

CHAP. XI.

Shewing how Faith is to be exercised at the Lords Table.

II. **W**hen you thus Consider the Blood of Christ in the Sacrament, *set Faith on work.* A Crucified Christ is the Object of justifying Faith; and one that hath a quick-sighted Faith, will perceive enough in the Blood of Christ, whereby he may resolve his doubts, scatter his fears, supply his wants; as that which is an universal Medicine against all Soul-distempers.

Let Faith make use of this Blood in re- spect of,	}	God, Satan, Your self.
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<i>Viz.</i> In	{	Appealing to God, Replying to Satan, Applying it to your self,
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First, when you are at the Lords Table, let your Faith be busied in appealing from this blood to God; after this manner:

Lord, of myself I am exceeding vile, even by Sin made worse than the very Beasts of the field, than the croaking Toad, or the most venomous Serpent; yet is not here precious Blood, which thy Son hath shed to make me precious in thy sight? Though without it I acknowledge I am loathsome and abominable before thee; yet by it I trust I shall become one of thy Jewels,

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one of those that are honourable in thine eyes: Lord, be not offended, for thou thy self thus speakest of thy people, else I durst not have thought it, had I not found thee thus speaking in thy Prophet, Isa. 43. 4. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee, O Lord, these are thy words, and I believe them, and am humbly bold through this precious blood, to apply them with it unto my self.

Lord, I have violated thy Law, and broken thy Covenant, and most fearfully sinned against thee, yet is not here satisfying blood? I was an Enemy unto thee, yet is not here reconciling blood? In this I do believe, thou art now my Friend, and my appeased God.

Lord, I was in worse than Egyptian Bondage, a Captive to the Devil, a very drudge and slave unto my lust; but is not here purchasing blood? am I not bought with it as with a price, which thy Son hath payed for my ransom? Through this I humbly trust I am delivered and redeemed, I am indeed under Soul-pressing wants: I want peace and comfort, I want love unto thee, and more holy fear and dread of thee; but is not here purchasing blood? And wilt thou be offended if I rely upon thee for supplies, especially since I ask nothing, but what this blood hath bought and purchased for me?

Lord, I have no righteousness of mine own, but what is as filthy rags before thee, when I would be justified in thy sight; I am ashamed of my prayers, and I blush to see my best performances, but is not here justifying blood? Is not a crucified Christ made of thee, to be righteousness to thy people? By thine assistance I fiducially will rely upon this Crucified Saviour, to make me righteous in thy pure eyes, and disclaiming all my Duties, reach forth the hand of Faith to be justified by this blood.

Lord,

Lord, I am a guilty Sinner, and my sins are both many for number, and heinous for their nature, and aggravating Circumstances: I have such a sinful heart within this breast, that I know not the man that hath a worse. If my Fellow-Communicants should know my heart they would look and stare upon me, to thy Disciple, should yet come with such a proud and worldly heart unto thy Table. I am guilty of sins against love and light, against thy mercy and thy judgments, against thy Spirit and my own Conscience; yea, against the very Law of Nature written in my heart, that a very Heathen would abhor to do what I have not blushed to do; yet is not here pardoning blood, that can pardon great sins as well as small, and many as easie as few? will not Mountain-sins as well as Mole-hill-sins be covered in this blood? Lord, thy Son hath dyed for these sins, therefore I trust I shall not be damned for these sins; though by them I have deserved greatest condemnation. Lord, for this blood I do believe that thou wilt pardon me, and by this blood wilt seal my pardon to me. I trust in this blood for a pardon; yea, in this will I trust that thou wilt pardon me.

Lord, I am not only guilty but polluted; Sin hath as well defiled me, as it would condemn me. Lord, I have a heart as black as Hell, as filthy and unclean as the unclean Spirits themselves; but is not here blood to wash me, as well as pardon me? To purge me from my filth, as well as save me from the guilt of all my sin? To this cleansing blood I bring my defiled Soul, and I will believe that thou wilt wrince, and make me clean. Lord, here is blood, and what may hinder but I may wash and be clean?

Lord, Sin hath stopped my mouth, and I cannot plead

plead my own cause before thy Majesty, but is not here pleading blood? Let that plead for me, this is my Advocate; my sins to plead against me, but here is blood that pleadeth for me, and I do believe thou wilt rather hear the pleadings of thy Sons blood for me, than the pleadings of my own sins against me.

Lord, my Soul is cast down within me, and I am often filled with thy terrors, till I am almost distracted: There are many things that do discomfort me; my sins they do discomfort me, and my very duties as I do perform them, do discomfort me; but is not here comforting blood? Oh this blood is *Aqua vitæ* to my swooning and dejected Soul. I will lay the mouth of my faith, to the bleeding wounds made in thy Son, and will suck and draw till my Soul is comforted.

Alas, O Lord, my sins have not only made me filthy, but have hardened my heart: Sometimes I may feel it to relent, and to give a little, but other whiles it is hard and stony within my breast; sometimes I think never heart so hard as mine; but is not here heart-softening blood? if there be not, let me go away as hardened as I came; but if there be, let me feel the virtue and the power of it, in making in me a heart of flesh. O Lord, I will lay my heart a steeping in this blood, and will believe that then it shall be softened.

Alas, O Lord, my sins are very strong and powerful within me, that sometimes I think they do not only rage but reign, sometimes they act so mightily in my heart, that I am apt to think there is nothing but sin in my Soul, and no principle of Grace to check and to controll it: My pride is strong, my passion is strong, and my lusts exceeding mighty; but is not
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Of the Lords Supper.

here sin mortifying blood, that can take down the strength and power of it? this blood hath subdued it in others, and now I will believe it will subdue it in my Soul!

Oh, my Lord, my heart is often dead and dull, that I cannot pray with life unto thee, that I cannot be lively in thy Service; fain I would, but lo my heart is dead, and cannot: But is not here quickning and enlivening blood? why then wilt thou Suffer such a heart to be in me? Lord wilt thou give me leave to apply it to myself, that I may be quickned to thy Service? Yea I know it is thy will I should so do: Now Lord my heart is warm.

Thus you may in respect of God, by Faith, make use of all the Properties of the blood of Christ, you may go on in all the rest. Let it suffice that I have shewed you how Faith may be set on work in the former particulars.

Secondly, When you thus consider the blood of Christ in the Sacrament, *set Faith on work to reply unto the Devil*. He will be with you at the Sacrament, to rob you of the comfort, and hinder you from that joy that there you might be filled with; but by faith in the blood of Christ you may resist him. And whatsoever his Accusations are, from some of these properties of the blood of Christ, you may put the Devil unto silence.

Doth the Devil cast your sins in your teeth, and rank them in order before your eyes? Doth he tell you of your pride, and Ignorance? Doth he tell you of your formal Duties, and your want of close walking with God? You may reply, *Oh mine Enemy! So far as there is truth in thine accusation, I am as willing to accuse my self: yea, before I came unto this Ordinance, thou heardest me accuse, and*
judge

judge, and condemn my self; but lo, O mine Enemy! here is blood that hath been shed for me, that was not shed for thee; here is blood to purchase pardon for my sins, which was not shed to pardon thee: Oh, how would such a believing Reply make the Devil to sink away, and leave thee to make the best improvement that thou canst of this holy Supper! What sayest thou, Oh thou Enemy of my Souls Salvation and Comfort? Hast thou ought to lay unto my Charge? It may be he will tell thee of the hardness of thy heart; but thou mayst reply, Because I found and felt it hard, therefore I came unto this Blood to have it softned: What now Satan! It may be he will tell thee of thy dulness in thy holy Duties: Thou mayst reply, I did indeed to the grief and burthen of my Soul, find too much deadness upon my heart; and therefore I have brought it to the quickening blood of my dearest Lord, and he will put life into me. What now, Oh mine Enemy! Indeed there is nothing that Satan can charge upon you, or bring against you, but from one of these properties of the blood of Christ, you may put him to the worst. You may go on in any of the rest, as you have occasion to make use of them.

Thirdly, when you thus consider the blood of Christ, you may set Faith on work, in applying it to your self; and stopping the mouth of your own Conscience, clamouring against you at the Lords Table, or else rightly and justly accusing of you: For Conscience may know more evil by you than the Devil can, viz. many vain thoughts, and inward sinful workings of your heart: But you may use some of these Excellencies of the blood of Christ, upon grounds sufficient to quiet and to allay

allay it; after this manner: *Thou tellest me, Oh my Conscience, of such blasphemous, vain, distracting thoughts! and I do subscribe unto my accusations; but lo, Oh my Conscience! here is blood that hath satisfied God, and wilt not thou be satisfied? Here is blood that hath reconciled God unto me, notwithstanding those my sins; and Oh my Conscience, wilt not thou then be reconciled unto me? For the sake of this blood, God is at peace with me, and wilt thou not? Thus may you procure peace of Conscience, and upon lasting grounds go away with a firm peace concluded betwixt your self and your self.*

Let Faith make particular application of this blood in all its Vertues and Efficacies, and say, *Look here, Oh my Soul! Here is pardoning blood, and it is thine; Here is quickning, softening blood, and it is thine; here is justifying, sanctifying, pleading blood, and this belongs to thee.* Thus for the drawing forth of Faith to do its work at the Lords Supper.

CHAP. XII.

Shewing how Love, Desire, and other Graces are to be exercised in the Sacrament.

II. **W**Hen you thus consider the Blood of Christ, then draw forth *holy Love* to do its part, as Faith has done its. And indeed, when Faith goeth thus before, it will be more easie to act all the rest. Let but Love see with Faiths Eyes,

Eyes, and it will quickly be inflamed. Let Faith make application, and love will quickly feel the benefit of it, and shew it in its actings: Oh how will Love flutter in your breast, when it shall behold that precious blood that did redeem you, and reconcile you unto God! Oh then bespeak your Love for God and Christ: *Look here, O my Soul! what love was this in God, to give his Son for thee! what love was this in Christ, to give his life and blood for thee! precious blood for a vile and worthless sinner! O look again. O my Soul! here is pardoning blood for thee a sinner, here is softning blood for thee an hardened sinner, and here is reconciling blood for thee, who wast once an Enemy to God. Oh what love is this! Oh never love like to this! Hath God and Christ thus loved thee, Oh my sinful Soul! and wilt not thou love him back again? Hath God sent his Son to dye, and said unto him, O my well-beloved Son, go and dye for ~~order~~ sinner, and thereby commend my love unto him. O Lord, this love of thine doth overcome me? O Lord, thou hast out loved me, if now my love were better, thou shouldst have it, but such as it is thou shalt have it, Make it more, and make it better, and still it shall be set upon thee. Oh my Soul, canst thou behold justifying blood, and not love him that shed it for thee? Canst thou behold precious, quickning, softning blood, and not love him that laid it down to quicken, and to soften thy heart, and redeem thee from Hell, and Sin, and Wrath.*

III. When you thus Consider the blood of Christ, then let desires be upon the wing, to fetch in unto your Soul such things that this blood, by its efficacy and vertue doth purchase and procure. O! here is pardoning blood. O! that I could have the
pardon

pardon of my sins! Here is sealing blood: Oh that I could have my pardon sealed and confirmed to my Soul! Oh that now my sin might be subdued by this blood! Oh that now my dull heart might be enliven'd by this blood! Oh that now my wounded soul, and troubled Conscience, might be healed and comforted by this blood! Oh that now I may receive more degrees of love to God, and faith in Christ, which this blood hath purchased for me! Oh that now my poor distressed Soul may have rich experience of this softning, quickning, healing vertue of the blood of Christ, which he hath so willingly, and so freely poured out for me.

IV. When you thus look upon the blood of Christ, let your Soul rejoyce in God; and call upon all the powers of your Soul to joy and to delight in God and Christ. Oh! Can you think that by this blood you are justified and pardoned, and not rejoyce? that you are redeemed and reconciled by this blood, and not rejoyce? Is it possible you should feel the quickning power, and comforting influences of this blood, and not rejoyce? Is it possible you should believe that this blood is pleading for you, and not rejoyce? O Lord, my Soul doth joy in thee; my Soul doth magnifie the Lord my Redeemer: Oh how good it is to be here! Oh what comfort is this my Soul is thus delighted with! Oh what joy is this I feel so warm about my heart! There is no joy like unto it, I never found any like unto it.

V. When you thus consider the blood of Christ in all those excellencies, Oh then be grieved that you have so long neglected it! that you did that which was the cause why precious blood was spilt; that you should thrust your Sin into his side, to fetch this blood from his very heart. Oh Lord, was I the cause this blood was shed? was it
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my pride and vain glory, that did set a Crown of Thorns upon this Crucified bleeding Christ? Was it my unbelief and my apostacy from God that broached his blessed heart, from whence I see these streams of Blood so plentifully gushing forth, that I may be washed therein, and justified thereby? What, was I the cause of it, and yet, must I have the benefit of it? Did Christ suffer me to murder him, and stab, and pierce his very heart, and then pardon me, and save me when he had done? O Lord, my Soul is grieved, my heart is sorrowful: O that I had never sinned! Lord, I hope if my sins were undone again, I should never do them. Oh that since this blood is shed, it might fall upon my heart, that it may be dissolved into tears! Oh that my eye may weep, when I see my Saviours heart to bleed: Oh that my heart may be rent asunder, when I see my Saviours flesh to cleave asunder, that this Blood may issue forth.

Is this Blood such quickning Blood? Then, Lord, I am ashamed that my heart hath been, and is so dull; that I have brought such a dead heart to behold my dying Lord: But if it be a quickning Blood, then, O that I might feel and find it to be so?

Is this such pleading Blood? Then, Lord, what did I mean, when I did plead so long against it? When I framed Arguments and Excuses to keep me from coming under the power and influence of it?

Is this indeed such mortifying Blood? Oh then, what did I do when I did neglect to bring my lusts unto it, but to consult how they may live, when Christ had dyed that they may be subdued?

Is there so many precious Excellencies in this Blood of Christ? Oh sinner, wretch, and fool that I was, that did prefer any thing, every thing so long before it, and have so often trampled it underfoot.

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But must I joy and sorrow too? Will not either sorrow keep me from rejoycing, or rejoycing prevent my sorrowing? No, both these may be, both these *must* be: this mixture, medly of affliction, doth well become a Believer at the Lords Table. You may mourn that your sins did put Christ to death, and yet you may rejoyce that Christ hath, would die for your Sins.

VI. When you thus consider the Blood of Christ, then let your Soul *bate and abhor your sin that was the cause of its effusion*, and would have hindred (if mercy had not prevented) its effectual, timely application. Oh that now your heart might rise against your sins, and that you might hate them while you live, with a perfect and implacable hatred! You do not love to see the Knife that killed your Friend, and will you love to think upon that Sin that killed your Lord? Or will you ever do it with delight? *Oh, badst thou any Love unto thy Lord, Oh my Soul! thou couldst not then but hate thy Sin. Oh now my Soul! be wrought up to a beighned resolution, with greatest indignation and abhorrence to cast away thy Sins. Now, Lord. I see that thou hast loved me, and I will hate my sins; and the more I taste of the sweetness of the blood of Christ, the more thou wilt cause my Soul to hate my Sin.*

Thus I have given you my thoughts for your satisfaction in this question. How you should consider the blood of Christ in the Sacrament, and have your graces exercised when you so consider it?

CHAP. XIII.

Conclusion 5. Shewing the necessity of Examination after the Sacrament.

THAT such as are partakers of the Lords Supper, should enquire after participation, what benefit they have received thereby.

There are some that before the Duty, take no pains to prepare themselves, and after the Duty do not reflect how they went, nor enquire what is that they got. *After-Reflection* is necessary as well as *Previous Examination*. What good have I got? should be a Question we should put to our selves after every Duty we do perform. Had I any warmth of affection in it? Have I any more love to God, more desires after him, more ability to duty, to bear affliction, to resist temptation, to walk with God? This you should do after every prayer you make, after every Sermon you hear, at the end of every Sabbath, and after every Sacrament you receive. For want of this reflection, these evils follow.

First, for want of this, many think they be better, when indeed they be the worse. For want of strict and narrow Examination before the Sacrament, they think they have faith in Christ, love to God, and repentance for their sins; but what they had was but a Counterfeit of Faith and Love, and other Graces, as Hypocrites may have: So for want of reflection after the Sacrament, they might think they had some workings of Faith, and Love, and sorrow for Sin, and joy in God; and yet it
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was not so, but something like to these, as Hypocrites might sometimes have in their attendance upon God at his Table, and in hearing of the Word, and other Duties. Hypocrites might shed many tears at a Sacrament, and might have some flashes of Joy through a false apprehension that this Christ did dye for them, and hath applyed his blood unto them, and that they are partakers of the benefits of his Death, as Grace, Pardon, Hopes of Heaven, &c. and yet shall be for ever damned for not having any of these in truth and in reality; and this mistake is very dangerous, and oftentimes pernicious: In as much as it doth strengthen the *presumption* of these mens hearts, when they do think their Faith is strengthened, and are more confirmed in their false hopes of Heaven and Eternal Life, and often go away rejoycing at the thoughts of their good Condition, and yet might lye for ever roaring amongst the Damned, for their folly and mistake; and might bless God for that which they thought they received from him at the Sacrament, and yet might be for ever cast from God, because they had not that Grace which they thought they felt working in their hearts therein; therefore After-examination is necessary.

Secondly, for want of Examination after the Sacrament, *you will be kept from After humiliation, and Repentance for your sins committed at the Table of the Lord.* If you did review and look back upon the frame of your heart, and find you have miscarryed in your work and management of your Duty, you should see what cause you have of lying low before the Lord for so great a Sin, as to get no good by such an Ordinance, that tends so much

much to promote the work of Grace in the hearts of them that come worthily to the same. Your Heart, when the Minister broke the Bread, was not broken for your Sin; When you took the bread, your heart was dull and dead, and did not reach forth the hand of Faith, to lay hold upon Christ and his Benefits, and apply them to your self, and so did play the Hypocrite before God and your fellow Communicants: When the Wine was poured forth, and you saw how Christ did shed his Blood for sinners, you could not drop a Tear for your sins that caused it; or if you did, it was not from a heart sensible of your Sin, or of Gods love unto your Soul; when you took the Cup and drank thereof, you did not remember Christ as you should have done: And while you were present at this Table, your mind was filled with distracting Thoughts, and your thoughts were wandring when they should have been fixed on God and Christ: And how shall you be humbled for this, if you do not reflect that you are guilty of such Sins? And how shall you confess this before the Lord upon your Knees, when you do not afterwards consider how it was with you at that time? And how great a Sin is this, and how bad is your heart, neither to be affected at the Table of the Lord, nor to be afflicted in your Soul after you are gone, that it was not so with you! This was your Sin, while you were there, that you got no good thereby; and this is also your Sin, that you do not bewail it when you come away? Whereas it should be lamented from one Sacrament to another, that your heart was indeed so bad and out of frame, when it should have been Delighting in God, and

Loving of God, and Sorrowing for your Sin.

Thirdly, For want of examination after the Sacrament, *you might receive good and not perceive it, nay, perhaps deny it.* As many have Grace, and yet think they have none; so many here might receive good, and yet think it is not so: You go away and soon forget the workings of God upon your heart, and the workings of your heart towards God; and so are tempted to believe it was no otherwise with you, than it may be with Hypocrites in this Ordinance: And because you do not seriously consider, and faithfully keep in your remembrance the experiences you had from God, while you were there, you yield to this temptation when you are come away.

Fourthly, For want of reflection after the Sacrament, *you are not so thankful after the duty is done, for what you did receive, as else you would be.* Many Hypocrites go away and rejoyce when they should mourn; and many gracious Souls go away and mourn, when they should rejoyce; and both because they do not afterwards reflect upon the inward working of their hearts, to judge of them according to what indeed they were, God did come into your heart and humble it; God did come into your heart and break it; God did come into your heart, and caused it to abhor your Sin, and to long after Christ, which you should remember while you live, to adore the riches of his Grace, that he should look upon such Sin and Dust as you are, and cause you to feel such operations of his Spirit, that every time you go into secret, you should give him thanks for these his workings upon your heart: But how shall this be done, if you do not often reflect how it was with you, when you were there?

Fifthly,

Fifthly, For want of reflection after the Sacrament, *you will oftentimes take up with the bare performance of the duty, and rest in the work done;* and rest satisfied that you have eat and drunk at the Table of the Lord; though you have not eaten the flesh of Christ, nor drunk his blood: and it is too great a sign that you rest in the work done, when you do not consider afterwards how you have done it, nor enquire, Did I please the Lord while I was eating? Did I please the Lord while I was drinking at his Table? Did I eat in Faith, & drink in Faith? Did I find God coming down into my Soul by his Grace and Spirit, and my Soul ascending up to God by Faith and Love?

Sixthly, For want of this reflection after the Sacrament, *you will not be so earnestly desirous after renewed opportunities of Receiving, nor have such longings in your Soul to come again.* One would think that the entertainment which God gives unto his People at his Table, the smiles that there they see in his Face, the love that there they perceive to be in his Heart, and the favours there they receive from his Hands, should stir up in their hearts such earnest breathings as these. Oh when might I come again! Oh when shall I be thus refreshed again! Christ was exceeding sweet unto my Soul; his Comforts were delightful to my heart; Oh when shall I return again unto this Table, that I might have more of that which on such a day I found! But if this be so much out of your thoughts, the other will be too much out of your desires.

Seventhly, For want of this reflection after the Sacrament, *you will be less experienced, and less acquainted with the workings of your own hearts.* If

you reflect upon what your heart did promise when you were there, and how you have come short of your promise, how your heart did work in hatred unto sin, and how afterwards (if it be not strictly watched) it will be ready to consent and yield unto it: if you thus compare your self, what you are at the Sacrament, and what your heart would be if not heedfully observed afterwards, you would be more acquainted with the deceitfulness of your own heart.

Eighthly, for want of this reflection after the Sacrament, *you will be fuller of doubts, and more empty of comforts than else you would be.* Sometimes God did so powerfully work upon your heart when you were at his Table, in drawing forth your love to him, your hatred to, and sorrow for your sins, that you could not deny that you had grace: But at another time you might lose the sence of this, when it might not be so with you, & then the Devil doth assault you, to perswade you that you have no grace, because now you do not feel the workings of it; but if you would reflect how it was with you such a time at the Sacrament, you might repel this temptation: Though I do not now find the lively workings of my love to God, yet at *such a time* in the Sacrament I did; though *now* I do not find my heart to break, but is dull and out of frame, yet *such a day* in the Sacrament I did: Then I found my sins my burthen, and the breaking of my heart: Then I did feel my heart to burn in love to God & Christ; and this will help to resolve your present doubts, and to expel your present fears, and to resist this temptation of the Devil: But if you do not reflect, you might lose so good an evidence of the truth of your grace.

Ninthly.

Ninthly, For want of this Reflection after the Sacrament, *you will be a grief to the Spirit of God*, whether you did meet with God or no; whether it was well or ill with you when you were there; *If you did meet with God*, and if he did comfort your heart, or humble you for sin, and do not reflect, you grieve the Spirit of God, that he was so kind and loving unto you, and you so soon forget it, to be thankful for it; *If you did not meet with God*, and do not reflect, you grieve the Spirit, that though he absented himself from your Soul, you do so soon forget it to be humbled for it.

Tenthly, It argues *your end was not so right as it should have been*; had you aimed indeed at Communion with God, and encrease of Grace, would you not enquire whether you had attained your end?

Eleventhly, It argues *great carelesness of heart*, and too great a slighting of the benefits of the Sacrament; did you esteem them, you would enquire whether you had enjoyed them.

Twelfthly, It argues *you are not so wise for your Soul, as you are for your Body*; not so wise for the things of Heaven, as for the things of this World; for after you have been trading for the things of this Life, you will cast up your accounts to see what are your gains, and what is added to your stock.

Thirteenthly, *This will provoke God in after-duties to withdraw from you*, and to deny that to you in following Ordinances, which you would not so much as enquire whether you had got in former Duties.

Fourteenthly, *You may decline in Grace, and be*

on the losing hand; and not easily and quickly perceive it, and fall into a frame of dulness before you are aware.

Therefore let it be your constant practice, as to examine your self before, that you may know your fitness for this Duty; so to examine your self afterwards, that you may know whether you are the better or the worse by this Duty; for every one is made better or made worse by coming to the Lords Table. Physick makes the Body better or worse: All God's Ordinances will have their operation. The Word is a savour of life or death to every one that hears it, 2 Cor. 2. 15, 16. So many are the worse by coming to the Lords Table, 1 Cor. 11. 17. *You come together not for the better, but the worse*: That you are not better, is *satis culpabile*, sufficiently blame worthy: but that you are the worse, this is *mali auxesis*, the aggravation of your sin. *Grande id nefas, quando medicina non modo non proficit aegro, sed in venenum vertitur*. It goes ill with that man whose Food and Physick is turned into Poyson, and proves to be his bane; not for his profit, but his detriment.

Here for your satisfaction, I shall enquire after these things.

1. *What are the causes that some go to the Lords Table, and receive no benefit thereby?*
2. *How may a Believer know when he doth receive benefit thereby?*
3. *What must a believer do, if upon this search he findeib some advantage by this Ordinance? And what if he doth not.*

C H A P. XIV.

Containing the Reasons why some receive no benefit by the Lords Supper.

THE Reasons why some are not the better by going to the Lords Table, are such as these:

First, *Because they are not habitually prepared for it*; they have not those necessary qualifications, nor habitual graces that must be in that mans heart that shall be benefited by the Sacrament: they had no life, & therefore are not capable of growth and nourishment. Growth of grace supposeth truth of grace: They that have not first received a *whole* Christ in the Gospel in all his Offices, cannot receive a *broken* Christ in the Sacrament: They are not united unto Christ, and where there is no union, there can be no communion; they are not ingrafted into Christ, and therefore they receive no fruit from the Cross of Christ. All the benefit that must come in by the Sacrament, must be by the exercise of grace, of faith, and love, and sorrow for sin, &c. but they that have it not, cannot exercise it.

Secondly, *Because many that are habitually prepared, may be too slight in actual preparation*; They did not seriously, thoroughly search their hearts and lives, nor enquire after their sins and wants: they do not solemnly, but slightly pray to God before hand: They do not quicken their hungings after Christ, nor go with great, believing

expectations of receiving great things from God in this duty.

And God will check you at his Table, by withdrawing himself from you, for your neglect before you came: It may be you were busie about the World, when you should have been preparing for your Duty: It may be you were in your Shop, when you should have been in your Chamber, or your closet: It may be God saw you reading your Account-book, when you should have been reading the History of the Death of Christ in the Book of God, and should have been studying the Book of your own heart: God saw you thinking of the World, when you should have been endeavouring to have warmed your heart in the believing thoughts of the Love of God, in the great transactions of Man's Redemption.

Thirdly, Because *after diligent actual preparation, you have rested in your foregoing duties, and expected that for your preparations sake, which you must only receive for Christs sake.* It is hard to make diligent preparations, and then deny them when we have done, and expect all through Christ; and after our most serious preparations, to acknowledge them as nothing, and that it will be Free Grace if God discover himself unto us at his Table. Sometimes you may observe, that after greatest enlargements in secret preparation, you have been most straitned in the duty; Not that God is displeased with your diligence in preparation, but that you lay too great a stress upon your previous duties, and mounted them up above their place, and would have made a Christ of your duties, and would have detracted from the merits of Christ, in hoping that from God,
because

Of the Lords Supper.

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because you had prepared, which you must only hope for, because Christ hath dyed: Not but that you may, and ought to look after your Prayers which you make, and see what returns the Lord doth give you; but there is a difference between an expectation of good things from God *according* to your prayers and preparations; and between an expectation of good things from God *for* your prayers and preparations; and yet you may disclaim this in word, and in your heart secretly too much rely upon them.

Fourthly, Because *God is offended that some sweet and secret sin is too much favoured*. Though there might be no reigning sin in you which is inconsistent with the state of grace, yet there might be too much connivance and favour shewed to some particular Sins: The reason why God smiles no more upon your Soul at his Table, may be, because you frown no more upon your Sins. God shews no more mercy to you at his Table, because you shew no more severity against your Sin; and must not God take it unkindly when you come to commemorate the death of his Son with too much kindness in your heart to sin, that was the cause of his death?

Fifthly, Because *you were too remiss; and let down your Spiritual Watch in the time of receiving*. You lost holy time at the holy Sacrament, by entertaining of, and being filled with vain distracting thoughts; when you are there, you should be careful to do nothing else, and to think of nothing else, but what is pertinent to the duty you are engaged in; your own heart will be frequently stragling if you do not keep it, and the Devil will be injecting thoughts of things of another nature:

or will fill your minds with thoughts of holy things, but not pertinent to your present work: And if you would receive benefit by your receiving, you must say to Satan, as *Nehemiah* to *Sanballat*, when he would have diverted him from building of the Wall, *Neh. 6. 2, 3, 4.* *Sanballat* sent to him, saying, *Come let us meet together in some one of the villages; but they thought to do me mischief.* And I sent Messengers to him, saying, *I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down; why should the work cease, while I leave it and come to you? Let them sent unto me four times after that sort, and I answered them after the same manner.* When you are receiving, the Devil would parley with you, but it is to do you mischief, therefore reply unto him, *I am doing a great work, so that I have no time to entertain thy suggestions. O mine enemy! I have other things to think upon; here is the death of my Lord, and his love in dying for me, to think upon; and why should this work cease, while I entertain thy suggestions? So far as your thoughts wander, so far your work at the Lords Table stands still.* And if Satan sollicite you four or more times, still answer after the same manner; be as constant in resisting, as he is in soliciting, and you will find benefit by the duty, if you ply your work when you are there.

Sixthly, Because you have not conscientiously endeavoured to live up to resolutions made in former receivings. Did you not there promise, if God would please to manifest himself unto you, and warm your Heart, and pardon your Sin, and speak peace unto your Soul, you would carefully avoid the like Transgressions? That you would resist Satans Temptations, and be better in every relation

relation, and fill up the duties that God requires at your hands? That you would pray more, and pray better; That you would take heed of after-paſſion, if God would pardon your former paſſion? And yet you have come ſhort of all this, not only through unavoidable infirmity, but through careleſſneſs and letting down your Spiritual Watch. When the Temptation hath aſſaulted you again, you have quietly yielded again, and God hath ſeen as much uncircumſpection in your Converſation as before; and do you think the next time you do receive, that God will not make you go away without the comfort of his Ordinance, who deny to him the care of your converſation? If you would have God to do you good by his Ordinances, you muſt walk ſo holily, when one Ordinance is over, that you may meet with God in another, or in the ſame at another time.

CHAP. XV.

Shewing how we may know whether we get good by coming to the Lords Supper.

THAT you may know whether you receive benefit to your Soul by coming to the Lords Supper, you muſt be careful that you do not Miſtake; To prevent which, let me preſiſe,

First, Take heed that you do not conclude, you have no benefit at all becauſe you have not ſo much as you perceive ſome other Chriſtians to have: For Gods discoveries to his People are arbitrary and gradual

gradual, when he will, to whom he will, and in what measure he will.

Secondly, Take heed that you do not conclude, *you have no benefit at all, if you have not so much as you hoped for, or expected.* You aimed at much and found but little, yet do not say it was altogether an empty Ordinance to your Soul.

Thirdly, Take heed that you do not conclude, *you have no benefit at all, if you have it not in that particular and kind that you looked for:* It may be you may aim at a great deal of comfort and joy when you went; and God may deny you that, and make you to sorrow and be broken more for your sins; this is spiritual benefit, though not in that way as you looked for it.

Fourthly, Take heed you do not conclude the Sacrament *doth you no good at all, if you do not sensibly perceive it in the very act of Receiving,* or while you are actually under the Ordinance; To have no benefit by it then, is very sad and uncomfortable; but yet limit not the efficacy of the Ordinance only to the time of receiving, but observe how it works with you after it is past; it may be sometimes you may mourn more, and rejoyce more afterwards, than when you were at the Table. Now to resolve your doubt, consider, *you do get real benefit by the Lords Supper.*

First, When you find *your heart thereby more strongly engaged to inward and universal holiness.* When you feel your heart more obliged to walk with God with more circumspection and care than you did before.

Secondly, When you find *your Faith is more increased,* you can rely upon Christ more fiducially than you could before; when you went, you did
purpose

purpose to take Christ upon his own terms, but when you come away, your purpose is more settled, and you are more resolved in Christs way. to venture the everlasting concernments of your Soul upon him.

Thirdly, When you find *your love to Christ hereby to be more inflamed*: You loved him truly before, but now you love him strongly; your Soul is sick while he is absent, but when he is with you, you are satisfied; he now dwelleth more in your thoughts than before he did, a sign you love him more than before you did.

Fourthly, When *Communion with God in the Sacrament is obtained*, and God gives you the meeting. The Ordinance then will certainly do you good, when you find your grace go forth in exercise towards God, and the Spirit of God breathing upon your Soul by the powerful influences thereof affecting of you.

Fifthly, When *your Spiritual delight and joy in God and Christ is more raised*: Before you did delight too much in the World, and in your Friends, and in your Riches, and less in Christ; but now more in Christ, and less in these; When you think of God you can rejoyce; when you speak of Christ, your Soul triumpheth in him.

Sixthly, When *your Soul under the sight and sense of sin is more deeply humbled*. If you have not joy in a Sacrament, yet if you have more ingenuous sorrow for your sin, God hath done you good thereby: If you do not come away with a rejoyceing heart, yet if you come away with a weeping eye, proceeding from a truly contrite Spirit, bless God for his mercy to you in that Ordinance.

Seventhly, When *corruption and sin is more bated*

bated, and becomes more loathsome to your Soul: When the thoughts of sin are more loathsome to you than the acting of it formerly were; when you groan more under the weight and load of sin, and do set your self more resolvedly against it.

Eightly, When your desires after full enjoyment of God and Christ in glory are more enlarged: Here you feel the workings of his Spirit, that makes you long to behold his face in his glorious Kingdom, that the little taste you have of Gods manifested love unto your Soul, makes you almost impatient till God shall take you to himself.

Ninthly, When your heart is more suspected, and you walk with a greater Holy Jealousie, that you do not lose the end of your going; and that you have a holy fear, that you break not Covenant with God, when his vows are upon you.

Tenthly, When you set a high valuation and esteem upon this Ordinance, and prefer it before your necessary food, and find that your Soul desires, you may come again for this very end, that you might meet with more of God another time.

Eleventhly, When you are more strengthened and emboldened to undergo the loss of all things for Jesus sake: When you see how Christ hath suffered for you, even unto death, you now count not your very life too dear to lay down for Christ.

Twelfthly, When you come away truly thankful for what you had, and truly sorrowful you had no more; If you come away sorrowful, thinking you have not met with Christ, that very sorrow proves you did meet with Christ, else you had not sorrowed when you think you missed of him: By such things as these judge.

CHAP. XVI.

Shewing how we are to Live after we have been at the Lords Supper.

IF you did find no benefit, then do these three things.

First, Examine *what may be the cause* why God with-held the benefit of the Ordinance from you: Why it was, it proved an empty duty unto you.

Secondly, *Greatly bewail this before the Lord*, that through your own miscarriage, you should lose the great advantage that might have been received.

Thirdly, *Labour to feel the benefit of the Sacrament by Repentance, and exercise of Faith upon Christ, when the Duty is over; And pray for the efficacy of it.*

If you have had good success, do likewise three things.

First, *Give to God the Glory of it; take you the Comfort, give God the Glory.*

Secondly, *The more good you get, the more frequent it: It is good to be often there where you meet with God.*

Thirdly. *Let your Conversation after the Sacrament witness the good that you receive in and by the Sacrament: You say so, live so, that all may see it: An holy, suitable conversation, in living up to Sacramental Obligations, will convince your self and others, that there is some real good, that you do get by attending upon God therein.*

But

But alas! how few do live as becometh those that have been at the Table of the Lord! If you did but listen to their discourse as soon as they are gone from this Ordinance, you should hear some talking presently of the World, or of something impertinent to what they have been about: If you did but follow them from the Lords Table to their own, what unfavoury words should you hear from them! How frothy and vain is their discourse! And if you observe their actions, even upon the same day, and sometimes in the same hour that they have been eating and drinking at the Table of the Lord, you would perceive that they have presently forgot where they have been, and what they have been doing, and the obligations that there were laid upon them to live better. You should see one drunk with passion, another filled with carnal mirth, another careless in the after-duties of the Sabbath: trace them in their lives in the week following, and you shall see them as worldly, as vain, as negligent as others that never had been at such an Ordinance.

Therefore that I might be instrumental (and Oh that I may) to stir you up to live as becomes those that frequent the Lords Table, I shall speak to these three things.

First, *why you should give all diligence in endeavouring to live suitably to the obligations laid upon you at the Table of the Lord.*

Secondly, *How you should live and walk after the Sacrament, that your conversation might be suitable to your Sacramental Obligations.*

Thirdly, *What are the Aggravations of this sin, in not living as becometh those that have been at the Table of the Lord,*

First,

First, It requires your utmost diligence to endeavour to live suitably to the Sacrament, if you consider,

1. *That your privilege is greater than the privileges of many others, whom God doth not invite nor call (while such) to come unto his Table. God honours you above the wicked in the World, above the ungodly and prophane; and the greater your privilege and dignity is, the greater should your diligence be in living up to after-duties. Mephibosheth esteemed it a great dignity and favour that he should eat bread at King David's Table, 2 Sam. 9. 7, 8. And is it not a greater dignity to eat of the Bread of Life, at the Table of the King of Heaven?*

2. *The Devil will be assaulting you with new temptations, to draw you unto sin, after you have been at the Table of the Lord. If God hath spoken peace unto your Conscience, the Devil will be endeavouring to break your peace; If you have got a pardon of your old sins, he will be tempting you again to the commission of new; and the greater discoveries you have had of God. when you were there, the greater will his temptations be to draw you into sin, when you come from thence. When Christ was Baptized, and God had owned him, by a voice from Heaven, then he was tempted by the Devil, Mat. 3. 17. & 4. 1. And if the Devil will be diligent to tempt you after such a Duty, should not you be diligent to resist him? Or, if you be not, is it not likely you will do something that will be unbecoming one that hath been at this Ordinance? Let your self be Judge.*

3. *You are to go again in the following Week unto your worldly business and employments, and to trade in things below; and how soon will you lose the sense*

sense of Gods love and the sweet delights your Soul was filled with, by dealing in the world, if you are not watchful ?

4. *Your own heart is apt to grow cold and dull again, after you have been warmed and heated in the Sacrament ;* Therefore you must be diligent after such a duty. The water that is heated by the fire still retains a principle that reduceth it to its former coldness, when it is removed from the fire ; and so doth your heart.

Secondly, If you would walk and live as becometh one that hath been at the Table of the Lord, you must,

1. *Endeavour to live and walk as Christ did,* when he was here upon the Earth. When you have been commemorating Christs death, you must come away purposing to imitate his life. For as Christ in his sufferings hath left us an example how we ought to suffer, 1 Pet. 2. 21. So Christ in his life hath left us an example how we ought to live, 1 John 2. 6 Then you will walk suitably to that Ordinance, which is a Commemoration of Christs death, when you tread in his steps while he lived upon the Earth.

2. *walk and live as one that is redeemed by the Blood of Christ should live.* In the Sacrament you have seen the greatness of the price that was paid for you to redeem you from the Torments of Hell, from the Wrath of God, the Curse of the Law, the Power of Sin : Here it is, you see you are redeemed and bought, and therefore you are no longer your own, but his that died for you ; 1 Cor. 6. 19, — *And ye are not your own ;* ver. 20. *For ye are bought with a price ; therefore glorifie God, in your Body, and in your Spirit, which are Gods.*

Oh how should a man redeemed from eternal torments walk and live?

3. *Walk and Live as one that hath been sealed up to the day of Redemption should live.* In the Sacrament you do not only see that you are redeemed; but also that you are sealed unto the day of Redemption: You are assured of Heaven and eternal Life, and Oh how should a person that in the Sacrament hath had the Seal of the Covenant of grace assuring him of Life and Glory, walk and live!

4. *Walk and live as one to whom the Lord hath spoken peace should live.* In the Lords Supper God hath told you, he is reconciled unto you; he hath said unto you, *My Son, My Daughter, be of good cheer, thy Sins be forgiven thee:* Then go and live as one pardoned by the Lord should live.

5. *Walk and live as one that hath renewed his Covenant with God should Live.* Be as strict against sin after the Sacrament, as you did purpose when you were there. God hath avouched himself to be your God, and you have avouched your self to be the Lords, then live accordingly.

6. *Walk and live as one that hath seen such sights at a Sacrament as you have seen.* Here you have seen the dreadful wrath of God against sin, the severity and the strictness of his Justice against Sin: Here you have seen the evil of Sin, and the deserts thereof; here you have seen what a precious thing the Soul of man is, by the price that was paid for it: Here you have seen the love of God and Christ to poor Sinners; then live with that fear of Sin, with that care of your immortal precious Soul, with that diligence to please and love God, as one that hath such sights should do.

But more particularly:

1. After

1. After you have been at the Table of the Lord, you must make Conscience of abstaining from those sins that there you did bewail, that there you sorrowed for: To weep for sin at the Sacrament, and to indulge it when you come away, is great Hypocrisie. Will you (while there) seem to be grieved for your sin, and yet afterwards be unwilling to forsake it? Did you resolve against it, or did you not? If you did not, the Lord forgive you, your sin is great, and your love to sin was great, when you would not so much as purpose to leave your sin, nor resolve against it; no, not when you saw what Christ hath suffered for sin; if you did, then do as you did purpose, and resolve: Especially watch most against that sin, that you have ofteneft found prevailing against you, that your heart is most ready to yield unto, and your Conscience did most reproach you for when you were at the Table of the Lord. Your endeavour must be against all sin, but chiefly against your chiefest sin. Oh never smile upon your sin, which you see hath put to death your Lord the Prince of Life!

2. After you have been at the Sacrament, be conscientious in discharging of other Duties, which this Ordinance doth engage you to. Yield Obedience to the Commands of God, which he hath given you to be the Rule of your Life: This was your duty before, but now there is another bond to tye you to it; there is a *superadded* obligation laid upon you so to do; and your neglect and disobedience will be more hainous if you do not.

First, Be more frequent, and more fervent in your secret Addresses unto God. Besides your worshipping of God in your Family (which some that
come

come to the Table of the Lord, do shamefully neglect) be much with God alone. Oh how should you love and delight to have Communion with God in secret, when no Eye doth see you but the Eye of God, whom you have seen in the Sacrament, hath given his Son to you and for you !

Secondly, *Labour after growth in Grace*: This should have been in your desires before you went, and it should be your endeavour when you come from thence, to have more love to God than you had before, to have stronger Faith in Christ than you had before, to have more delight in God and Christ, and more ardent desires than you had before.

Thirdly, *Be more resolved to suffer, and to dye for Christ, than you were before*. At the Lords Table you have seen what Christ hath done and suffered for you, be you thereby more resolved not only to do, but to suffer also for his sake: Be not only more eminent in your active, but more patient in your passive Obedience than before.

Fourthly, *Live in love with all that are partakers of the same benefits with you*. Yea, in this Ordinance you have an example of loving your very Enemies, as Christ did when he died for you; but a more special and peculiar Love you are taught to have to all the Members of Christs Mystical Body, when you see in this Ordinance, how Christ hath loved them all, Eph. 5. 2. *Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour*.

Fifthly, *Be not so affraid to dye, after you have seen the Death of Christ in the Sacrament represented to you*. Christ hath conquered this Enemy. he hath made Death your Friend to open the door to you, that you

you may go and live with him who hath died for you.

Thirdly, If you do not live as becomes one that hath been at the Table of the Lord, consider the greatness of your Sin in these aggravations of it. If you live a loose and carnal life, after you have partaken of this Ordinance.

1. *You break Covenant with God*, and those promises which you made to him of better obedience: you did again resign your self to be the Lords; If you did not, that was your sin; if you did, and do not answer it in your life, this is your sin.

2. *You dishonour Christ*, if you live not suitably to this Ordinance; You profess your self to be one of his Disciples, else what did you there? If you be, and do not live accordingly, you dishonour him whom you there have seen so much vilified and reproached by others for you, and yet shall he be reproached by others by reason of you?

3. *You do grieve the Spirit of God*, if you live not holily after the Sacrament: Did not the Spirit of God come and bear you witness that you were a Son of God, and did secretly and powerfully persuade your heart, that God through the death of his Son was reconciled to you, and that your sins were pardoned, and that your Soul should be saved when you die; and must not this be a grief unto him to see you walk so unworthy of his love?

4. *You discredit your Profession*, and cause the Holy ways of God to be evil spoken of; if you lead not an Holy life after you have been at the Table of the Lord, those that will not be holy themselves will blame you, and reproach your profession if

you

you be not holy. Such a man goes to the Sacrament, and yet will be unjust, and yet is vain in his discourse, and we see but little difference betwixt his life and ours; and so will be hardened in their evil ways, and be prejudiced against Religion, by the Unsuitable Conversations of those that do profess it.

5. Falling into Sin, which you have purposed and resolved against at the Lords Supper, *will more deeply wound your Conscience, and disturb your peace*; When Conscience shall tell you, You resolved against this sin, and yet you have committed it; you promised to be more watchful against the occasions and appearances of this evil, but you have willfully run into the commission of it, or when tempted to it, you willingly consented.

6. Unsuitable walking after you have been at the Lords Table, *will cause you to lose much of your holy confidence when you go again*. It will much hinder your application of Christ unto your self, that you cannot with that holy confidence say, *This Christ did die for me*; especially if you be not deeply humbled for your failing before you come again.

7. Unsuitable walking after this Ordinance, *will provoke the Lord to withdraw from you, and to leave you in a deserted state, to leave you to the dulness and the deadness of your heart*; to take away his comforts from your heart, and to conceal his love from your Soul, till you learn to walk more worthy of it.

8. Unsuitable walking after this Ordinance, *will be great unthankfulness unto God for the giving of his Son, and all the Priviledges you have been partakers of by him*. It is not your praising God with your lips, but chiefly with your lives; not only

only in your words, but principally in your works, that will Prove you truly thankful unto God. All that God requires from you, for all the blessings purchased by the death of Christ, and made over to you in the Sacrament, is that you should be thankful unto him, and to improve them to his praise and glory; but you cannot have a thankful heart, if you have not a suitable conversation.

These are some of those evils and aggravations of your sin in this respect, which you should be careful to prevent; that in nothing you may provoke your God to anger and displeasure, but behave your self *before*, and *in*, and *after* your participation of this holy Ordinance, that God may delight in you through Christ, and might welcome you to his Table here, and to his Kingdom when you leave this World; where you shall be filled with those delights and joys, of which you have a taste in this imperfect state at the Table of the Lord.

A short Dialogue between a Minister and a private Christian, that desires to partake of the Lords Supper.

Christian,

SIR, if it will not be an interruption to you in your work, I desire your advice and counsel about a duty that concerns my Soul.

Minister. It is the work which God hath committed to my charge, to further Souls in their way to Heaven, and direct them in their duty in order thereunto; therefore

therefore if your business with me be such, tell me what it is you do desire?

C. My earnest desire is to partake of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

M. *Did you never receive this Sacrament?*

C. No.

M. *Why have you lived so long in the neglect of this Ordinance?*

C. Because I have been full of doubts and fears concerning my fitness for it.

M. *Have you then got your doubts resolved? and are you perswaded that you are an invited Guest unto this Holy Supper?*

C. Sometimes I have some hopes that God doth call me to it, but sometimes I fear that I am not yet prepared for it, and therefore I beg your direction what I ought to do.

M. *You know that a Minister cannot look into your heart, nor infallibly discern, whether you have grace or no; should you not then rather search and examine your self, since you may know the state of your own Soul, which another cannot?*

C. I know that no man can know my heart, and whether I be fit before God; but you may take account of my knowledg in order to it, and if I speak the truth, and do not lye (which in the presence of God, at whose Tribunal I must shortly stand, I promise,) while I declare to you the workings of the Spirit of God upon my Heart, you may tell me from the Word of God, what my condition is; neither do I come to spare my pains in examining of my self, but that thereby I might be the better enabled for it.

M. *Are you willing then that I should try your Knowledge concerning the Lords Supper, and enquire*

into the grounds and Reasons of your hopes, why you think you are fitted for this duty?

C. I ought to be always ready to give an answer to every Man that asketh me a reason of the hope that is in me, much more to such whom God hath set to watch for my Soul, and especially when I desire to partake of the Lords Supper.

M. Tell me then what is the Lords Supper?

C. The Lords Supper is the Second Sacrament of the New Testament, *1 Cor.* 11. 25. instituted by Christ, *Luke* 22. 19, 20. wherein by the signs of Bread and Wine, and the actions that concern the same, *Mat.* 26. 26, 27. we shew forth his death, *1 Cor.* 11. 26. and God signifieth, sealeth, and exhibiteth the Body and Blood of Christ, *1 Cor.* 10. 16. with all the benefits of his death and passion, to every worthy Receiver, for his spiritual nourishment, and growth in Grace.

M. Why is it called the Lords Supper?

C. Not because it is appointed a Supper to us, but because Christ sitting at his last Supper, ordained it instead of the Passover, *Mat.* 26. 26.

M. How long is the Lords Supper to continue in the Church?

C. Till Christs coming in Glory, *1 Cor.* 11. 26.

M. Is it the Duty of Believers to receive the Lords Supper?

C. Yes:

C. Yes: Else, 1. They disobey Christs Command, *Luke 22. 19.* 2. Slight Christs love in appointing it for them. 3. Neglect a profitable means for their growth in Grace. And 4. Provoke God to great displeasure. *Mat. 22. 2. to vers. 9.*

M. *Is it the Duty of Believers often to partake of the Lords Supper?*

C. 1. Christs Command, *1 Cor. 11. 26.* 2. The Apostles practice, *Acts 2. 42. and 20. 7.* 3. Their own necessity, being often dull, *John 20. 9* and often doubting, *Mat. 28. 17.* and often backward to believe, *Luke 24. 25.* or to remember Christs Doctrine about his Death, *Luke 24. 5, 6, 7, 8.* their often spiritual wants, *Phil. 4. 19.* their too often decays in Grace, *Rev. 2. 4. and 3. 2.* their often sinning against God, *Jam. 3. 2.* and their often need of cleansing by the Blood of Christ, *John 13. 8.* *1 John 1. 7.* and often need of pardon, *Mat 6. 12.* do require that Believers should often partake of the Lords Supper.

M. *Do Hypocrites and Unbelievers eat and drink Christs Body and Blood?*

C. No: Such receive only the outward Elements.

M. *Is not then their case dangerous?*

C. Yes: Because, 1. Their Sin is great, being guilty of Christs Body and Blood, *1 Cor. 11. 27.*

2. They eat damnation to themselves, *v. 29.* 3. Are sickly and do die for this sin, *v. 30.* For this God casts some mens Bodies to the grave, and their Souls to Hell.

M. What course then must you take to prevent this sin and danger?

C. I must give all serious diligence to prepare my heart for so great a work.

M. Why do you think preparation is so needful?

C. Because, 1. All men are naturally unfit. 2. After Conversion, believers are often indisposed for it. 3. God will come and view his guests, *Mat. 22. 11.* 4. We have to do with the Blood of the Son of God. 5. Many duties here do meet. And 6. God hath made great preparations for us.

M. How must you prepare your self for the Lords Supper?

C. By a serious narrow search of my heart, whether I have those graces which God requires of worthy receivers; and by fervent solemn Prayer.

M. What are those graces which God requires in worthy receivers?

C. Knowledge, Faith, Love to God, Repentance, and New Obedience.

M. Why is knowledge necessary?

*C. Because without knowledg the heart cannot be good, *Prov. 19. 2.* Nor can a man else examine himself, or discern the Lords Body.*

M. What knowledge is necessary?

C. It is necessary to know how we were created, how we fell from God, and how we are recovered.

M. How were we created?

*C. After the Image of God, *Gen. 1. 27.* in Knowledge,*

ledge, Righteousness, and Holiness, *Col. 3. 10. Eph. 4. 24.*

M. How came we then to be so sinful and miserable.

C. By the first Transgression of our first Parents, Rom. 5. 12. 18.

M. Wherein consists the sinfulness of our estate, by reason of our first Parents fall?

C. In the imputation of Adam's first sin, Rom. 5. 19. The privation of the Image of God which we had at first, Rom. 3. 10. And in the propensity of our hearts to the vilest sin, Gen 18. 12. and 6. 5.

M. Can you not declare more particularly the sinfulness of the several faculties of the Soul, and members of the Body?

*C. The understanding is dark and ignorant, 1 Cor. 2. 14. Eph. 4. 18. An Enemy to God, Rom. 8. 7. Vain, Eph. 4. 17. The will is stubborn and rebellious, John 5. 40. Mat. 23. 27. Unable to chuse good, Phil. 2. 13. The Conscience is defiled, Tit. 1. 15. In some seared, 1 Tim. 4. 2. Erroneous, John 16. 2. Doubting, Rom. 14. 23. The heart as hard as an Adamant, Zech. 7. 11, 12. The Affections turned from the best Objects, the *liking* Affections which should be placed upon God, are towards evil; Naturally Men love pleasures more than God, 2 Tim. 3. 4. And Riches, Mat. 19. 21, 22. And themselves, Mat. 10. 24. And their Relations, Mat. 10. 37. And desire any thing rather than God and Christ, Isa. 53. 2. Job 21. 14. And delight in evil, not in God. Prov. 2. 14. Their *disliking* Affections which should be against Sin, are against God: *Haters* of God, Rom. 1. 30. *Grieving* at Gods goodness to others,*

others, *Mat.* 20. 11. to 16. The memory apt to forget good, *Heb.* 12. 5. *Deut.* 1. 10, 11, 14. To remember evil, *Ezek.* 23. 19, 21. And when it remembers good, it is for a wrong end, *Mat.* 27. 63. So all the Members of the Body are instruments of sin, *Rom.* 6. 19. Eyes are full of Adultery, *2 Pet.* 2. 14. Feet swift to sin, Throat, Tongue, Lips, Mouth, full of sin, *Rom.* 3. 13, 14, 15.

M. *Wherein will the knowledge of this sinfulness of man be useful to you when you go to the Lords Table?*

C. It will be an help to break my heart when I am there, that I should be such a bundle and lump of sin; to feel a need of Christ, and to admire the Love of God in sending his Son to dye for such a filthy, loathsom, and polluted wreth.

M. *What is the misery of that estate into which Man fell?*

C. The punishments that are due to Man for sin, are. 1. All *Temporal Miseries*, as Gods Curse upon the Creatures, *Gen.* 3. 17. *Rom.* 8. 20. Upon his Estate, *Deut.* 28. 17. Children, *v.* 18. And all he takes in hand, *v.* 20. Sickneses, as Plague, *v.* 21. Consumption, Fever, Agues, &c. *v.* 22. 27. *Levit.* 26. 16. Famine, *Deuter.* 28. 22, 23, 24. Madnes, *v.* 28. Death, *Rom.* 6. 23. *Gen.* 2. 17. and 3. 19. Yea, all the Curses that are written in the Book of God, *Deut.* 29. 20, 27. And that are not written, *Deut.* 28. 16. 2. *Spiritual Miseries*. By Nature man is dead in sin, *Eph.* 2. 1. A Child of Wrath, *Ephes.* 2. 3. And of the Devil: *John* 8. 44. Loathsome to God, *Ezek.* 16. 5. A Stranger to him, *Ephes.* 2. 19. Under blindness of mind, *Isa.* 6. 9. In danger of Hell,
but

but doth not see it, *Rom.* 11. 8. Nor fear it, *Deut.* 29. 19. Insensible of sin, *Isa.* 48. 4. But sometimes filled with such horreur of Conscience, that he is weary of his Life, *Gen.* 4. 13, 14. And will die by his own hands rather than bear it, *Matth.* 27. 3, 4, 5. Hath a Reprobate Mind, *Rom.* 1. 28. And vile Affections, *Rom.* 1. 26. Is under the power of the Devil, *Ephes.* 2. 2. And of lust, *v.* 3. And is prone to unnatural wickedness, *Gen.* 19. 5. Indeed this is his misery, that God is angry with him every day, *Psal.* 7. 11. And that nothing he can do, doth please God, *Rom.* 8. 8. 3. *Eternal miseries*: As banishment from the comfortable presence of God for ever, *Matth.* 7. 23. 2 *Thes.* 1. 9. The pains of Hell, *Rev.* 20. 15. In a Lake of Fire and Brimstone, *Rev.* 21. 8 That never shall be quenched, *Mark* 9. 44. With the company of cursed, tormented, and tormenting Devils, *Mat.* 25. 41. Where the Worm shall never die, *Mark* 9. 46. And the Torment shall be easeless, *Luke* 16. 24, 25. Remediless, *verse* 26. Endless, *Rev.* 14. 10, 11.

M. *Wherein will the knowledge of this promote your fitness for the Lords Supper?*

C. It will make me the more importunately to cry for mercy, *Luke* 18. 13. To see my need of Christ *Mat.* 9. 12. To hasten to him, and believe on him, *Acts* 16. 29. to 35. To value Christ above all, *Phil.* 3. 7, 8. To confess my sins, *Luke* 15. 18. And to grieve for them, *Acts* 2. 37.

M. *By whom are you recovered from this sin and misery?*

C. By Jesus Christ alone, *Acts* 4. 12.

M. *Who was Christ?*

C. The Eternal Son of God, *Psal.* 2. 7. Who became

became man, *John* 1. 14. Who was and is God, *John* 1. 1. and Man, *1 Tim.* 2. 5. In two distinct Natures, *Mat.* 22. 41, to 46, and *Rom.* 1. 3, 4. And one person for ever, *John* 3. 13.

M. *Why was it necessary that the Mediator betwixt God and Man, should be both God and Man.*

C. If he had not been Man, he could not have died, *1 Tim.* 6. 16. And if he had not been God his death had not been satisfactory for our sins, nor have purchased his Church, *Acts* 20. 28.

M. *How doth Christ recover us from our sin and misery?*

C. By executing the Office of Prophet, *Acts* 3. 22. Priest, *Heb.* 5. 6. and King, *Psal.* 2. 6.

M. *Why was it necessary that Christ should execute this three-fold Office.*

C. To cure us of a three-fold misery that we lay under.

M. *What was the first?*

C. We were blind and ignorant, *Mat.* 15. 14. and 23. 16, 17, 19, 24, 26. Therefore he became a Prophet to reveal to us the will of God for our Salvation, *John* 1. 18.

M. *What was the second?*

C. We had sinned, and could not satisfy the Justice of God, *Mic* 6. 6, 7. Therefore he became our Priest, by dying to satisfy Gods Justice, and to intercede for us, *Isa.* 53. 4, 5, 6, *Heb.* 7. 25.

M. *What was the third?*

C. We were weak, *Rom.* 5. 6 and could neither turn to God, *Fer.* 13. 18 and 17. 14. *Lam.* 5. 21. nor subdue our Enemies, *Mark* 5. 2 to 14. Therefore he became our King, to subdue us to himself, *Psal* 110. 3. And to save us, *Isa.* 33. 22. And
to

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to restrain and conquer his and our Enemies, *Psal.*
110 1. *1 Cor.* 15 24, 25, 26.

M. *How are we made partakers of Christ and his benefits?*

C. By Faith, *John* 3 16 *Acts* 13 39 *Ephes.*
c. 2. v. 8.

M. *What is Faith?*

C. It is an hearty receiving of Christ for Lord and Saviour, *John* 1 12 Or, a resting upon Christ alone for Salvation.

M. *Why did you say that Faith is necessary to worthy receiving?*

C. Because, 1. Without Faith it is impossible to please God, *Heb.* 11 6 and we should not displease him at his Table. 2. By Faith we are the Children of God, *John* 1 12 *Gal.* 3 26 And this is Childrens Bread, and Gods Household Provisions: And we are not of the Household of God, till we are of the Household of Faith, *Ephes.* 2 10 *Gal.* 6 10. 3. The Lords Supper doth not sanctifie Unbelievers, but Unbelievers prophane the Lords Supper; *Hag.* 2 12, 13, 14. 4. Because of many Scripture expressions, setting forth the usefulness of Faith, it is the foot of the Soul, and at the Lords Supper we should come to Christ. *John* 6 35. It is the mouth of the Soul, *John* 6 53. And there we should feed upon Christ. It is the hand of the Soul, to receive Christ, *John* 1 12. And we should take Christ, when we take the Bread: It is the eye of the Soul, *Isa.* 45 22. And there we should behold our Crucified Lord. It is the Life of the Soul, *Gal.* 2 20. And a dead man cannot feed upon Christ.

M. *Why do you say that Repentance is necessary to worthy Receiving?*

C. Because, 1. We are to Judge our selves, 1 Cor. 11. 31. 2. A soft heart will receive the impression of this Seal. 3. Because a man is to turn from sin when he comes to the Lords Table.

M. *Why did you say that love to God is necessary?*

C. Because it is uncomfortable to sit down at the Table of an Enemy, but dreadful and dangerous to sit down in our enmity at the Table of the Lord: If a man keep up his fellowship with the Devil, he provoketh God if he comes to his Table, 1 Cor. 10. 21, 22.

M. *Why did you say that new Obedience is necessary?*

C. Else a man would come in his rebellion. God preferreth obedience before sacrifice, else a man doth not receive out of obedience unto God, but for some sinister end. A disobedient liver cannot be a worthy receiver, nor have communion with God, 1 John 1. 6, 7.

M. *If these things be so necessary, doth it not concern you to examine whether they be wrought in your heart?*

C. Yes.

M. *What are the signs of true Faith?*

C. 1. A prizing of Christ above all things in this world. 1 Pet. 2. 7. 2. Willingness to receive him into the heart upon Gospel terms, for Lord and Saviour, John 1. 12. 3. If it purifie the heart, Acts 15. 9. 4. If it be fruitful in good works, James 2. 17. 5. If it enable us to overcome the world, 1 John 5. 4.

M. *How do you know you love God?*

C. Because, 1. I am grieved at his absence, and cannot be satisfied, till I find him, Cant. 3. 1, 2, 3. 2. By my desires to be like him, and love to those that

that are like him, 1 *John*. 4. 7. 12.. 3. By my hatred unto sin, *Psal*. 97. 10. 4. By my obedience unto his commands, *Exod*. 20. 6. *John* 14. 21, 23. 5. By my desires to have an heart to part with all for him, that he might have the predominancy of my love, *Mat*. 10. 37. 6. By my grieving when he is dishonoured by my self or others, *Psal* 51. 4. and 119. 53. 136. 158.

M. *How do you know you have repentance for sin?*

C. Because, 1. My Soul groans under it as a burthen heavier to me than any affliction, *Luke* 15. 16, 18, 19, 21. *Mat*. 11. 28. 2. Because I am ashamed of my secret sins before God, that never exposed me to shame amongst men, and loath my self for all, *Ezek*. 36. 31. 3. Because I desire to forsake all sin, even the dearest. *Prov*. 28. 13. 4. Because what I cannot get freed from, I fight against, that sin might never have a peaceable possession in my heart, *Gal*. 5. 17.

M. *How do you know the truth of your new Obedience?*

C. Because, 1. My Obedience springs from a new principle, love to, and fear of God, *Deut*. 10. 12. 2. Is guided by a new Rule, not by my own will; but the Word of God, *Gal*. 6. 16. And 3. I aim at a new end, the Glory of God, 1 *Cor*. 10. 31.

M. *But if a man cannot say, he loves God, and say, he hath faith, but yet find he hungers after Christ and thirsteth for him, may he come to the Lords Table?*

C. Yes, 1. Because assurance is not necessary, 2. Because Weak Believers have a right unto it. 3. Because God inviteth those that hunger and thirst, *Isa*. 55. 1 *John*. 7. 37. 4. Christ pronounceth them blessed. And 5. Promiseth that they shall be filled, *Mat*. 5. 6.

M. *But*

M. But would it not tend much to your comfort at the Lords Table, to know before you go, that Christ died for you in particular?

C. Yes, because then I could say, Here is Blood, and it was shed for me, &c

M. How may you know that Christ died for you in particular?

C. 1. If I be one of his People, *Mat. 121* and this I am, if I be willing to be, to do, to suffer what Christ would have me, *Psal 110 3*. 2. If I be one of Christs Friends, doing his Commands, *John 15 13, 14*. 3. If I be dead to sin, *Gal. 6 14*. 4. If I live to Christ, *2 Cor. 5 15* I may conclude he died for me, *Gal. 2 20*.

M. If upon serious search you find these Graces wrought in your heart; is it necessary you should spend some time in solemn Prayer before you go?

C. Yes, because, 1. I cannot act what Grace I have without Gods assistance, *John 15 5*. 2 The duty is solemn and weighty. 3. Though God will give the blessings of the Covenant of Grace, yet he will be sought unto for them, *Ezek 36 37*.

M. Is it sufficient for your worthy Receiving, that you have found these graces in your heart, and prayed to God before you go?

C. No; But I must see that my End be right, and that I behave my self as I ought, while I am there.

M. What is your end in going to the Lords Table?

C. My End must be, 1. To have Communion with God: 2. To encrease my Faith in Christ, and Love to God: 3. To further my Joy in the Holy Ghost: 4. My Peace of Conscience: And 5. Hope of Eternal Life: 6. To renew my Covenant with God: 7. To quicken me to Obedience: 8. To
make

make me thankful to God for his mercy bestowed upon me in Christ: 9. To get power against my sins: And 10. Especially to remember and shew forth the death of Christ.

M. What remembrance must this be of the Death of Christ?

C. Not an Historical remembrance of Christs Death only; for so the Devils remember that Christ hath died, but such a remembrance that should affect my heart with love to him, desire after him, joy in him, with sorrow for my sin that caused his Death, and whereby I might answer all the charges of the Law, the clamours of my Conscience, and the accusations of the Devil, *Rom. 8 33, 34*

M. Having found the truth of Grace in your heart, and that your End is right, what must you do when you are there?

C. Give all diligence in endeavouring to draw my Graces into act.

M. What are those Graces that you must endeavour to exercise when you are at the Table of the Lord?

C. Faith, Love to God and Christ, sorrow for sin, desires after Christ, and thankfulness.

M. What means would you use when you are there to exercise these Graces?

C. Sometimes I would meditate upon such things as are here offer'd to my thoughts from this Ordinance, tending thereunto; and sometimes put up ejaculations unto God, that he would please to help me.

M. What would you meditate upon at the Lords Table for this end?

C. 1. Sometimes I would think upon the Love of God and Christ. 2. Sometimes upon his Wrath and Severity against Sin. 3. The hainous nature of

of sin. 4. The preisciousness of my Soul. 5. The sufferings of my Lord. 6. Of my sitting with God in his Kingdom. And 7. The priviledges I am made partaker of in this life by the death of Christ,

M. What are those priviledges purchased by the death of Christ, sealed in the Sacrament, the believing thoughts whereof will tend to warm your heart, and all your graces at the Sacrament?

C. These are, 1. Peace with God, *Rom.* 5. 1. *Col.* 1. 20, 21. 2. The Righteousness of Christ imputed, 2. *Cor.* 5. 21. 3. Pardon of Sin, *Eph.* 1. 7. 4. The death of Sin, *Rom.* 6. 6. 5. Adoption, *Eph.* 1. 5. *Gal.* 3. 26. 6. Perseverance *Phil.* 1. 6. 7. Deliverance from Wrath to 1 *Thes.* 1. 10. 8. Communion with God, 1 *John.* 1. 3. 9. Hope of Heaven and eternal life, 1. *Pet.* 1. 3, 4.

M. What is there in the Sacrament presented to your senses, that represents these things to your Faith?

C. Sacramental Elements, and Sacramental Actions.

M. What are the Sacramental Elements?

C. Bread and Wine, signifying Christs Body and Blood, *Mat.* 26. 26, 27.

M. Is not the Bread and Wine changed into Christs Body and Blood?

C. No surely: For then, 1. Christs glorious Body now would be subject to Corruption. 2. Then a finite Body can be in Heaven and Earth, and in many places upon Earth at the same time. 3. Then I do not know Bread and Wine when I do see it and taste it. 4. Then there would be no Signs of the things signified, and so this would be no Sacrament. 5. Then a Drunkard

kard might eat and drink Christs Body and Blood, as well as a true Believer. 6. Then the Minister may as surely give the thing signified as the outward Signs, whereas this is the Gift and Prerogative of God alone, *Luke 3. 26.* 7. Then at the first institution there were two Christs, one that gave, and another that was given. 8. The Cup is said to be the new Testament, as well as it is said to be Christs Blood, *1 Cor. 11. 25.* But in that there must be a Figure, whether Papists will or no, and so there is in this.

M. Why then are the outward signs graced with the names of the things signified?

C. 1. To shew the inseparate Conjunction of the things signified, with the outward signs to the worthy Receiver. 2. Because of the fit proportion and agreement between the signs, and the things signified.

M. Wherein is the agreement betwixt the outward signs, and the things signified?

C. In regard, 1. Of the preparations; that bread might be prepared, the Corn must be threshed in the floor, grounded in the Mill, baked in the Oven; and that Wine may be prepared, the Grape must be Crushed in the Wine-press. So, that Christ might be a Saviour unto Sinners, he must be bruised for our sins, and scorched in the Oven of his Fathers Wrath, and alone must tread the Wine press, *Isa. 63. 3.* 2. In regard of usefulness; Bread is of daily use, whatsoever be our other refreshments: So Christ is of daily use unto us, whatsoever be our other injoyments: Bread is the staff of life, and Wine cheareth the heart of Man: Such is Christ unto our Souls.

M. What may you meditate upon, when you see that
Christ

Christ ordained both Bread and Wine to be the signs in this Sacrament?

C. The plentiful Redemption we have in Christ, that from him we might have a supply for all our wants, compleat nourishment; here being Bread that satisfies our hunger, and Wine that quencheth our thirst.

M. *What may you meditate upon when you see the Bread and Wine given apart?*

C. That Christs Blood was separated from his Body, that we might not be separated from God for ever.

M. *Doth the Cup belong also to the People as well as to the Minister?*

C. Yes, forasmuch as Christ in the first Institution, *Mat. 26 27* and the Apostle afterwards, *1 Cor. 11 25 26* say, *Drink ye all of this.* The same that are commanded to eat, are also commanded to drink, without difference. And this Sacrament is the Communion of Christs Blood, as well as of his Body, *1 Cor. 10. 16*

M. *What be the Sacramental Actions?*

C. The Actions, some are of the Minister, some of the Receivers.

M. *What are the Actions of the Minister?*

C. They be four.

M. *Which is the first?*

C. He is to take the Bread and Wine into his hands, and separate them from ordinary Bread and Wine.

M. *What may you meditate upon when you see the Minister do this?*

C. That God in his eternal Purpose and Decree hath separated Christ from all other men, to be our Mediator, *Exod. 12 5 Heb. 7 26.*

M. *Which*

M. Which is the second action of the Minister?

C. He is to bless and consecrate the Bread and Wine by the Word and Prayer.

M. What may you meditate upon as signified by this?

C. That God in the fulness of time sent his Son into the World, furnishing him with all Gifts needful for a Mediator, *Gal. 4. 4.*

M. What is the third action of the Minister?

C. To break the Bread and pour out the Wine.

M. What may you meditate upon when you see him do this?

C. The Passion and Suffering of Christ, and all that he endured both in Body and Soul for our Sins, his blessed Body being bruised, and his precious Blood shed, and that his Soul was poured out unto the death, *Isa. 53. 5, 10, 12. Heb. 9. 14.*

M. What is the fourth action of the Minister?

C. To give and distribute the Bread and Wine unto the Receivers.

M. What may you meditate upon when you see him do this?

C. That God is giving of his Son, and the Son giving of himself; and really, though invisibly dealing forth to every worthy receiver the benefits of his death according as he needs.

M. What be the Sacramental actions of the Receivers?

C. Two.

M. Which is the first action of the Receiver?

C. To take the Bread and Wine offered by the Minister.

M. What may you meditate upon, and do then?

C. I ought to stretch forth the hand of Faith, and receive Christ and all his benefits, else I play the

the Hypocrite at the Lords Table, before God and the whole Congregation.

M. *Which is the second action of the Receiver?*

C. To eat the Bread and drink the Wine.

M. *What doth that signifie?*

C. My Union unto Christ, and Enjoyment of him, my feeding upon Christ by Faith, for the strengthening of the Graces of Gods Spirit in my Soul.

M. *What must you do after the Sacrament is over?*

C. Consider with my self, if I have received any benefit thereby.

M. *How will you know this?*

C. 1. By the encrease of my Faith in Christ, and Love to God. 2. By my greater hatred unto sin, and power against it. 3. By my longing after the enjoyment of God in Heaven. 4. By my prizing of this Ordinance above my necessary Food: And 5. By my resolutions in the strength of Christ, to suffer for him who died for me.

M. *What must you do if you have found good by this Ordinance?*

C. I must give God the Glory, and desire to come again, and walk suitably in my Conversation.

M. *How must you live that you might walk suitably?*

C. I must make it my business to forsake all sin, and to perform all the duties that God requireth from me.

M. *What if you do not?*

C. I then, 1. Dishonour Christ. 2. Grieve the Spirit. 3. Break my Covenant made and renewed with God. 4. Discredit my Profession. 5. Wound my Conscience. 6. Provoke God to withdraw from me. 7. Shall be guilty of great unthankfulness.

fulness. And 8. Weaken my Confidence when I go again.

M. *What if you find no good by the Sacrament?*

C. I must examine what was the cause, and be humbled for it, and forsake the sin, and pray to feel the benefit of it when I am come away, and better prepare my self, and humbly wait upon God therein another time.

A Dialogue between a Weak Believer that dares not come to, and a Strong Believer that dares not absent himself from the Lords Supper.

Weak Be- **M**Y Friend! I am glad I met with you
liever. *on such a day as this.*

Strong Believer. I rejoyce in your health, and in the mercy vouchsafed to us both, that we have one Lords day more to wait upon our God.

W. I may account it mercy indeed, who have been so dull and dead, and out of frame all the week long, and yet uncertain what the state of my Soul is; but I pray you whether are you going so chearfully?

S. I am going to a Feast this day.

W. Do you spend holy time in Feasting?

S. Yes, in such feasting as I am going to.

W. What Feast do you mean?

S. A Feast of fat things, a Feast of Wines on the Lees, of fat things full of Marrow, of Wines on the Lees well refined.

W. Who invites you to this Feast, of which you speak such great things as these?

S. God

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S. God himself doth make this Feast, and invites me to it; our Father makes a Banquet for his Children.

W. *If God do call you to a Feast, the Provisions surely are according to the state of so Great a King?*

S. Wisdom hath killed her Beasts, she hath mingled her Wine, she hath furnished her Table; the Oxen & Fatlings are killed, & all things are ready: There is Milk for the weak, and Wine for the strong & sorrowful of Heart. There is Bread for the Hungry, Water for the Thirsty, every thing that is necessary or delightful. Indeed it is the Body and Blood of Christ, who is both the *Master* and the *Master* of this Feast.

W. *Now I understand you mean the Lords Supper: And I have heard indeed of some that have partaken thereof, that great and precious things are there prepared.*

S. Yes, there are, and methinks I feel my heart, to burn within me, while I am speaking of them, and of the love of him that hath prepared them and called me unto them.

W. *Surely you will be much delighted when you are there, since your heart is thus raised as you are going to it.*

S. Raised! through the mercy of my God, at this time it is; but sometimes it is not so, but I am without a sense and feeling of the love of God, yet then I should not dare to absent my self from this Holy Supper, for when I am without the sense of the love of God, I then endeavour to keep upon my heart a sense of my duty towards him, and of my wants, to fetch supplies from him by this and other means, as he hath appointed in his Word.

W. *Then*

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W. *Then, if you have the light of Gods countenance or not, you are desirous to be partaking of the Supper of the Lord?*

S. *Though I have no comfort, I would do my duty, yea then my Soul doth long, doth thirst and exceedingly desire, that (through the mercy of my God, and merits of my Saviour) I may taste of these Provisions, and feed upon my Lord Redeemer, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed.*

W. *But I pray you, what are those Provisions that are there prepared, that do thus affect your heart?*

S. *What are they! They are Rich and Costly Provisions; they are free, suitable, plentiful, sufficient, Soul-nourishing, lasting, heart-cheering Provisions.*

W. *Will you not particularize some of these Provisions for my better information?*

S. *Oh! my Soul rejoiceth within me.*

W. *Lord, how dull am I, while he is thus affected?*

S. *My Soul rejoiceth within me, while I consider what they be.*

W. *What are they?*

S. *What! Christ and all his Priviledges are ready to be exhibited, and sealed to my Soul this day.*

W. *What Priviledges?*

S. *Peace with God, pardon of sin, righteousness imputed, peace of Conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, more grace, perseverance to the end, and at the end eternal life.*

W. *Shew me the suitableness of these Provisions to your Soul.*

S. *A Saviour is suitable to a lost Sinner; pardon to a guilty Sinner; peace with God to a Sinner that*

that was an Enemy to God ; peace of Conscience, to a Sinner under apprehensions of Gods Wrath ; Justification, to a Condemned Sinner ; cleansing Blood to a polluted Sinner ; comfort to a Dejected Sinner : *These, these*, are the provisions which are set upon my Fathers Table.

W. These are great and excellent things indeed, but who are the Guests invited to this Feast ? who are these provisions for ?

S. For those that are burthened with sin, and do forsake it ; for those that hunger and thirst after Righteousness, for the Children of God, for the Friends and followers of Christ ; for those that are willing to take him in all his Offices.

W. But might the poor and those that have no money go unto this Feast ?

S. Yes, yes, the poor in purse might be welcome, and the poor in spirit shall be welcome. God loves to see his Table filled with those that are sensible of their wants and sins, and these he will satisfy abundantly with the fatness of his House, and cause them to drink of the Rivers of his pleasures, when the full self-righteous Pharisee shall be sent empty away.

W. This revives my heart, if you can make it good.

S. The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, and therefore you may not doubt thereof. He is most earnest with the hungry and thirsty to come, Isa. 55. 1. Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy Wine and Milk without money and without price. And the Son calleth such, John 7. 37. In the last day, that great day of the Feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. And the Spirit calleth such,

such, Rev. 22. 17. *And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and let him that heareth say, Come! and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him drink of the Water of Life freely.* And the Ministers of God are still sent to call such, Luke 14. 21.—

The Master of the house said to his Servant, Go out quickly into the Streets and Lanes of the City, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind, verse 23. And the Lord said unto the Servant, Go out into the high way (where poor men wont to beg) and hedges (where poor men wont to work) and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

W. *And do these Scriptures encourage you to frequent this Ordinance?*

S. Yes; And because the same God that Commandeth me to pray, commands me to receive, and hath given me hopes that I shall be partaker of the benefits thereof, I am bound to wait upon the Lord therein.

W. *What do you hope to be partaker of, by going to that Ordinance?*

S. I hope to have my heart inflamed with love to God, and desires after Christ; to have my Saviour more endeared to my soul, my heart softened, my sin subdued, my faith strengthened, my evidences cleared, and my Soul assured of eternal Life.

W. *What reason have you to hope that you shall have these advantages by going to the Lords Supper?*

S. Not for any worth in me; but God is pleased to give these things freely for the sake of Christ to those that in obedience to his Command, in a right manner, and for a right end, do make Conscience of this duty.

W. *What*

W. *What course have you taken before-hand, that you have such hopes of such benefits by this Ordinance?*

S. I do not want to declare what my secret duties are, but if it might be for the edifying of your Soul, I shall not be unwilling to acquaint you.

W. *I pray you do, for I do stand in need of help from others more experienced in holy duties.*

S. I cannot say I am more experienced; but this I did, I seriously searched my heart to find the truth of Grace, my Interest in Christ, my Right unto this Ordinance, to find out my sins, and have renewed my Repentance for them; my wants, and have begged of God as earnestly as I could, that I may be supplied at his Table, and for his strength to discharge this duty to his glory and my own comfort.

W. *O happy man! that have these provisions prepared for you, and can go with this delight, and holy confidence to partake of them.*

S. You also may draw near unto this Table of the Lord, and have a share of these Gospel benefits, and be assured of them.

W. *I! Alas! Alas! you know what I am, what I have been; I never did. I do not dare to meddle with the Blood of Christ in this Ordinance?*

S. You may come and eat of this Bread, and drink of this Cup.

W. *What I? shall a Dog eat of the Childrens Bread? I dare not do it.*

S. You must, you sin if you do neglect it,

W. *Sin! that I would not, that is it that maketh me absent from it, because I would not sin against the Blood of Christ: But why do you say, I sin if I do not come?*

S. Be-

S. Because you live in the neglect of a plain commanded duty; it is a slighting of a special token of the love of your dying Lord.

W. *My Lord!*

S. It is a neglecting of the Seal of the Covenant of Grace, it is Hypocrisie to complain of the hardness of your heart and yet will not use the means to have it softened; and of the power of your sin, and will not use the means to have it weakened.

W. *I never knew any under my doubts and fears that went to this Ordinance, and found good thereby.*

S. Not so, for I my self was long under the same doubts and fears, and I know my heart was as bad as yours can be; but when I was willing to forsake my sin and close with Christ; sense of duty, fear of sin if I did not, moved me to the use thereof, and there God resolved my doubts, and removed my fears, and made it profitable to my soul, for my comfort and increase of grace.

W. *But it would be sin to me to go, for that which is a duty, and would be food unto another, might be a sin and poyson unto me, because I am not fit for such an Ordinance.*

S. If you be not fit, that also is your Sin.

W. *Then my case is miserable indeed: if I do not come, I sin, and if I be unfit and come, I sin. Ah Lord? Am I in this necessity of sinning? Oh tell me then what must I do?*

S. You must not abide in that condition wherein you are unfit for the Supper of the Lord, but fit your self and come.

W. *Alas! who will pity my pining soul, that hath food before it, and yet unworthy to meddle with it?*

S. A legal worthiness you cannot have, neither

doth God expect it at your hands; but an Evangelical worthiness you may have.

W. *I would fain know what I may do in reference to this Ordinance; I pray you tell me, when is a person said to be worthy in a Gospel-sense?*

S. When he is clothed with the righteousness of Christ, hath grace infused into his Soul, and doth act it at the Lords Supper, he doth worthily receive.

W. *Then I perceive that a man might be a sinner, and yet be a worthy Receiver.*

S. Yes.

W. *What and a great sinner too?*

S. Yes he may.

W. *This is some support to my fainting Soul: But yet my Soul is cast down within me, for I doubt I am not one of those sinners that you do mean.*

S. It grieves me to see you in this distress of spirit, I am persuaded if you would go unto this Ordinance, you would in time hear God speaking peace and comfort to your Soul.

W. *My desires and my fears are such, I know not which exceeds. Fain I would, but I dare not. It is a grief unto my Soul, when I see the Children of God approach unto their Fathers Table, and I absent myself, as though not of his Family: But I am such a sinner, that I dare not go.*

S. Why, what a sinner are you?

W. *I am the chiefest of Sinners, should I therefore go?*

S. So was St. Paul in his own esteem, yet such Christ came to save. 1 Tim. 1. 16. Gods mercy and Promise, Christs merits are as great, yea greater than your sins, Psal 103. 11 Mat. 12. 31. You have not been a greater sinner than Adam, or Manasseh,

Manasseh, 2 Chron. 33. 1. to 14. or Mary Magdalen, Luke 7. 37, 39. Or at least, you have not committed more sins than all these; if you have, yet you have not committed more sins, than all the sins of all the Elect of God, in all ages of the World amount unto: And hath, and will God pardon these? And are your sins yet too great for pardoning Mercy?

W. O wonderful! I see it is not the greatness, or the number of a Sinners abominations, that shall keep mercy from him; but these had their hearts of stone turned into hearts of flesh; but my heart is hard, and like an Adamant, and it should be a broken heart, that should behold a broken Christ in the Sacrament: But this I want.

S. Sense of hardness of heart, is some degree of softness of heart, Isa. 63. 17. Pharaoh complained of his Judgments, not of the hardness of his heart. You are sensible, and do grieve for the hardness of your heart, or do you not; if you do not, why then do you complain? if you do, your hardness is not the hardness that there is in Reprobates, but such as may be, and is, in the People of God: and this Sacrament is a means to have it softened.

W. This doth a little help me, I pray you proceed to discover what things do difference hardness in a Child of God, from the hardness that is in a wicked man.

S. Sense of Sin, and of Gods dishonour, a judging of your self for sin, and unfeigned turning from sin, earnest Prayers for softning grace, a rolling your self upon Christ, tenderness of Conscience, an holy fear of sinning against God; holy care to please him, teachableness of heart, and holy restlessness till you have Christ, do distinguish your

hardness from the hardness of heart in a wicked man.

W. *How else?*

S. Your hardness is occasional, not constant; the hardness of a Reprobate is like the hardness of such stones that are harder by the heat of the Sun! but your hardness is like the hardness of Ice, that when the Sun doth shine upon it, it is melted and dissolved.

W. *But if I had a heart of flesh, I do not think there would be so much hardness remaining in me more than others.*

S. God cures the hardness of his Peoples hearts in their Conversion, effectually; In Sanctification, gradually; and at their dissolution, perfectly; but not till then.

W. *This proves my hardness to be more than the hardness of Gods people, because I mourn not for my sin as they do, nor can I be so deeply humbled for it, and what should I do at the Sacrament, if I cannot mourn for sin?*

S. Imitate those that mourn most for sin; but you conclude not right, that you mourn not truly, nor at all, because you mourn not gradually, or as much as others do. The word of God and not the attainments of others, must be the Rule by which you ought to judge of the truth of your mourning for Sin. Besides, if you do not mourn directly, you mourn reflexively; you mourn that you cannot mourn, and you pray that you may mourn. Besides, it is not your tears that can justify you in the sight of God; for if you could mourn more than any, yet you must be justified freely by the blood of Christ; and so you will when you mourn truly, though less than some others do.

W. If

W. If it be so, then tell me when my mourning for sin is right, and is the mourning of a true penitent.

S. When you mourn for sin as sin; for all sin, because it is against God, Psal. 51. 4. as an evil greater than any affliction, Rom. 7. 24. Paul never cryed out so for the evil of affliction, as he did for the evil of sin: When you rejoyce in the Law of God that doth discover it, and bleſs God he ever wrote it, and that you ever knew it, Rom. 7. 12. When your mourning for sin makes you loath it and leave it, and prize Christ, and hasten to him, to close with him.

W. This I fear, that my mourning for my sin ariseth from the fear of Hell.

S. You may quicken your heart to mourn for sin, from the Torments of Hell, that it hath deserved; but that this is not the principal ground of your mourning, appears, because you can mourn and grieve for other mens sins as well as for your own, and when you have no thoughts of Hell, and when you have greatest perswasions of Gods mercy to you, in saving you from wrath to come, you mourn most; and that you mourn as well for the power and filth of sin, as for your misery thereby, and are willing to accept of Christ for your Lord, as well as for your Saviour.

W. I do not deny it to be thus with me, that I am willing to accept of Christ upon any terms. Lord, a Christ upon any terms! But I fear Christ is not willing to give himself, nor God willing to give his Son to such a one as I; and what should I do at the Sacrament, if Christ be not willing to give himself and his benefits unto me?

S. This is the Language of your Unbelief.

W. *I have enough of that.*

S. For it is impossible you should be willing to receive Christ, if Christ were not willing to give himself to you.

W. *Indeed*

S. For you could not be willing, if Christ had not first been willing: And it is the intolerable pride of your heart, to think that you can be more willing to be, and receive good, than God and Christ is to give and make you good. Besides, then such a one may come and plead at the last day, Lord, I am not damned because I was not willing to accept of Christ, but because thou wouldest not give Christ to me, when I was willing to receive him.

W. *Truly I think there shall be no such plea at the day of judgment.*

S. Then your condition is good, if you be willing; for if you be willing to receive Christ, and God be willing to give him unto you, you have him, and yet will you not go to commemorate his death?

W. *O Lord what strange conviction is this! surely I had Christ and did not know it: I was happy, and did not perceive it. But alas! no sooner did I perceive a little light to shine into my soul, but it is clouded; for my heart is deceitful, and I may think that I am willing when I am not.*

S. Then I do discern you will not suspect, that you your self are not willing, rather than that God is not willing, and so you have more reason to do; but though your heart be so deceitful, that you cannot understand all the particular sinful actings of your heart, yet by serious search, and Prayer unto God, you may know what it is that

that you do love, desire, and chuse above all things in the world, and what is the general bent and inclination of your heart and will.

W *I do not know my heart.*

S. What would you ask of God, if he should say, Ask any one thing, and thou shalt have it.

W *Christ, I think: but still I am afraid lest this should be from love unto my self, and not unto the Person of Christ.*

S. An holy self-love you ought to have, and that is not inconsistent with predominant love to the person of Christ.

W *How may I know it is holy self-love (that God approveth of) that moves me to be willing to accept of Christ?*

S. If you desire Christ to make you holy, as well as to make you happy, and to free you from the power and dominion, as well as from the punishment and damnation of your sin.

W *If there were no Hell, yet I would not sin against the Lord.*

S. You have made an answer to your own enquiry.

W. *But if I had been willing to accept of Christ, to take down the power of sin, it would not have been so strong as yet it is, and the Power of sin makes me question the truth of grace.*

S. Strength of sin might argue weakness of Grace, but not the nullity of it, because it might rage, when it doth not reign.

W. *That I would know, for if sin reign you will say I must not go.*

S. True, but if you can say with St Paul, Rom 7 15. *That which I do, I allow not: For what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that*

do I, ver. 19. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. You may then conclude with him, ver. 20. Now if I do that which I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth (he saith not reigneth) in me: And if it rage when it doth not reign, you have the more need to go unto the Lord's Supper, that sin, this usurping Tyrant (not your acknowledged Lord) might be taken down.

W. But sin hath great power in my thoughts, for not only vain, but blasphemous thoughts come frequently crowding in my mind, and I cannot sometimes remove them.

S. That they have power over your thoughts is your sin, but that they have not such power over your will, that proves your grace, for you would remove them when you cannot: And whether they be injected by the Devil, or do arise from your own heart, if grieved for, groaned under, and striven against, it is no otherwise with you, than with many others of God's dearest Children.

VV. I have long neglected Christ, now it is too late; so what end then should I go unto this Ordinance?

S. Who told you it was too late? where do you read it? the damned in Hell might say it is too late, but not you that would have him if you could, and may have him if you will, and have him indeed, because you are willing: And it is not what you have been, but what you are, and would be, that you must judge your state by.

VV. But if the day of grace be past with me, and the door of mercy shut against me, it is too late, how then should I be sealed in this Ordinance unto the day of Redemption.

S. The day of grace is not past with him that would

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would fain have grace above all earthly riches, nor is the door of mercy shut against him that doth set open the door of his heart for Christ the King of glory to enter in; and doth importunately pray for the fruits of the Spirit.

W. But alas! I cannot pray, how then should I receive?

S. Though you cannot word your desires, yet you can cry to God, and nothing will still you but a Christ. As the Infant cannot ask, yet cryeth for the Breast. Some might utter words in Prayer, and not pray; and you might want words, and yet pray fervently, acceptably unto God; for Prayer doth not consist in the exercise of parts, memory, &c. but of grace.

W. I cannot cry to God, my eyes are dry, and cannot drop a tear; sometimes, when I am confessing my sins, though so many and so bainous; when others can shed many tears for one sin, I cannot shed one tear for many sins.

S. It is so with you but sometimes. Besides, as there may be tears in the eyes, when there is no sorrow in the heart; so when your eye is dry, your heart may grieve. An Hypocrite, as he may have more words, so he may have more tears in prayer, than a true Child of God.

W. How then may I judge of my prayers, when I want these outward signs of sorrow, &c.

S. By your inward frame of heart, when you cannot shed a tear, you feel your heart burthened with, and rising in hatred against your sin? and when you beg for Christ and Grace, you find your heart sincerely reaching forth after both Christ and Grace.

W. I do pray indeed, and hear, that I may have

Christ, but I doubt all is in hypocrisie; and that all my duties are the services of an hypocrite; and what did Judas get by eating with Christ?

S. If you delight to do a duty so, that no man might know that you do it, and that when you be with others in holy Ordinances, you find you had rather be affected, and not seem to be so to others, than to seem to be affected, and not to be so before God, where is your Hypocrisie? Besides, if you do your duties from a right Principle, love to, and fear of God, in a right manner, viz. humbly, believingly, fervently in the name of Christ, and for a right end, that you may glorifie God, have Communion with him, be made more like unto him, that you may have more love to him, and more power and strength against your sin, you are sincere, and not an Hypocrite in your duties.

W. But sometimes I find a secret contentment in my heart, that men take notice of the outward signs of inward affections, and that when the outward signs are more than my inward affections; Is not that Hypocrisie?

S. Yes it is, and much to be lamented and opposed: Mourn so if you can, that none but God might perceive it, except when it might be more for the glory of God and the edification of another, that your mourning should be manifested rather than concealed.

W. May such a duty then be accepted of God, that is done in such hypocrisie?

S. Such an Hypocrite a sincere Christian may sometimes be, and is; for as there is something of Unbelief in one that hath faith in Christ, and something of Pride in one that is humble, &c so there

there is something of hypocrisie in every one that is sincere; for in nothing are we perfect as to degrees, while in this life: Therefore as you must not conclude, that your prayers and duties are not accepted of God, because there are some actings of Unbelief and Pride in them; so neither because there is something of Hypocrisy mingl'd with them when (as is said) your principle, and manner, and end, in the main be right.

W. I doubt whether the principle of my duties be love to God, or only a natural Conscience: And if I should go to the Sacrament, and not from a principle of Love, God would not be pleased with me.

S. And I pray you take heed that no time you do absent your self from Duty, against the dictates of a sanctified, enlightned Conscience.

W. I pray to God I may not: But speak unto my doubt.

S. You may perform duty from a principle of Love, when it is not from a sense of love: when a natural conscience is the principle, it puts you upon the duty, but gives you no strength to perform the duty, but the Spirit of God doth both.

Natural Conscience is satisfied, if the duty be done: But you are not satisfied, except God be enjoyed in the duty. Natural Conscience puts on to duty in time of temporal, or for fear of eternal punishments, but you pray, &c. That you may please God, have communion with him, and be delivered from the filth and power of sin: when natural conscience only is the principle; a Duty is done with much backwardness of Heart, Conscience hales and draggs the Sinner to his knees; but you love it, and delight in Duty, or are grieved if you do not. When natural Conscience only

is the principle, if a man can get an excuse which will silence Conscience, the Duty with gladness is omitted; but if you are kept (though by lawful cause) from a Duty, it is some grief and trouble to your Soul, and nothing but what is weighty, and judged by you to be a Duty also; shall divert you from the Ordinances of God. Are you not yet satisfied in this, that you may go unto the Lords Supper.

W. *I have proposed to you the chiefest grounds of my doubts and fears, and for the present, in some measure, have some hopes that God hath done some special work upon my heart.*

S. Then I hope you will make Conscience of this duty, that it may be promoted, and carried on in your Soul.

W. *I shall further consider of what you have said, and shall beg of God his holy Spirit, that I may know the things which are freely given (if given) to me of God: And if I shall by further searching of my Heart, and prayer unto God, be convinced that it is my duty, I will no more absent myself.*

S. I should rejoyce to go see you there.

W. *But I find my heart is too slight and careless in what I know to be my duty. I would therefore understand how I may get my heart to be diligent and serious in preparing for it.*

S. When you are to go unto this Ordinance, endeavour to confess your sins, and to pray for Pardon, and for Christ, and Grace, as earnestly as you would do if you were then to die; Prepare as you would do if Christ himself were to deliver it to you, as if men could look into your heart, as if God should strike you dead with the bread in your mouth, or with the cup in your hand, if you come unwor-

unworthily; as if it were the last time you should receive it, and go and stand at God's Tribunal when you have done, as if a Soul that hath been damned for prophaning of the blood of Christ should come unto you, and tell you what he is suffering in Hell for this his sin; as if Christ should call to you from Heaven, and mark you out, and make you know if you come unpreparedly, (see P. 72, &c.) but this is not to discourage you from the duty, but to quicken your heart to greater diligence in order thereunto.

W. How then must I prepare my self?

S. For this I refer you to the Book it self, (Page 88, &c.) and to the former Dialogue.

VV. I shall not then any longer keep you from your other busineses.

S. The God of Heaven guide you in this work, and smile upon your Soul, when you shall be present at his Table.

A Dialogue between one Believer that hath Assurance, and another that hath Hopes, and another that is under Doubtings of the Love of God, and of good by the Sacrament, as they come away from the Lord's Table.

Assur. WAS not this he that came from Edom, with died garments from Bozrah, whom we have seen glorious in his Apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save us from our sins, that were mighty to condemn us?
Hope.

Hope. This is he, who being red in his apparel, having his garments dyed with Blood, with his own blood, with his own heart Blood, doth save us from our scarlet crimson sins.

A. Was not this he whom *Judas* did betray, whom *Peter* did deny, whom all forsook, whom the *Jews* did crucifie, whom the Souldiers pierced, that suffered so much from men, from Devils, and from God himself?

H. This is he, who (I trust) was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. This is he who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of man, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.

Doubt. Certainly this was a righteous man, the Son of God, willing and able to save to the uttermost all those that come unto God by him, who once died upon the Cross, but ever lives to make intercession for them.

H. We have seen the Prince of Life did die, the Lord of Glory exposed to open shame; we have seen his blood streaming down, and through the holes made in his side have looked into his heart; what did you see in his blessed heart?

A. I saw a sight of love, a fire, a flame of love. When for our sins I saw this blood flowing from his heart, I saw love still abiding there; my Lord would part with his most precious blood, but not with his Love unto his People; I saw I was not only gravened upon the palms of his hands, or set as a Seal upon his Arm, but I was portrayed upon

on his Heart. The High Priest, that was a Type of Christ, did bear the Names of the Twelve Tribes of Israel in the Breast-plate, in or upon twelve precious Stones; but I did see that our great High-Priest doth bear the Names of his Elect gravened in his precious heart: And when I did read my Name amongst the rest, what joy and comfort filled my Soul, I am not able to express: His love was stronger than death, the coals thereof were as coals of fire which had a most vehement flame, and methoughts when I drew near unto it, I felt my heart begin to warm. All the waters of affliction, and sufferings, & sorrows which he endured, could not quench his Love; for he was resolved to ransom and redeem all that were given to him of the Father.

H. And do not the thoughts of this blood that was shed, and of the vertue and efficacy thereof exceedingly delight your Soul?

A. When I consider that this blood which was shed upon the Cross, is pleading for me in Heaven, that by this blood God is reconciled, Sin expiated, Death & the Devil conquered, it makes me to cry out, Never love like this! Never any like to this;

H. In this God manifested his love unto us, that he sent his only begotten Son into the world to die that we might live through him.

A. Herein God recommendeth his love to us, that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; and this Love of God unto my Soul, it is sweet, it is exceeding sweet, beyond, beyond the sweetness of the honey or the honey comb.

H. His Love is better than Wine! a bundle of Myrrh is my beloved unto me, he shall lye all night betwixt my breasts.

A. As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood,

Wood, so is my Beloved among the Sons : I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet unto my taste ; he brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

D. O stay me with Flaggons, comfort me with Apples, for I am sick of Love !

A. Thou hast ravished my heart, my Lord, my Saviour, thou hast ravished my heart, while with an eye of Faith I have seen thy blood streaming from thy heart to wash me from my sins.

D. With what admiring thoughts of the Love of God do these come away from the Supper of the Lord !

A. Oh the heighth, the depth, the length, the breadth of the love of God ! we know it, we know it, and yet indeed it passeth knowledge.

H. By the Death and Resurrection of this crucified Lord, we have a lively hope of an incorruptible Crown, he was crowned with Thorns, that we might have a crown of Glory.

D. O Lord, how dull and dead am I, who have been there, where these have been, but have not found what they have found !

H. Why do you weep ?

A. Do you weep for joy, or grief ?

D. Who can but weep, when God doth frown ? you may say, his loving kindness is better then life, and I can say, his frowns are worse than death.

H. Did you not find Christ attempting to get into your heart, to come down from the Cross into your heart ?

D. He knocked indeed, but I was sleeping.

H. Did you find no stirrings of affections when Christ's hand was upon the lock, and put his hand into the hole of the Door of your heart ?

D.

D. He put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my Bowels were moved for him.

H. Why did you not set open then the everlasting gates of your Soul, that this King of Glory might have entred in?

D. I rose up to open to him whom I desire to love, and my hands dropped with Myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling Myrrh, upon the handles of the Lock.

H. How was it then you missed of him?

D. At first I was not heedful to let him in, whereby I grieved him, when I made him stand without: Afterwards I rose to open to him whom I would love, but he had withdrawn himself; wo is me, he was withdrawn; my soul failed when he spake: I sought him in every part of the duty afterwards, but I could not find him; I called after him, but he gave me no Answer.

A. O Lord, what am I! a vile and worthless sinner, that thou revealest thy heart and love to me when it is secret unto others.

H. I began to be dejected, when I saw how short I came of your joy and comfort; but when I see his doubts and fears, I bless the Lord who hath given me some hopes of his favour and his love.

D. How is it that you come away with such hopes of mercy to your Soul?

H. When I knew my sin and misery, and the mercy of God to poor Sinners, through the merits of his Son; when I did read Gods invitations, and commands that I should come to Christ, and promise of pardon if I did; and in the Sacrament have seen God setting to his Seal, I willingly cast away my sins; and cast my self down at the foot of
mercy;

mercy, resting upon the merits of Christ, I did, and do hope that God will not cast away my Soul from him, nor exclude me from his Kingdom.

D. Then you have not yet got assurance of the Love of God, nor a full perswasion of Gods mercy in the pardon of your sin, and salvation of your soul?

H. No, because though I do not question the truth of Gods promises, nor his willingness to receive repenting Sinners, yet I am not without doubts and jealousies of the truth of my Faith, Repentance &c.

D. And yet can you hope for Heaven?

H. Yes because it is pleasing unto God, that we should trust him, when we are not sure of our interest in him, and to see sinners hoping in his mercy

A. And yet do you hope your hope is true?

H. Yes, because I find it puts me on to purifie my heart

H. And how is it that you come away with such assurance of the love of God and eternal life?

A. When I had found the truth of my Faith in Christ, love to God, and hatred unto sin, and the promises that God had made to such in Christ, I did, and do believe, that as surely as I did eat the bread and drink the wine; so surely hath God pardoned my sins and will save my Soul.

D. And doth this alone give you this evidence of your title to his Kingdom, and fill you with this joy?

A. No, but moreover I did find the Spirit of God bearing witness to, and with my spirit, that it was thus with me; and oh how sweet was Christ then to my Soul!

D. When

D. When did you find your heart thus raised in the apprehensions of Gods love to you?

A. When I saw the Bread broken, and heard the Minister say, Thus was Christ's Body broken for you; and saw him pour out the Wine, and heard him say. Thus was the Blood of Christ shed for you; and when he did distribute both, and I did take and eat, did take and drink, I did believe that God was really, though invisibly dealing forth his Son, and all his benefits to me, as well as unto others; and I was enabled to apply him particularly to my self, and take him as my own: Then, Oh then my heart was warmed with love, and filled with joy.

D. When else?

A. When the Congregation was singing forth the praises of the Lord, my Soul being satisfied as with marrow and fatness, my mouth, my heart, my All did praise him; and now my love, my faith, my joy, my sorrow for my sin, were stirring in my heart.

D. And how do you know that this is true and spiritual joy, and not such which an Hypocrite might have at the Table of the Lord

A. Because I find it doth engage me to inward and to universal holiness, inflames my heart with love to God and Christ, increaseth my hatred to my sin, and makes me more watchful against it, and makes my soul to long after full and perfect enjoyment of God in glory.

D. I am glad and do rejoyce in your mercy, while I must bewail my own unprofitableness, even at the Table of the Lord; I must go home and eat my bread with a sorrowful heart, and mingle my drink with tears, while you can go and eat your bread with a chearful spirit.

A. Nay,

A. Nay, but go and examine your Soul, what good and benefit you have received by this Ordinance, and give to God the glory of it.

D. Might one that hath not got assurance of the Love of God, nor been filled with joy, conclude he hath got good by the Lord's Supper.

H. Yes, or else I must go home and weep for this as well as you.

D. How doth that appear?

H. Because God doth work variously upon divers Persons, and variously upon the same Person at divers times. Sometimes he breaks the heart for sin, and reserves his comforts for another time: If you do not find your heart inflamed with love and filled with joy, yet if you do find your heart to rise more in hatred unto sin, and to be grieved for it, and more resolve and watch against it, you have received benefit by this Ordinance.

D. Then I must take heed of the stratagems of the Devil, that, as he might not cause me to conclude, I have that which I have not; so neither to deny that I have not that which through mercy God hath given to me.

H. That will be your wisdom, because it will be your way to get more from God, by being thankful for a little: God will another time give you peace and comfort, if now you will give him thanks that you have wept for your sin, and been grieved for the same.

D. O Lord! my heart begins to warm; I think the Sacrament may work and affect my heart, after I am come away, though I was dull when I was there.

A. So it may, and so I have sometimes found it, though to day God hath wonderfully smiled upon such a vile unworthy sinner as I am.

H.

H. I would advise you to take heed; that you do not conclude, that you have no benefit at all because you have not so much as you expected and desired, or so much as you see other Christians to have; or that you have it not in that particular or kind that you looked for; or though you did not sensibly perceive it in the very act of receiving.

D. But what may be the cause that I found no more of God in the time of this Ordinance.

H. It may be you were too slight in your Preparations for this Duty; or if enlarged in them you trusted too much to them, and less to Christ than you should have done; or were not watchful in the time of the Ordinance, or do too much favour some peculiar sin; and God withholds what you expected, that you might mend that with which he is offended.

D. This will be mercy, if I missed of Comfort, that I may have less of sin; and shall desire of the Lord, that I may find some good by the Ordinance, and your Discourse, now I do go in.

A. Stay, one word more, and that is, that we all remember the Obligations that do lie upon us, to walk suitably to the Privileges we are made partakers of by the death of Christ.

H. That is well remembred, for we are apt to forget to make returns to God, when we have received great things from him.

D. That will do well, for then, it may be I might feel more the efficacy of this Ordinance, than yet I have done.

A. Yes you may, and therefore let us all consider, and bear it upon our hearts, where we have been this day, and how we have renewed our Covenant with God, and that his Vows are upon us,
and

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and his eyes to observe how we shall walk, and live after we have had. or do hope for peace and joy in him; and that we watch each other, that where any of us fail, the other will reprove in love, and restore him with a Spirit of meekness.

H. All this will be needful.

A. The Lord enable us by his Grace to discharge what God commands, that we may expect what he doth promise in his Word, and hath sealed to us in this Sacrament.

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5 bands 1 neckloth
4 pair of shoes
1 silk handkerchief 1 mit
handkerchief 5/2 pices.
1 shirt 1 flannel waistcoat

