of Gods Word, some new Friends, to help and assist him; their Names were *Conscience*, *inform'd Judgment*, alias *enlightened Understanding*. Now, *Apollyon* being in great fear, that *Thoughtful*, by the help of *Consideration*, *Conscience*, and *enlightened Understanding*, would embrace *true Godliness*, rose up in great Fury, and spoke to the rest of the Infernal Crew to this purpose.

*Most might Pow'ers, who once from Heav'n fell,*  
*To raise this Throne and Monarchy in Hell;*  
*Bestir your selves with speed, or all is gone,*  
*For Thoughtful has almost the Battel won:*  
*'Tis hateful in my sight to think that we*  
*Should by this thinking Thoughtful worsted be.*  
*Shall Godliness, that cursed Foe of ours,*  
*Prevail against all Hells infernal Powers?*  
*I swear in spite of Heaven it shall not be---*  
*And presently he rose from off his Seat,*  
*Ready to burst with Rage and Malice great,*  
*And cast a terrible Look on Thoughtful, who*  
*Stood musing still, but knew not what to do:*

At

*At this, another Fiend stept in, and said,  
 Let ne'er a Devil of us be afraid;  
 Lo, don't you see th' unwary Wretch doth lie  
 Ope to your Arms in great Security?  
 What though some Ground is lost, we'll seek about  
 To find some way to keep this Traveller out;  
 We in the House have a strong Party yet,  
 Who in our Bands keep his unwary Feet;  
 But sad it is the Wretch such light should see,  
 As to perceive his woeful Misery.  
 We must bestir us, and give new Directions,  
 And by all means keep fast his Souls Affections.  
 Affliction still by Old-man is directed,  
 And Willful will to us is well affected,  
 Let us pursue our present Enterprize  
 With all the Power and Craft we can devise.  
 This Consideration hath the Mischief done,  
 Whom I do wish a Plague to light upon.*

*Apollyon and all the Powers of Hell having  
 thus combin'd together, to find out new ways  
 to prevent Thoughtful from receiving true Godli-  
 ness, endeavoured to stir up Old-man and his  
 cursed Darling Carnal-affections, to do what  
 they could to place his Mind and Thoughts  
 upon the perishing things of this Life: Which  
 being done, this put poor Thoughtful unto a  
 stand; one while he was resolved to open the  
 Door, but then on a sudden his Heart was  
 captivated with the Pleasures and Delights of  
 this Life, which came to pass by reason his  
 Affections were not yet throughly changed, nor  
 the evil qualities of his Soul removed; for Old-  
 man had grievously corrupted all the Powers  
 and Faculties thereof, which Godliness (who  
 with Patience waiting still at his Door) per-  
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ceiving, ask'd him, What the matter was he did not let him come in?

*Thoughtful* answered, he was hindred by a base Fellow that he had got in his House.

Upon this, *Godliness*, and he fell into a serious Discourse again.

*Godli.* Who is it, *Thoughtful*, that obstructs my being receiv'd?

*Thought.* His Name is *Old Man*?

*Godli.* He is, indeed I know, my grand Enemy, and hath been near this 6000 Years, (for so old this *Villain* is; ) and there is not one in all the World that has done me more Wrong, to tell thee plainly, than he and his cursed Daughter, *Carnal-Affections*.

*Thought.* Aye, Sir, but I find also one *Willfull-mill* is uterly against your coming in; Lord, what will become of me, I know you are a Person worthy of Entertainment; and O, who am I, that you should come to be Guest to such a vile and unworthy Wretch.

*Godli.* Nay, *Thoughtful*, I do not stand alone, but here are others waiting at thy Door to come in with me also, who are Persons of no mean Quality.

*Thought.* Others, pray who are they?

*Godli.* Why here is my Father *the eternal Jehovah*, with Jesus Christ, *the Prince of the Kings* of the Earth, and the *Holy Spirit*, Rev. 3. 30.

*Thought.* Lord, what shall I do? O infinite and admirable Grace and Condescension! God and Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost at my Door, and I not let them in! O this is an amazing *Consideration*?

*Godli.* Nay *Thoughtful*, 'tis so, and more I must tell thee, they have been waiting here a long

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long time, ever since I came first to knock at thy door, and I told thee so too, but I perceive thy Memory proves false to thee; likewise, he is doubtless misled by that base *Old-man*; but if thou dost not open to me the sooner, they will leave thee, for they never come into any Man's House, who keep their Doors shut against *true Godliness*. Why dost not knock the *Old-man* down, and lay him a bleeding, 'tis not enough to cry, *What, Lord, shall I do?* but thou must shake off that lazy Fellow *Sloth*, and like a brave and courageous Soul, acquit thy self.

*Thought.* Alas what can I do? this *Old-man* is too strong for me, and *Wilful-will* is a very stubborn Fellow too, I am no match for them.

*Godli.* Why I will tell thee, there is one in thy House that will help thee, if thou hearken to him.

*Thought.* What is his Name, Sir?

*Godli.* His Name is *Conscience*.

*Thought.* Sir, I know him very well, he has, since his Eyes were opened, been a very good Friend to me. But for a great while he lay in my House as one Dead, and I found his Eyes almost quite put out by that cursed *Old-man*; but all that he can do, is not sufficient without farther help.

*Godli.* Thou say'st right, thank enlightned Understanding for that; *Consideration*, by bringing thee to read and hear God's Holy Word, opened his Eyes also, but is there never another Friend of mine in thy House, who can lend thee a little Assistance in this time of need?

*Thought.* Alas, Sir, who have I else that can do any thing for me, for my House is full of

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cursed Adversaries ; never was a Cage fuller of unclean and hateful Birds, than my House, I mean my Heart, is full of Base and filthy Enemies to true Godliness.

*Godli.* Thou sayest right, I believe thee, poor *Thoughtful* : But prethee see if thou canst not find a Friend that I dearly love, and have a long time sought for.

*Thought.* Pray Sir, who is that ? tell me his Name.

*Godli.* His Name is *Endeavour*, alias *Laborious* ; you can't imagin *Thoughtful* what great things he hath done : Oh, I love him dearly, he helpt *Noah*, to build the Ark, and *Jacob* to get the Blessing, and to Wrestle with the Angel, and to prevail too ; and *Solomon* to build the Temple. *Consideration* 'tis true, caused *David* to think on his ways, but it was *Endeavour* that turned his foot to keek Gods Statutes : *Consideration* also brought the Poor Prodigal to his right Mind, but it was my Friend *Endeavour* that sent him home to his Fathers House, 'twas he that made him find his Feet, (after the Spirit of God had brought him to himself) nay I could tell the, I have taught him to get many a Blessing by Prayer. Prethee who was it that got the *Three Loaves in the Gospel*, was it not this importunate *Laborious* ? Was it not he likewise that made the Poor *Widow* to prevail with the unjust Judge to avenge her of her Adversary ; nay in a word, the Promise of God is made to him, *If you follow on to know the Lord, then you shall know him.* 'Tis this diligent painful Person that makes Men (with Gods Blessing) Rich, I mean Spiritually Rich : And this I must tell

thee too, he can do nothing of himself, do not think that he can open the Door, no, no, it must be the Spirit of God that does that; I do not say *Thoughtful*, that he is able to do it, but the promise of better assistance is made to this my dear Friend sweet *Endeavour*: Have you never read in *Aesop's* Fables of a Man that was fallen into a Dich, and lying there almost Drowned, he called to *Jupiter* to help him out, but *Jupiter* answered, endeavour to get out, and *Jupiter* will help thee; Though 'tis but a Fable, yet the Moral is very teachable. Now what dost thou say *Thoughtful*, canst thou find thy good Friend *Endeavour*?

*Thoughtful*, Truly Sir now I think of it, I hope I have, but he hath been here but a little time, if I have found him, and God knows he has been too much neglected by me, for I did not strive to enter in at the strait Gate till now. But pray wherein will he be so usefull to me? What are his Properties?

*Godli*. Why he commonly stirs up Men to do what they can to open the Door to me, he is a great Enemy to Sloth and Idleness, he makes them rise betimes in the Morning to call upon God, and to read God's Word, and pry into it very deligently, and he will cause thee to incline thine Ear to what *Conscience* says, and make thee tremble at his Reproofs and Accusations when you Sin against God, if you will but take his Counsel: He will also cause thee to go to hear Sermons, and not to sleep when you come there, nor neglect nor slight Convictions, nor be careless and remiss in any duty, and will help thee to Labour after Faith, and not to rest upon any thing short of Christ.

*Thought-*

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*Thought.* O Sir, this is the Friend I want, and Blessed be God I have found him, I am resolved to make use of his help and assistance continually. Now *Old-man* look to your self, *Laborious* I hope, will do your Business, and I shall quickly prevail, and open the Door to true Godliness.

Vpon this he became very diligent in attending upon all the means of Grace. Moreover, by the help of *Endevour* he cut of some one or two of the Members of *Old-man*, that Cursed Body of Sin, and prayed Morning and Evening, eschewing all open Prophaneness and Scandalous Sins, and would not speak at random with his Tongue, nor neglect to hear one good Sermon, if possible he could get an opportunity, and became mighty just in all his Dealings and Commerce with Men. But soon upon this, *Apollyon*, by the treachery of *Old-man*, raised up an other Enemy which had almost insensible undone him; his Name was *Self-Righteousness*, a very great Enemy to true Godliness, which Godliness soon perceived; and called upon him to open the Door, for it appeared he had not received him yet.

*Godli. Thoughtful,* What is the cause of this great neglect? What shall I not yet be received? O What a long time have I stood at your Door? what is the matter now?

*Thought.* Truly Sir, I concluded now the Door had been open, by the help of my good Friend *Laborious*, for I have done what he required of me.

*Godli.* No, no, *Thoughtful*, I am still kept out, *Wilful-will* and *Old-man* have beguiled you, and have let in another dangerous Enemy,