CHAP. XXIII.

Of Perfection; and whether it may be attained in this Life.

PErfection in the new Covenant Restauration and Life, is a Glory to be believed beyond what we do, or can yet know or injoy. But in as much as there are great mistakes about this matter, and the word perfect being frequently used in the Scripture, and abused by ignorant and erring persons, by reason of which serious souls may be (and many are) put to a loss in this matter; I shall endeavour to clear up this truth according to the best light that I have (through Grace attained herein, for the advantage of others: in which I shall endeavour, 1. To clear up the various use and import of the word perfect, as used in the holy Scripture, and how far perfection is attainable here. 2. To prove that perfection in the highest intention, is not attainable in this life.

The various import of the word sincere.

1. The various use and import of the word perfect, as used in the Scriptures; 1. Sometimes it imports sincerity and truth in the inward parts; he that is a sincere Christian towards God in all his walks, is in God's

God's account a perfect Christian, though otherwise attended with many imperfections; uprightness and integrity is a choice virtue, owned and approved of God, and a comfort to souls in whom it is; 2 *Chron.* 20. 3. *Hezekiah* could say, *Remember Lord I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart*; that is, with an upright and sincere heart, that is the true sense and meaning of the King, for otherwise he had many infirmities; 1 *Chron.* 28. 9. *And thou* Solomon *my Son, know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind*; that is, a sincere, upright, sound, and undivided heart; for the Lord *desireth truth in the inward parts*, Ps. 51. 6. *Job* was said to be perfect; that is, upright, sincere, and so owned of God, though he saw himself to be sinful, and so confesseth, *Job.* 13. 23.

2. There is a comparative perfection spoken of in Scripture; that is, some have been, and may be reputed more perfect than others; and so said to be perfect, compared with those that are worse than them; living in the same time and age, and it may be enjoy like means; *Gen.* 6. 9. It's said that *Noah was a perfect man in his Generation*; that is, compared with the Generation in which he lived; he was a perfect man comparatively, and upright and sincere *in his Generation, and walked with God*; that is, kept close with God, and worshipped him in an evil

2. *Comparative.*

evil Generation; *ver.* 5. *God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth*, &c. or compared with others that are weaker Christians. Some Christians compared with others, may be said to be perfect, and this I call a comparative perfection; 1 *Cor.* 2.6. *Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect*; that is, perfect comparatively with the *Corinthians*, Chap. 3. 1, 2. *And I brethren could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ*, &c. not as to those that were spiritual, or perfect, which is all one in sense and substance; they compared with others, were not so spiritual or perfect as them: and this is it the Apostle minds, *Phil.* 3. 15. *Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded*; that is, compared to others that were more imperfect in their Knowledg, Faith and Practice, not perfect in the highest perfection; for so the Apostle himself was not perfect; *ver.* 12. *Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect*, &c. So that it's evident both from Scripture and experience, that there is this comparative perfection, and that in varieties of degrees among all Christians; which are distinguished, 1. Degrees of this perfection among Christians. 2. Among Churches. And, 3. Among Ministers, yet all are Christians.

1. *Of Christians in general.* 1. Among Christians in general, there are varieties of degrees, in Knowledg, in Faith, and in Practice, and in all the gifts and

and virtues of the new Covenant; this is abundantly cleared by the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12, to 25. Where he discovers the Church in all its parts to have variety of members, as the body of Christ, some more honourable or perfect than others, some weak in the Faith, and some strong; *Rom.* 14. 1. and 15. 1. Some are comely in their spirits and conversations, and some need to have comeliness to be put upon them; 1 *Cor.* 12. 23, 24. Some spiritual, some carnal, some useful and helpful to others, others that must be helped along, and supported; 1 *Thes.* 5. 14. *Now we exhort you brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient toward all.* Now it's evident, that it was not (only) the Ministers or Elders the Apostle intended, compared with *ver.* 11, 12, 13. But it was the more perfect and spiritual members of the Church, that they might know how to behave themselves towards the more weak and imperfect ones.

2. There are degrees in this perfection among the Churches, some Churches are more perfect than some, being compared; and that is it the Apostle intended in his writing to the Church of *Corinth*; *He could not write to them as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal*, &c. But he spake wisdom among them that were perfect, 1 *Cor.* 2. 6. *But we speak wisdom among them that are perfect*, &c. that is, more perfect, and more spiritual, 2. *Among Churches.*

as

as the Church of the *Romans*, whose *Faith was famous throughout the World*, Rom. 1. 8. and 16. 19. The deep things the Apostle writes to them about their freedom from the Law, and sin, by Jesus Christ, and from condemnation, *by the Law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus*, &c. So likewise the Churches of *Ephesus*, Phil. *&c.* and *Rev.* 2, 3, *Chapt.* Some Churches were more perfect than others, and two of them excelling all the rest; that of *Smirna*, *Ch.* 2. 8, 9, 10. and that of *Philadelphia*, *Chap.* 3. 7, 8, 9, 10.

3. *Among Ministers.* 3. Among Ministers, there is a ministerial perfection spoken of in Scripture; 2 *Tit.* 3. 17. *That the man of God may be perfect*, &c. That is, the minister of God, frequently so called in the Scripture; 1. Of the old Testament, *Deut.* 33. 1. *Jude* 13. 6. 1 *Sam.* 2. 17. 2 *King.* 1. 9, 10. And in the new Testament *Paul* calls *Timothy*, *the man of God*; 1 *Tit.* 6. 11. *But thou O man of God, flee these things*, &c. This is a ministerial perfection; that is, to be well instructed in the Scriptures, and have thence learned how to fulfill their ministry; 2 *Tit.* 2. 15. *Study to shew thy self approved unto God, a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* And among such, are likewise diversities, and degrees of perfection; and that,

They differ, 1. *In Gift.* 1. In gift, 1 *Cor.* 12. 11. 2 *Cor.* 11. 5. *For I was not behind* (that is, in gift) *the very chiefest Apostle*: which word chiefest, imply-

implyeth clearly a diversity in gifts, even amongst the Apostles; for there was no chiefdom by Office, but in Gift *Peter* and *John* seems to excel.

2. In divine disposition to the work, some are more disposed thereunto than others. The Apostle *Paul* had upon him the care of all the Churches, 2 *Cor.* 11. 28. For which (very probably) he was envied *by false Apostles, deceitful workers, the Devils ministers*, who envy those who are more sincere, laborious and faithful than themselves; *ver.* 12, 13, 18, 19. with *Gal.* 4.17. *They would exclude you*, (or rather us) *that you might affect them.* And the same in substance he speaks of *Timothy*, *Phil.* 2. 19, 20. *I have no man like minded*, (that is, no Minister) *that will naturally care for your estate.* It's a choice virtue in a Minister to have a natural care of the Church of Christ, such (it seems) were, and still are, very rare to be found. 2. *In divine disposition.*

3. In labour and industry in the work, as an effect of this divine disposition; so the Apostle *Paul laboured more abundantly than they all*; that is, than all the rest of the Apostles: see both disposition and labour for the Church together, *in* Titus, *and the brother, whose praise is in the Gospel*, 2 Cor. 8. 16, 17, 18. 3. *In labour.*

4. In conversation and holiness, there are diversities and degrees of attainments (and so of this comparative perfection) in holiness, 4. *In conversation.*

lineſs, and that in the true Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt, although it greatly concerns all to be exemplary in this matter, 1 *Tit.* 4. 12. 1 *Theſ.* 2. 10. *Gal.* 2. 11, 12, 13, 14.

The reaſons of theſe degrees of perfections and attainments both in Miniſters and Members, and ſo in the Churches, are,

Reaſons, 1. Difference in Gifts.

1. From the varieties and degrees of Gifts, Graces and Virtues given by the Lord to his people; he gives to ſome more, to ſome leſs, even as it pleaſeth him; *Rom.* 12. 6. 1 *Cor.* 12. 4, 5, 6, 11. *All theſe worketh that one and the ſelf-ſame ſpirit, dividing to every man ſeverally as he will*; and in *Matth.* 25. 15. Is this held forth by our Lord in the diverſity of talents; and *Eph.* 4. 7. *But unto every one of us is given Grace according to the meaſure of the gift of God.*

2. Degrees of Improvement.

2. From the degrees of improvement of thoſe gifts the Lord hath given; for ſutable to the improvement the Lord gives increaſe: where perſons are ſluggiſh and negligent, whether Miniſter or Member, there is but little or no increaſe; and where perſons are diligent and faithful improvers of the talents received, there God will bleſs it with increaſe; *Matt.* 25. 29. *For unto every one that hath, it ſhall be given, and he ſhall have more abundantly*, &c. That is, he that hath improved that which he hath, as is clear, compared with the former part of the Parable, and will prove true both here and hereafter: ſee *Heb.* 5. 12, 14. *Prov.* 13. 4.

3. From

3. From the due and undue ends of persons endeavour after a greater measure of perfection in gifts and virtues; 1 *Cor.* 12. 7. *The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every one to profit withal*; that is, for spiritual profit both for himself and others; but when Gifts and Virtues are sought after for pride, honour, and self-esteem, or the like fleshly and base ends, no wonder if God with-hold, see *Jam.* 4.3. Or if he answer the desire, it is in a way of wrath, as sometimes he gave his people their desire according to their lust, but it was in a way of wrath, *Ps.* 88. 29,30,32. 3. *In their ends.*

3. A third sort of Perfection minded in Scripture, is a perfection in Unity amongst the Saints and Churches, and this is a desirable perfection, of which Christians greatly fall short at this day; 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. *Now I beseech you brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jesus, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joyned together in the same mind, and in the same judgment*, *Eph.* 4.2,3. *Phil.* 2.2,3. This is promised in the new Covenant, *Ezek.* 11. 19. Prayed for by our Lord, *Joh.* 17. 21. And to be endeavoured after by all Saints, and they that are contrary, shew themselves to be carnal, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. 3. *Perfection in unity.*

A fourth sort of perfection spoken of in Scripture is, when men are well instructed in the principles of Religion, relating to matters of Faith and Practice, and are truly 4. *In Unity.*

and

and humbly reaching after the knowledg of the whole will of God in his Word; when the heart is universal for God in all his will, that is a perfect man, *Col.* 4. 12. It was the fervent labour and prayer of *Epaphras* for the Church, *that they might stand perfect and compleat in all the will of God*, *Acts* 18. 26. *Apollo*, though an eloquent man, yet being a godly man, was willing to be instructed by *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, *in the way of God more perfectly*, and the earnest Prayer of the Apostle in behalf of the Church, 1 *Thes.* 3. 10. And this is such a Perfection where it is in truth, that will afford the soul much boldness both towards God and Men, *Ps.* 119. 6. *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy Commandments*; ver. 165. *Great peace have they that love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them.*

5. *In Justification.* 5. There is a Perfection in Justification, which is by Jesus Christ crucified; that is, the pardon of all sin for the sake of Christ; and this is perfect, and is the perfection spoken of by the Apostle, *Col.* 1. 28. Which was the great desire and endeavour of the Apostle, that all believers might live up in it, *That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus*; that is, perfectly justified in him; *Col.* 2. 13. Having forgiven you all trespasses; that is perfect justification, where all trespasses are forgiven, *Act.* 13. 39. *By him all that believe are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the Law*

of

of Moses; this imputed righteousness to believers is perfect.

6. As for Sanctification, that is two-fold, 1. Imputed, that is the perfect obedience and purity in the person of the Son of God, imputed to believers, that is made to them, and accounted theirs; 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. *Who is of God made to be unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*: and this is perfect Sanctification. 6. *In Sanctification.*

2. Is holiness wrought in the Saints, as I minded in the matter of Sanctification, *Chap.* 17. And this is both perfect and imperfect; 1. Perfect, in respect to the parts of holiness; that is, there is something of every part of holiness, of every virtue of Christ, in whom holiness was perfect; and so he was the perfect pattern of holiness to his people, and from whom it comes into us; *Joh.* 1. 16. *And of his fulness have all we received, and Grace for Grace*: that is, of every virtue that was in Christ, have his people received a measure, by which there is (sutable to the reception) a conformity to him, and a bearing his image and likeness in this World: on this account it is they are said to be *Created after God in Righteousness and true Holiness*, Eph. 4. 24. And in this respect the Saints are perfect in Holiness, *i. e.* in respect of the parts thereof. A child when he is born into the World, hath all the parts of a man, and so is reputed a man in respect of parts, though

not

not in respect of growth and stature.

So believers in respect of growth up to the perfect state, so they are imperfect, and greatly imperfect too, and are (or should be) growing daily in all the parts of Holiness, 1 *Cor.* 13. 11. The Apostle presents this same truth by the same simily, *When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, but when I was a man, I put away childish things*: he useth this simily, to hold forth the childish, and perfect state of Christians: they are children, though but little ones, yet they are perfectly so; yet imperfect in respect of the highest degree, or growth to the perfect state; and that is it the Apostle intends, *Phil.* 3, 12.

2. The highest degree not attainable in this life.

2. Things propounded, that the highest degree of Gospel-perfection is not attainable in this life; and to demonstrate this truth, and make it plain, let us consider.

1. The declared experience and judgment of the Saints in Scripture record, which the Reader may in these Scriptures take knowledg of, 1 *Kin.* 8. 46. *Eccl.* 7. 20. *Jam.* 3. 2. 1 *Joh.* 1. 8. 10. *Job.* 40. 4, 5. and 42. 6. *Isa.* 6 5. All which demonstrates the truth of this matter; the most eminent of the Saints that lived in the World, yet were sensible of sin and imperfection, and some of them declared it to be the state of all; *Not a man on earth that liveth, and sinneth not*: and the Apostle *Paul*, a man

man of the highest attainment in Gospel-perfection, yet confesseth himself not to be perfect; *Phil.* 3. 12. And that we have every virtue but in part, 1 *Cor.* 13. 10, 11, 12.

2. We are yet in the imperfect and fallen state, only coming forth by Faith, and the beginning work of regeneration wrought in the spirit of the mind; the people of God after believing, are but in the way to the perfect deliverance; perfection is for the perfect restored state of the Saints: and indeed, were it not so, we might say as the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 15. 19. *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable*; so, if our highest perfection were in this life, we should be (comparatively) but miserable.

3. That this perfect state of the Saints will not, cannot be, till the second coming and Kingdom of our Lord Jesus: it's true, when the body returns to the dust, the Saints shall cease from sin, and they shall be with the Lord: but this is not their perfection, though it would be a blessed degree, if it were possible to be attained here; but perfection will not, cannot be, till our Lord come again from Heaven: the truth of this appears from these Scriptures, *Phil.* 3. 20, 21. *Col.* 3. 4. 1 *Joh.* 3. 2. Read these Scriptures, and understand.

2. The resurrection from the dust will not be till our Lord doth come again in

Glory, 1 *Thes.* 4. 16. 1 *Cor.* 15. 23. And till then we come not out of the falen ſtate, *The laſt enemy to be deſtroyed is death.* While we lie in the grave, our bodies are in the loweſt degree of the falen ſtate; and for any to pretend perfection while in the falen ſtate, a ſtate of ſin, ſickneſs, ſorrow, and death, muſt flow from ignorance, or wilfulneſs, or both.

4. That though perfection is not attainable in the higheſt degree, in this falen, mortal, ſinful, ſorrowful, and imperfect eſtate; yet it is the duty, diſpoſition and concernment of all perfect Chriſtians, to be preſſing forward after perfection, *Phil.* 3. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

Queſt. To what end is it to preſs forward after that which is not to be attained in this life?

Anſw. In my anſwer to this queſtion, I ſhall mention three things; 1. That believers, if they preſs forward after any thing, that is of God and Chriſt, that is of the new Covenant; it muſt be perfection, it is not imperfection they reach after, too much of that they have already in themſelves, which makes them groan in the ſenſe thereof; therefore if they preſs forward after any thing, it muſt be Perfection.

2. By preſſing forward after Perfection, I intend a growing up into a greater meaſure of the perfection attainable in this mortal

mortal ſtate; for (as hath been ſhewed) there are degrees of Perfection attainable here, both in Knowledg, Faith, Love, and an holy conformity to our Lord Jeſus, in the Gifts and Virtues of the Holy Spirit; 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. And this is it the Apoſtle minds, *Phil.* 3. 10. *That I may know him*, &c. That is, that I may grow and increaſe in the knowledg of him, and in a conformity to him, for he knew him in part before. O, it's a ſign of a gracious ſoul, that is truly longing and endeavouring after the higheſt degree (attainable here) of conformity to Jeſus Chriſt; 1 *Joh.* 3. 3. *He that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf as he is pure*: that is, maketh Chriſt the copy and pattern after which he walketh.

3. By preſſing forward after Perfection, I intend that the godly ſoul principled with perfection, have in his eye the higheſt and glorious perfection; and that is it he would attain, if poſſible, though he knows it's not attainable here, yet he reacheth after it, and can do no leſs, if intereſted in it; it is his portion, and that is it the Apoſtle intends, *Phil.* 3. 11. *If by any means I might attain unto the reſurrection of the dead*; that is, to that perfection that ſhall be attained at the reſurrection of the dead; *ver.* 12, 13, 14. *I preſs forward to the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus*: God & Chriſt is the mark we are running to,

1 *Pet.* 3. 18. *Mat.* 16. 24. And Perfection and Glory is the prize we are running for, 2 *Tit.* 4. 7, 8 *Rom.* 2. 7. And he can never run right that hath not both the mark and prize in his eye: *So run that ye may obtain.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of Sincerity.

SIncerity being that which crowns all other virtues and duties (for without sincerity all is nothing) and must have its place and use in all relating both to God and Man, without which it is unaccepted with God; and although I have occasionally given hints of this virtue in other Chapters, and particularly in that about Prayer, in the manner how it must be performed, yet I shall in this place speak something more distinctly, yet briefly. It being a virtue so well pleasing to God, he *desireth truth in the inward parts*, *Psal.*51.6. man would not accept of hipocritical service or shew of love, if he knew it so to be, ; how much less will God accept of that which is but feigned and in shew; God knoweth the heart, the mind, and thoughts, and he will have the heart in all, or nothing at all, *My Son give me thy heart*; God will accept no gift without the heart, let God have the heart, and he hath all, but without the heart he will accept nothing.

All the glorious shews in Religion without the heart, are but Painted sins, and the

persons but as *Whited Tombs, that appears beautiful to men, but within are full of Dead men Bones.* Sincerity must have its place in Faith, or else it is but feigned and nothing worth, true faith must be *unfeigned*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. its to be feared that there is a great deal of feigned Faith in the World, that makes men no better then Hypocrites. *Job.* 2. 23, 24, 25. Sincerity must have its place in love, (or else its nothing) and that 1. to God the Father, *Mat.* 22. 37. to Jesus Christ his Son, *Eph.* 6. 24. *Grace be with all those that love our Lord Jesus in Sincerity, Amen.* To the people of God for his sake it must be sincere heart love, *Mat.* 22. 39. *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*; 1 *Joh.* 3. 18. *love not in Word and Tongue, but in deed and in truth*; 1 Pet. 1. 22. it must be *unfeigned and with a pure heart fervently.* Sincerity must be in our prayers, *Psal.* 17. 1. *Give ear unto my Prayers that goeth not out of feigned lips.* In a word, Sincerity must be in all our services if they are accepted of the Lord, 1 *Chron.* 28. 9. *Psal.* 119. 34. *Give me Understanding and I shall keep thy Law, yea I shall observe it with my whole heart*, ver. 69. *I will keep thy Precepts with my whole heart*, and 9. 1. *I will praise thee with my whole heart*; so that whether it be faith or love, prayer or praise, or any part of obedience, it must be with the heart, a sincere heart, a whole and undevided heart, a heart and a heart the Lord disowneth.

I shall indeavour to shew some infallible Characters of a sincere heart, plain from Scripture, and Saints, Experience, not to darken truth, or leave Souls at a loss, but that he that runs may read and understand. And in general, as the ground of the whole, a sincere heart is an *honest heart, and good heart, Luk.* 8.15. this honest and good heart includes the whole of sincerity. *Signs of sincerity.*

1. An honest, good, and sincere heart, is an open and plain heart; he is true in what he doth, he hates and abhors deceit, we use to say he is an honest man that deals plainly and justly, so that he dares let all his actions come to the tryal; so is it with the sincere soul, he is honest and plain, would have all his works done in the light, he hates darkness, he deals above board (as the saying is) he is willing that all his actions should be brought to the tryal, *Rom.* 13. 13. *Let us walk honestly as in the day,* &c. The honest sincere soul loves the day, he is not for night work, nor deeds of darkness, be it never so secret. *Joh.* 3. 19 20, 21. *He that doth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.* The sincere soul loves the light, because it discovers the darkness of sin, the sincere soul fears all sin, especially hypocrisie, he would not be an hypocrite for the world, and therefore comes to the light. Of the Word and Spirit of Christ, to try his spirit and actions by, that *1. Its an open plain heart.*

ſo he may know that *his deeds are wrought in God*, that they are of God, and owned and approved of him; the honeſt ſincere heart, as he fears hypocriſie, and comes to the light, that he may underſtand of what ſort his work is, ſo he doth it ſincerely and throughly; he is in good earneſt in the matter, and therefore do not only ſearch himſelf, and is willing to be ſearched by others, but is willing to ſtand to the Lords ſearching who knoweth all things. *Pſal.* 139. 23, 24. *Search me O God and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, and ſee if there be any wickedneſs in me, and lead me in the way everlaſting.* O this is a ſincere honeſt heart indeed that would have all darkneſs diſcovered and brought to his knowledge, and to that end deſires the Lord to ſearch and bring to light any hidden way of iniquity and darkneſs. But the Hypocrite dwells in the dark, and is afraid of the light, he covers himſelf with darkneſs, he thinks men ſee it not, nor would he have God to ſee it, he dares not make a ſearch himſelf into his heart and ways, much leſs would he have God to do it, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved.

2. *It is a universal heart.*

2. This honeſt ſincere heart is a univerſal heart for God, it hates, abhors, and forſakes all ſin, he would not have one ſin left, as he deſireth to have all ſin pardoned, ſo he would have all ſin mortified, *he loatheth every evil way*, *Pſal.* 119 128. is willing

to

to imbrace every truth of the Gospel for truths sake, to have a respect to all Gods Commandments, *Psal.* 119. 6. *Then shall I not be ashamed when I have a respect to all thy Commandement*, ; the sincere soul (according to his light) do not half it with God or with men, but as *Joshua* and *Caleb*, *Num.* 14. 24. and 32. 12. *Being men of another spirit they follow God fully*, and what they know not they beg light from him, as the Prophet, *Psal.* 119. 33, 34. *Teach me O Lord the way of thy Statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end, give me understanding and I shall keep thy Law, yea I shall observe it with my whole heart* ; a sincere heart as he is universal in his obedience to God, so is he careful of out-running truth, moves not sudden, but on sound and sollid ground, he would not miscarry for a world, to take errour for truth, *Psal.* 119. 128. *I esteem all thy Precepts concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way.*

But the Hypocrite at best does but half it with God, and with men, leave some sins that are most scandalous and less profitable, but keep some sins close and fast still, as his *Dallilah*, that he will not part withal ; touch his Darling, beloved, profitable sin, then he startles, be it covetousness, oppression, pride, or whatever else that must not be medled with, like *Herod* who heard *John* the Dipper gladly, and reformed some things ; but when he touched

ched the Darling Luſt, he muſt ſuffer for it; ſo it is likewiſe with the Hypocrite in matter of ſervice, he will do ſome duties, ſuch as like him and may ſtand with his credit and profit, but is not univerſal; do not deſire to know, that he may do, and ſo indeed is not upright and honeſt either with God or Men, for the Hypocrite can ſin out of ſight, lye and cheat for advantage, without any conſcience at all.

3. *Deſigns only the Glory of God, &c.*

3. The honeſt plain ſincere heart carrieth no deſign along with him in his heart, but the Glory of God, and his own and others ſpiritual and eternal good. This is the deſign of the ſincere heart in all his undertakings both towards God and Men; and this is Gods deſign in all his undertakings, eſpecially on the new Covenant account, his own Glory and the Salvation of Sinners, and this the ſincere heart is principled with. *Pſal.* 119. 55. *I have remembred O Lord thy name in the night, and have kept thy Law*; that is a good keeping of the Law of God that flows from the remembrance of his name, *Mal.* 3. 16. There was a book of remembrance written for thoſe that *feared God and thought upon his name.* The ſincere ſoul in all his ſeekings, ſeeks God and Chriſt as the chieſeſt good, and ſeeks the Glory of the Name of God, and his own and others Salvation. *Pſal.* 119. 94. *I am thine, ſave me, for I have ſought thy Precepts.* So *Abraham* and the Saints of old ſought a Country,

Country, *Heb.* 11. 14. *They that say such things plainly declare that they seek a Country.* The Saints may, yea, they ought to be seeking after the Heavenly Country, the Heavenly City, and to have *respect to the recompence of reward, ver.* 26. to their own salvation, and the salvation of others, 1 *Cor.* 10. 33.

But the Hypocrites design is to keep up a visible Profession for his own honour and esteem among men, designing himself in all, making his Profession a Cloak to cover his secret Abominations, either covetousness as *Judas*, they make it *a Cloak for Covetousness*, 1 *Thes.* 2. 5. Or for *Malitiousness*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 16. or at best designs his own honour and esteem with men, *for they love the praise of men more then the praise of God.* But sincere souls can acquit themselves of such things, and abhors such designs as these, but designs to approve themselves to God, whatever men think, speak, or do against them.

4. A sincere heart is constant with God, he is the same at all times, and in all places, and in all companies, time and place changes him not, *Ps.* 119. 20. *My soul breaketh for the longing it hath to thy Judgments at all times*, vers. 33. *Teach me O Lord the way of thy Statutes and I shall keep it to the end*, ver. 44. *So shall I keep thy Law continually for ever and ever.* 4. *Is constant with God.*

But the Hypocrite is much for timeing his

his service, serve God in prosperity, but turn away in adversity, *Mat.* 13. 20, 21. seem to be good in good company, but bad in bad company; Religious with the Religious, and Prophane with the prophane; the Hypocrite will be for God while it may stand with his honour and profit, but when that failes, his Religion is lost, like those, *Mal.* 3. 14. that said *it is in vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances and walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts*; they are all for worldly profit, gain is their best Godliness, but Gratious Souls see a gain in true Godlyness, though obtained in worldly loss.

5. *Design to please God.*

5. The design of the sincere heart is to please God in every thing that he doth, and to approve himself to God, he will choose rather to cross the wills of the whole world then the will of God, and yet will please men too, so far as may be, and not displease God; sincere Christians in their non-conformity to the world, it is not to please their own fancies and humours (as some imagine) but it is to please God, to live to his word and will, *Gal.* 1. 10. *Do I now please men or God, &c. If I please men, I should not be the Servant of God*, 1 Thes. 4. 1. *That as ye have received of us, how ye ought to walk and please God, &c.* 1 Joh. 2. 22. 2 Cor. 2. 17. That is a Son-like frame indeed, that designs to please his Father in all things; the Sincere Christian would not dis-

displease God for a world, he had rather displease men, and himself too (I mean fleshly self) then displease God.

But Hypocrites design is to please men, and to please their own humours, they do what they do to be seen of men; the Hypocrite if he pray; it is to be seen of men, if he give, it is to be seen of men, to have applause of men, that is his end, and if that be attained, he hath his reward, *Mat.* 23. 5. *But all their works they do to be seen of men, ch.* 6. 1, 5. The Hypocrite if he can keep but just so much Religion as may continue his esteem among the Professors of his way and time, he looks no more, unless it be the vain glorious, glossing, talking, (and it may be) preaching Hypocrite.

6. The great care of a Sincere Christian is to look to the heart, to have the heart right with God, he knoweth *that the heart is deceitful*, and that God requireth the heart, and will have the heart or nothing; and therefore *whatever he doth, he doth it heartily as to the Lord*; and mourns when he finds the heart wanting and wandering; he hates a divided Hypocritical heart, he believeth with the heart, loveth God with the heart, prayeth with the heart, obeyeth with the heart, *Rom.* 16. 17. he accounts no service well done where the heart is wanting. *6. Look especially to the heart.*

But the Hypocrite is a stranger to heart work and heart service, he troubles not him-

himself with that work, the most he doth is to bring his body to the service, and his head it may be, but for the heart he takes no care for that, he is a stranger to such work, Ezek. 33. 31. *With their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness*, See Mat. 15. 8. Psal. 78. 36, 37. *They did flatter him with their mouth, and they lyed to him with their Tongues, for their heart was not right with him; Thus the Hypocrites in heart heap up wrath*, Job. 36. 13. For Hypocrisie lyeth in the heart, and Sincerity is in the heart, it is an honest and good heart.

7. *Is most at home.* 7. The Sincere Christian dwelleth most at home, looks most to the state of his own soul, keepeth his own Vineyard, dresseth that, and watcheth his own heart and his own words, and ways, and warreth against his own sins and sinful nature, judgeth himself for his own miscarriages, cryeth out, *O wretched man that I am*, (not but that sincere souls seeth, and reproveth, and mourneth for others sins; but his first, his great work is at home, to keep things in order there; he saith with the Prophet, *Psal.* 51. 4. *Against thee only have I sinned*; and with the Publican, *Lord be merciful to me a Sinner.* He saith with the Prophet, *Psal.* 119. 5. *O that my ways were di ected to keep thy Statutes.* But the Hypocrite is most abroad, quick-sighted to see into others failings, but blind at home, cryeth peace to his own soul

soul without ground, his great work is to be finding fault abroad, he cryeth not, *O wretched man that I am*, but O wretched man that thou art; he is quick sighted into the sins of others, that his own may be covered, or at least lessened in his conscience account; an Hypocrite will sooner see a Mote in his brothers eye then a Beam in his own.

8. The Sincere Christian as he believeth in the Lord, and loveth and obeyeth the Lord above all, so he cleaveth (not only in word, and in tongue, but in deed, and in truth) to the Doctrine of Christ, the Word of the Gospel, as his alone ground of faith, and rule of obedience, and dare not for a world to swerve from it, either to his own or others inventions, 1 *Joh.*4.6. *He that knoweth God heareth us, he that is not of God heareth not us; hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of errour*, 2 Joh. ver. 9. *Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ, hath not God; but he that abideth in the Doctrine of Christ, hath both the Father and the Son.* 8. *He cleaveth to the Doctrine of Christ.*

But Hypocrites whatever they pretend in word, of owning the Doctrine of Christ, yet easily turn from it, preferring their own inventions and imaginations equall with, if not above the Doctrine of the Gospel, *Mat.* 15. 7. *Ye Hypocrites*, &c. *ver.*9. *In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandements of men*, Isa. 29. 13. *Their*

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fear towards me is taught by the Precepts of men.

God takes them to be Hypocrites that pretend to own him and his word, and indeed own the Precepts of men, and their own inventions in his worship.

9. *They love Gods things for his sake.*] 9. Sincere Christians love Gods things for his sake, his word, his ways and Ordinances, because it is his, because it hath his stamp upon it, and spirit in it, loves his people because they are his, and have his spirit in them, and his name upon them, and so loves all whom the Lord loves, the poor Saints as well as the rich, they that are alive, as well as they that are dead, they they see and know, as well as them they never saw, &c.

But Hypocrites love is to some, for some base and by end, and not to all, or to the dead Saints, but not to the living; Hypocrites pretend a great deal of love to the deceased Saints which they never saw, but hate and persecute the living Saints, who desire to be the *Followers of those who through faith and patience inherit the promise.* Hypocrites will pretend to be the greatest lovers of dead Saints, none love them as themselves, they will honour them, every one of them shall have a day dedicated to him in honour, Saint *Peter* and Saint *Paul*'s day, &c. yea, and it may be adore and pray to them, make them their intercessors, but hate and persecute them that are alive, whom they

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ſee and know, and that too because they walk in the ſteps of the deceaſed Saints. We may eaſily judge what love ſuch have to Jeſus Chriſt and the Apoſtles (if they were alive, they ſhould quickly find and feal their love) that are ſo friendly to their followers in Faith and Patience; thus did the Hypocrites of old *Mat.* 23. 29, 30, 31. *Woe unto you Scribes, Phariſees, and Hypocrites, becauſe ye build the Tombs of the Prophets, and garniſh the Sepulchers of the righteous, and ſay, if we had been in the days of our Fathers we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets. Wherefore ye be witneſſes unto your ſelves that ye are the children of them that killed the Prophets.* They witneſs that they are the Children of the Perſecutors (not by nature, but) by the ſame ſpirit, children in blood and perſecution, therefore Hypocrites, in pretending to love Saints that are gone, whom they never ſaw, but hate them they ſee, and would as truly hate and perſecute them they never ſaw, if they were preſent, as they do thoſe that are alive and preſent with them.

10. And finally the honeſt hearted ſincere Chriſtian is fruitful, *he heareth the word of God and keepeth it, and bringeth forth fruit with patience.* He knoweth that hereby God is glorified, *Job.* 15. 8. and that his account ſhall be thereby advantaged in the day of account, *Phil.* 4. 17. *They have their fruit unto holineſs, and the end everlaſting life,* Rom. 6 22. 10. *He is fruitful.*

Even the fruit of righteousness that is by Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of God. Phil. 1. 11. *Fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God*; it is the fruitless tree that must be cut down. But the Hypocrite is a fruitless branch, *an empty vine that bringeth forth fruit to himself*; he never goes out of (or above) himself, seeks himself in all that he doth, but brings forth no fruit to God, no fruit to men, no fruit for the good of his own soul, unless it be the fruit of his Hypocrisie, that is woe and wrath. *The Hypocrite in heart doth heap up wrath*; *Woe to you Scribes, Pharisees, Hypocrites, ye Serpents, ye Generation of Vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell.* Mat. 23. 29. 33.

2. *The advantages of sincerity.*

2. I shall shew the advantages of sincerity and honesty of heart, to God-ward, in the New Covenant of his Grace.

1. Sincerity of heart to God, is that which renders all the weak and imperfect services of his people acceptable to him, not as the meritorious cause, that is alone in Christ Jesus, and for his sake, both our persons and services *are accepted in the beloved*, Eph. 1. 6. But in him; neither are our persons nor services accepted without sincerity, feigned faith, and love, and obedience is not accepted, it must be (as you have heard before) heart faith, heart love, and heart obedience, that God accepts in Christ and for his sake; this of sincerity and truth in the inward parts, God desireth

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and accepteth in all things, *according to what we have, and not according to what we have not.* Weak and imperfect services are accepted where sincerity is, this sweetens all our services, keeps the soul humble and holy, with a dayly dependance on the Grace that is in Christ Jesus. God (in Christ Jesus) covers the many failings, and accepts the weak services of his upright ones; *David* a man of many failings, yet being upright and sincere, he was owned of God to be *a Man after his own heart*: sincerity of heart makes us after Gods own heart, he delights in, owns, and approves of sincere souls, he takes them for his own, with all their weaknesses and imperfections.

But Hypocrisie marrs all, it is as the *dead Fly in the Box that causeth all the Oyntment to stink*; The Hypocrite may to visible appearance in outward shew, exceed the sincere soul, as the Pharisee did the Publican, he may preach, and pray, and converse at such a rate, as if he were an Angel of light, or a Minister and man of righteousness, and yet be an Hypocrite all the while, proud and selfseeking, designing himself and his own ends in all; and this spoileth all; God owns not any person under heaven, for such external painted excellencies, though men sometimes (through weakness) may admire them, and they may admire themselves, yet God owns not, on any such

account, see *Mat.* 7. 22, 23. *Luke* 13. 15, 16.

2. Sincerity of heart towards God in the faith, gives great boldness to the soul before the Lord, both here and hereafter.

1. Hear the sincere heart can appeal to the Lord in the most difficult case, when the Hypocrite must sink in his spirit, so *Hezekiah*, *Isa.* 38. 2, 3. *Remember Lord how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, &c.* and *Job* in his great tryal was supported and bold on this account, *Job.* 13. 15, 16. *I will maintain mine own ways before him, for an Hypocrite shall not come before him*, and 31. 6. *Let me be weighed in an even ballance, that God may know mine integrity.* O the boldness of a sincere soul, that dares to appeal to the Lord in the matter, and to say as *Peter*, *Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest I love thee.*

But the Hypocrite faints and sinks when God deals with him, *Prov.* 28. 1. *The wicked flee when none pursue, but the righteous are bold as a Lyon.*

2. Hereafter in the day of accounts, the great day of the Lord, who may abide it; sincerity then will be worth the world, then shall the righteous, sincere upright ones, *stand with great boldness before the Lord*, 1 *Joh.* 4. 17. *Herein is our love made perfect that we may have boldness in the day of Judgment.* Hypocrites shall then be ashamed

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and confounded, they shall *be speechless, the ungodly shall not stand in the Judgment, nor Sinners in the Congregation of the just*, then they shall be ashamed and confounded in their own spirits, knowing themselves to be Hypocrites, and *the Congregation of Hypocrites shall be desolate*, Job 15. 34. See Isa. 33. 14.

3. Sincerity will preserve the soul pure to God from sin, and keep the soul close and constant to God in duty. 1. It will preserve from sin, it is a wonderful preserving vertue, a sincere heart would not sin against God for a world, it not only preserves from the common sins of the time and place, but from the sins of mens callings and relations; and from the sins that men are by nature most inclined unto, *Psal.* 18. 33. 23. *I was also upright before him, and I kept my self from mine iniquity.* Sincerity will keep souls from the iniquity of their natures, to which they are most inclined, it will *pluck out the right eye, and cut off the right hand*; but Hypocrisie must have that spared and kept alive, the darling lust must live, though in the death of the owner thereof, *Psal.* 25. 21. *Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait on thee.*

2. It will keep the soul constant and close to God is duty, it makes conscience of every duty and service, private and publick, and keeps the soul in a right frame in

the performance thereof, that is, holy, humble, awfull, believing, and rejoycing in the Lord, its that will tend to compleat the soul in all the will of God; sincerity goes through with the work, does not half it with God, nor turn back in the day of tryal, but the Hypocrite is fleeting, and inconstant, *will not pray always*, doth nothing in conscience and love to the Lord, especially to private work and duty he is a stranger, looks not at the frame of his spirit in the work, but is too and fro, fast and loose with God, suitable to the time, occasion, and advantage of Profession.

Obj. *Obj.* Sincerity I perceive is a choice vertue, and all without it is nothing, but I find that I have much and many of the symptoms of hypocrisie in those discoveries, at best I come short in many of those ten particulars mentioned, (I therefore) fear how it is with me; I would not be a Hypocrite for a world, can you say any thing further about this matter, that I might more clearly and certainly know mine estate?

Answ. *Ans.* What I have said as to the discovery of the sincere soul from the Hypocrite, is plain and full, yet I shall mention two or three things more.

1. A sincere soul dreads to be a Hypocrite, he would not be a Hypocrite for all the world, he fears Hypocrisie as he doth any other sin; this is the experience of all sincere

ſincere Chriſtians, they watch their hearts in this matter, and keeps up a holy jealouſie of themſelves, becauſe they know that the heart is deceitful and treacherous; and therefore prayeth as the Prophet. *Pſal.* 119. 29. *Remove from me the way of lying, and grant me thy Law graciouſly, and in a gracious ſincere heart*; he knows that whatſoever is done in Hypocriſie, will prove but a lye in the end, and therefore dreads to be a Hypocrite, and ſaith as the Prophet, *v.* 163. *I hate and abhor lying, but thy law do I love.*

2. We are to diſtinguiſh between being a Hypocrite and Hypocriſie; Hypocriſie is a ſin of nature that all are inclined unto; there is the ſeed of all ſin in the nature of it, in the Saints, and but in part mortified, the difference lyeth in this; the ſincere heart deſireth and deſigneth truth and ſincerity in all, he would not be a Hypocrite nor have any hypocriſie to have any being in him, but the Hypocrite deſigns Hypocriſie, and ſo profeſſeth himſelf to be what he is not, and doth, or eaſily might know himſelf to be a Hypocrite.

The ſincere heart watches himſelf in the matter to find it out, and warreth againſt it, and mourneth in the ſenſe of his natural inclinations on that account; he judgeth it, and loaths himſelf for it as for any other evil: Pride and Hypocriſie will be appearing, but its the ſouls grief, and his deſire and endeavour is againſt it.

But the Hypocrite is in his Element, let his design be answered and he hath his end, he troubles not himself about sincerity, or if at any time conscience accuse, he searches not to the quick to find out the truth of the accusation, in order to deliverance, but stills and stifles convictions, and willingly silences conscience, laying it to sleep without any cure of the malady.

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CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

Of Election.

THough Election be first in order of time, yet not so in manifestation, relating either to God or man; God doth manifest it in time, and man comes to understand it after believing, 1 *Thes.* 1. 4. My manner and method of speaking to this great truth shall be, 1. To shew from Scripture what Election is; Election is the choosing and designing of some out of the lump of mankind, for the end by the Elector determined; I take Election, foreknowing and choosing, to be all one in sense and substance, and these are the Scripture terms about the matter, *Rom.* 8. 29. & 11. 2. 5. 7. *Eph.* 1.4. *What it is.*

To Elect or choose in the common sense of all men, imports a taking of some, and leaving others, it cannot import the electing and choosing of all, as some imagine, for in common sense, that is no choosing where all are taken, for where some are chosen others are left, *Mat.* 22. 14. *Many are call'd but few are chosen*; so that in the common sense of all men, divine and humane, we must understand Election to be

be a choosing of some persons out of (or from among) many, to the end determined by the chooser.

2. That God hath elected some.

2. That God hath elected and chosen some for himself from among men, and that before the world was, *i. e.* from Eternity; this appeareth from Scripture, 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. *Elect according to the fore knowledge of God the Father*, &c. or fore-ordained, as the same word is rendred, *ver.* 20. or fore-decreed, or as its rendred, *Rom.* 8. 29. *Fore-know, whom he did fore-know*, &c. that is, decree or ordain, and this for knowledge, ordaining and decreeing about the salvation of some men and women must be before time, *Eph.* 1. 4. *According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world*, that is, from Eternity, it is Gods eternal willing or purposing to save some in the way by him determined.

Obj. This choice seems to be in time, for they are *chosen in Christ Jesus*, and none are accounted to be in him before and without faith.

Answ. Its one thing to be actually in Christ by faith, and another to be elected and chosen in him before the world was; faith is the demonstration, and (in some measure) the accomplishment of this choice or election, which was in Christ Jesus before the world began, or for his sake decreed, ver. 5. *Having Predestinated us*, (or before set us apart) *unto the adoption of Children*

dren by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Where is a Predestination unto the Adoption of Children, before the Adoption was accomplished, and that *according to the good pleasure of his will*, which he purposed in himself; and its without all question, that in all things, and in relation to all persons, about this great work of Salvation, *He worketh all things according to the councell of his own will, ver.* 11. And why should we not believe the truth of God in relation to Election before time, (it being so plainly stated in Scripture) as well as believe the truth of that word, *Tit.* 1. 2. *In hope of Eternal life, which God that cannot lye, promised before the world began*; If God made promises to us in Christ Jesus before the world began, why should we think it strange for him to elect or choose for himself before the world began? 2. *Tim.* 9. *Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the World began*; all which demonstrates this truth, that true believers are, but what they were Elected and designed to before they were, and that they do, nor shall enjoy any thing but what was promised them in Christ Jesus, before the World was.

But 2. If we should let it pass for currant as some would have it, (which we may not doe) that is, that Elect persons were not

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in any sence considered as in Christ Jesus, before and without faith, yet the choice was *before the foundation of the World*; foreordained to believing, to sanctification, so that it answers not the end for which it is objected. And further, *Rom.* 9. 23. those Elected chosen ones are called, *the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared to glory*; all which confirms the truth of Election before time.

3. That this Electing, Choosing, Decreeing, and Ordaining love of God, was (as respecting the persons so chosen and elected) without any respect to any foreseen faith, or grace, or good in them, as the preceeding meritorious cause of election, (if any meritorious cause at all, it must be in Christ Jesus, in whom and for whose sake the election was) the truth hereof appears; that it was not for our goodness, faith, or holyness, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace that was given us in Christ Jesus*, &c. And *Rom.* 11. 5. *There is a remnant according to the Election of Grace*, and if it be of Grace, then it is not of work, as the Apostle reasons it, *ver.* 6.

Obj. Though it be not of works as the meritorious cause, yet it may be of works as the conditional cause, as in the matter of Justification.

Answ. Though Faith, &c. be the condition of Justification (according to the law of

of the new Covenant) which is effected in time, yet it is not the condition of election; the reasons thereof are,

1. Because its no where stated in the Scriptures, as the condition of Election, as Faith is the condition of Justification.

2. Because in reason it cannot be, for Election and choice was before time, and so could not be on the condition of what we had not, we were not, nor had not faith when Elected, therefore faith would not be the conditional cause of an act past in God before the supposed condition thereof was in being, that could not be either the meritorious or conditional cause of such an act; so that its evident that Election was of Grace and not of Work, whereas Justification is not till we believe and obey the truth.

4. To what persons are elected, and that is to believe and obey the Gospel, to be holy here, and happy hereafter, 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. *Elect, &c. Through Sanctification of the Spirit unto Obedience*: Obedience as the end, which includes faith and love, and all the divine vertues and duties of the Gospel, *through* (or by) *the Sanctification of the Spirit*; hence faith is said to be, *The faith of the operation of God*, *Col.* 2. 13. *Eph.* 1. 4. The end of the eternal choice is described to be; *That we might be holy, and that we might shew forth the praises of him that hath called us out of darkness* 4. *To what persons are elected.*

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into his marvellous light, 2 *Thes.* 2. 13. *God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation*, *Jam.* 2. 5. By all which it appears, that the end of God in his Electing grace was, that he might have a holy, obedient people, that might shew forth his praise, and be eternally saved and glorified in the world to come.

5. *How men may know their Election.*

5. How persons may come to know their Election of God, and that they are of the number of his Elected ones; God hath in his word opened a way by which his people may in a good and comfortable measure know their Election, 1 *Thes.* 1. 4. *Knowing Brethren, Beloved, your Election of God.* But how may we know our Election of God? *Answ.* When Gods ends of Election are effected in us, by that we may and must know it, if ever we rightly know it, when Faith, Love, Holyness, *&c.* is effectually wrought in us, by that we read our Election, the effects of electing Grace wrought in us, and this the Apostle clears, having asserted their knowing of their Election, *ver.* 4. he discovers how they came to know it, *ver.* 5, 6. by the effectual work of the Gospel in them, *Gods shedding abroad his love in the heart*, and uniting the heart to himself in truth of faith and love, is the alone way by which Christians may read their Election. So the Apostle for himself, 1 *Tit.* 1. declares himself to be *an Apostle, after the Faith of Gods Elect.* And how does he prove that?

that? *By the acknowledgment of the truth which is after Godlineſs*: and perſons that pretend to know their Election of God any other way, deceive themſelves.

6. The Reaſons why God Elected ſome to Salvation before the world was, are, 1. his love, his ſpecial love; its true that God had a love to all mankind, for they were, and are his, he made the nature of all in the firſt man, and determined the being or perſons of all in time, and loved all, *Joh.* 3. 16. *God ſo loved the world that he gave his Son*, &c. But herein is diſcovered his ſpecial everlaſting love, *Jer.* 31. 3. *Yea, I have loved thee with an everlaſting love*, &c. and this is the new Covenant love, a promiſe of Goſpel grace to the Spiritual Seed, as appeareth *Chap.* 30. 10. to the end, and *chap.* 31. throughout, here is the great and ſpecial love of God and of Chriſt, who *loved the Church and gave himſelf for it*, Eph. 5. 25. Even the *Univerſal Church of the First Born, whoſe names are written in Heaven*, Heb. 12. 23.

6. The reaſons why God elected ſome.

2. That his deſign of Salvation by Jeſus Chriſt might not be altogether fruſtrated, and come to none effect, for ſuch was the Metamorphis and change made in man by the Devil, and Sin in the Fall, being gone out from God, that he would never be willing rightly to return to him again, and this the Lord foreſaw, and therefore it

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stood with the honour of his whole name to choose some in his Son, to be made partakers of the life designed by him, that so our Lord Jesus might not suffer in vain, but might *see of the Travel of his soul and be satisfied*; it would have been infinitely below, and unbecoming an infinite God, to have entered upon such a work of such glorious concernment to his own name, and the good of sinners, and to be effected by so wonderful a way, as the sufferings of his own Son; without a certain fore-knowledge of its event, yea, and without the certain accomplishing of the whole after the council of his own will, and too low and base thoughts are they in men to think the contrary, as if God should go about such a work as a man, not determining the event before the undertaking, by which all his design and Christs sufferings might, nay, necessarily would have been in vain, that man was gone out from God, so as not (by his own will) to return again is evident, not only by experience, but by Scripture, *Ps.* 81. 11. *Job* 21. 14, 15. *Prov.* 1. 24, 25. *Rom.* 3. 11. to 17. with many like Scriptures to this purpose; wherefore it was necessary that God should give some to Christ, *John* 6. 39. (which are his Elected ones) that they might obtain the salvation designed, and he might not bestow all his labour

and

and sufferings in vain, *Isa.* 49. 4, 5, 6. read it at your leasure, and consider it well.

Obj. If God hath Elected some, it seems contrary to the Scripture that saith he is no respecter of persons, *&c.* *Obj.*

Answ. Its true that God is no respecter of persons, that is, of Jews above the Gentiles, which was the present occasion of those words, nor of any person one above another (according to the usual respect among men) *i. e.* for any good by nature in one more then another, for all were in their blood, that is, in their sin alike, enemies alike, and alike miserable. But some he purposed to magnifie his Mercy on to life, and fixes his choice on them according to his own will, without any respect of person; that is, of Goodlyness of Person, Beauty, Wisdom, Strength, Honour, Riches, good Nature, or the like, but rather the contrary, See 1 *Cor.* 1. 26, 27, 28, 29. *Jam.* 2. 5. and that from his own will and pleasure, *Luke* 20. 21. a wonderful and hidden mistery it is. *Answ.*

3. That he might glorifie the riches of his mercy in saving some, as well as of his Justice in condemning others. *Rom.* 9. 23. *That he might make known the Riches of his Glory on the Vessels of Mercy, which he had afore prepared to Glory*; *Ephe.* 1. 4, 5, 6. this was the ut-

most and final design of God, to glorifie the Riches of his Grace Eternally, in the Vessels of Mercy prepared to Glory.

CHAP.