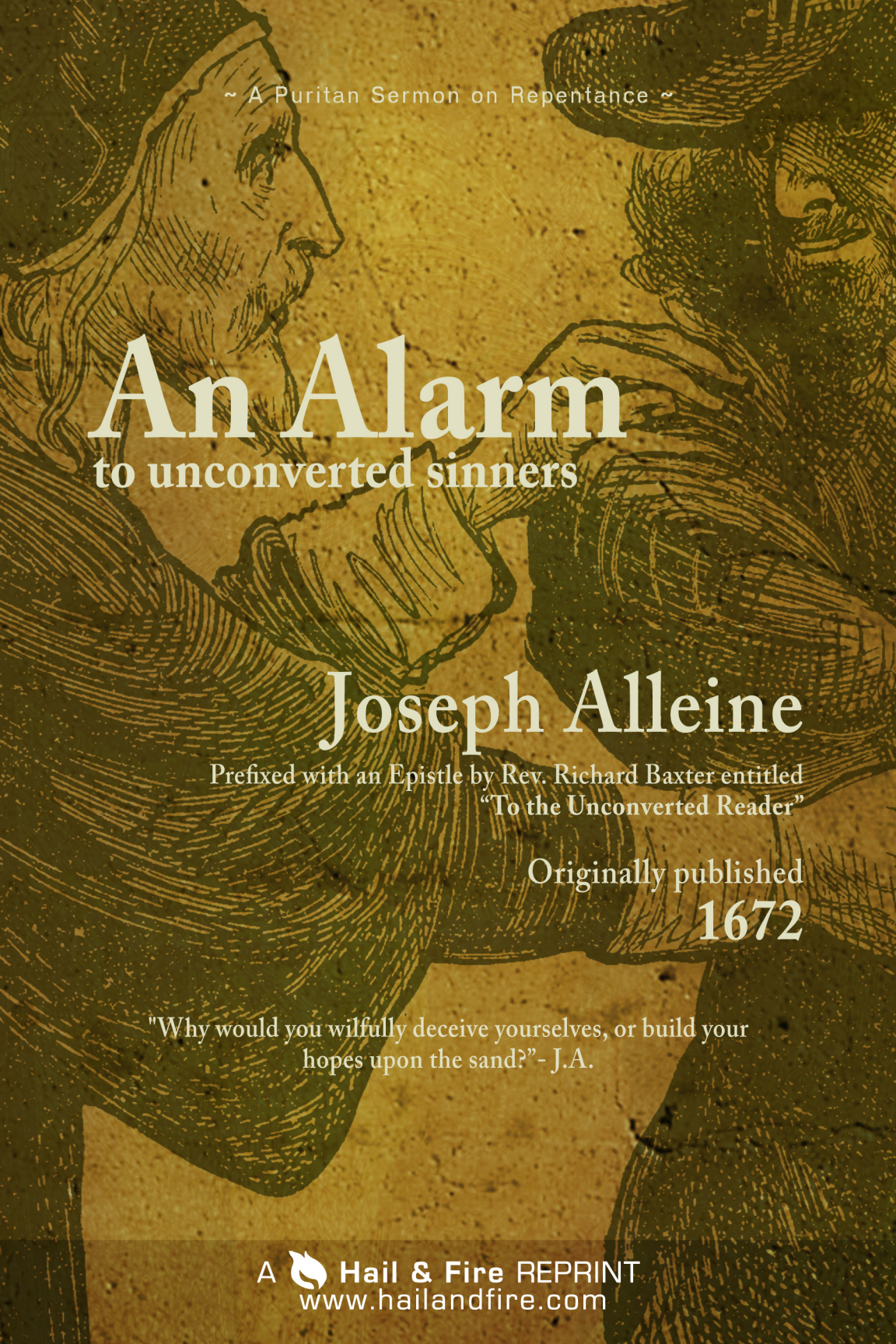


~ A Puritan Sermon on Repentance ~

An Alarm
to unconverted sinners

Joseph Alleine

Prefixed with an Epistle by Rev. Richard Baxter entitled
"To the Unconverted Reader"

Originally published
1672

"Why would you wilfully deceive yourselves, or build your hopes upon the sand?"- J.A.

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"**An Alarm to Unconverted Sinners**," by Joseph Alleine, originally published 1672, to which is prefixed an Epistle from the Rev. Richard Baxter entitled **"To the Unconverted Reader,"** in the 1818 Edition, is here reprinted by Hail & Fire, 2009.

Category: Religion, Christian, Sermon on Conversion

Joseph Alleine, D.D.
1634-1668, English Puritan Divine.

Richard Baxter, D.D.
1615-1691, English Puritan Divine.

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PREFACE

to the Protestant Reprint of

"**An Alarm to Unconverted Sinners**," by Joseph Alleine, originally published 1672, to which is prefixed an Epistle from the Rev. Richard Baxter entitled **"To the Unconverted Reader."**

by Hail & Fire

PROTESTANT SERMONS, EXHORTATIONS & BOOKS ON HOLY LIVING

In this age of ecumenism, when the lines have been blurred between the two major denominations and the world itself speaks of the Pope as head of all Christians, we join with so many to call to remembrance the truth of the Gospel and of those who, in times past, both well-known and unknown, answered a good answer for a pure and Gospel faith against the traditions of men. The intention of Hail & Fire is to make available Gospel and Reformed Theology in the works, sermons, exhortations, prayers, and apologetics of those who have maintained the Gospel and expounded upon the Scripture as the Eternal Word of God and the sole authority in Christian doctrine.

AN

ALARM

TO

UNCONVERTED SINNERS:

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

An Epistle

FROM THE REV. RICHARD BAXTER.

BY THE REV. JOSEPH ALLEINE.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY THOMAS CORDEUX:

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1818.

TO THE

UNCONVERTED READER.

Miserable Soul,

THERE is that life, and light, and love, in every true believer, but especially in every faithful minister of Christ, which engages them to long and labour for your salvation. Life is communicative and active: it maketh us sensible that faith is not a phantasm, nor true religion a stage-play, nor our hopes of eternal happiness a dream: and as we desire nothing more for ourselves than to have more of that holy life (which we have, alas, in so small a measure) so what is it we should more desire for others? With the eye of an infallible (though too weak) faith we see the heaven which you neglect, and the blessed souls in glory with Christ, whose companions you might be for ever. We see multitudes of souls in hell, who came thither by the same way that you are going in, who are shut out of the glorious presence of God, and are now among those devils that deceived them, remembering that they had their *good things* here, (Luke xvi. 25,) and how they spent the day of their visitation, and how light they once set by God, by Christ, by heaven, by Mercy, whilst Mercy was an earnest solicitor for their hearts; and with our *bodily eyes* we see, at the same time, abundance

of poor sinners living about us as if there were no God, no Christ, no heaven, no hell, no judgment—no, nor death to be expected; as if a man were but a master-beast to rule the rest, and feed upon, and perish with them. And if it were your own case to see what souls do in heaven and hell, and at once to see how unbelievingly, carelessly, and senselessly most men live on earth, as if there were no such difference in another world, would it not seem a pitiful sight to you? If you had once seen the five brethren of Dives on earth, eating, drinking, laughing, and merry, clothed and faring daily with the best, and at the same time seen their brother's soul in hell, begging in vain for a little ease, and wishing that one from the dead might go and warn them, that they came not to that place of torment; would it not seem to you a pitiful sight? Would not pity have made you think, "Is there no way to open these gentlemen's eyes?—no way to acquaint them what is become of their brother, and where Lazarus is, and whither they themselves are going? No one driveth or forceth them to hell, and will they go thither of themselves? And is there no way to stop them, or keep them back? Did you but see yourselves, what we see by faith, (believing God) and at once behold the saints in heaven, the lost despairing souls in hell, and the senseless, sensual sinners on earth, that will lay none of

this to heart, surely it would make you wonder at the stupidity of mankind.—Would you not say, O what a deceiver is the devil, that can thus lead on souls to their own damnation! O what a cheat is this transitory world, that can make men so forget that world where they must live for ever! O what an enemy is this flesh, that thus draweth down men's souls from God! O what a besotting thing is sin, that turneth a reasonable soul into worse than a beast! What a bedlam is this wicked world, when thousands are so busy labouring to undo themselves and others, and gratifying the devil against their God and Saviour, who would give them everlasting blessed life!

And as we have such a sight as this by faith, to make us pity you, so we have so much taste of the goodness of God, the sweetness of his ways, and the happiness of believers, as must needs make us wish that you had but once tried the same delights: they would turn the pleasures of sin into detestation. God knows, we desire nothing more for ourselves than the perfection and eternity of this holiness and happiness which we believe and taste: and should we not desire the same for you?

And being thus moved with necessary pity, we ask of God what he would have us do for your salvation; and he hath told us in Scripture, that the preaching of his Gos-

pel, to acquaint you plainly with the truth, and earnestly and frequently entreat you to turn from the flesh and the world to God, by Jesus Christ, is the means with which his grace is ready to concur for your salvation; whereas obstinate resistance causeth the Holy Spirit to forsake the sinner, and leave him to himself, to pursue his own counsels, lusts, and will.

In this hope we undertook the sacred ministry, and gave up ourselves to this great and most important work. In the great sense of our own unworthiness, but yet in a sense of our soul's necessity, we were not such fools at our first setting out as not to know it would be a life of labour, self-denial, and patience; and the devil will do his work to hinder us, and have all his instruments ready to serve him against our labours and against your souls. Christ, our Captain, was saved by patient conquest, and so must we save ourselves and you; and so must you save yourselves, under Christ, if ever you be saved. It was no strange thing to Paul that bonds and afflictions did every where attend him; nor did he account his life dear, that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry committed to him by the Lord, Acts xx. 23, 24. It was no strange thing to him to be forbidden preaching to the *Gentiles, that they might be saved*, by such as were *filling up the measure of their sins*, and were under

God's *utmost wrath* on earth: 1 Thess ii. 16. Devils and Pharisees, and most men where they came, both high and low, were against the Apostles preaching the Gospel; and yet they would not sacrilegiously and cruelly break their covenant with Christ, and perfidiously desert the souls of men; even as their Lord, for the love of souls, did call Peter *Satan*, who would have tempted him to save his life and flesh, instead of making it a sacrifice for our sins: Matt. xvi. 23.

What, think you, should make us undertake a calling so contrary to our fleshly case and interests? Do we not know the way of ease and honour, wealth and pleasure, as well as others?—and have we not flesh as well as others? Could we not be content that the cup of reproach, scorn, slander, poverty, and labours might pass from us, if it were not for the will of God, and your salvation? Why should we love to be the lowest, and trodden down by malignant pride, and counted as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things, and represented to rulers, whom we honour, as schismatics, disobedient, turbulent, unruly, by every church-usurper whom we refuse to make a god of? Why give we not over this preaching of the Gospel at the will of Satan, who is for the everlasting *suffering of your souls*, under pretence of its making *us suffer*? Is not all this that

you may be converted and saved? If we be herein beside ourselves, it is for you: could the words of the ignorant or proud have persuaded us that either your wants or dangers are so inconsiderable (or your other supplies and helps sufficient) that our labours had been unnecessary for you, God knoweth, we should have readily obeyed the silencing sort of pastors, and have betaken us to some other land where our service had been more necessary. Let shame be the hypocrite's reward, who takes not the saving of souls and pleasing of God for a sufficient reward, without ecclesiastical dignities, preferment, or worldly wealth.

I have told you our motives, I have told you our business, and the terms of our undertaking. It is God and you, sinners, that next must tell us what our entertainment and success shall be. Shall it still be neglect and unthankful contempt, and turning away your ears and hearts, and saying, "We have something else to mind?" Will you still be cheated by this deceitful world, and spend all your days in pampering your guts, and providing for the flesh, that must be rotting shortly in a grave? Were you made for no better use than this? May not we bring you to some sober thoughts of your condition? Not one hour seriously to think whither you are going? What! not one awakened look into the world where you must be for ever? Not one heart-piercing

thought of everlasting glory! Not one heart-piercing thought of your Saviour's love! Not one tear for all your sinful lives! O! God forbid: let not our labours be so despised: let not your God, your Saviour, and your souls be so lightly set by: O let there be no more profane persons among you, like Esau, who *for one morsel sold his birthright.*

Poor sinners! we talk not to you as on a stage, in customary words, and as if talking was our trade: we are in as good earnest with you as if we saw you murdering yourselves, and were persuading you to save yourselves. Can any man be in jest with you, who believes God, who by faith foresees whither you are going, and what you lose, and where the game of sin will end? It is little better to jest with you now in a pulpit, or in private, than to stand jesting over your departing souls, when at death you are breathing out your last!

Alas! with shame and grief we confess, we never speak to you of these things as their truth and weight deserve, nor with the skill and wisdom, the affection and fervency that beseemeth men engaging in the saving of souls; but yet you may perceive that we are in earnest with you (for God is so.) What else do we study for, labour for, suffer for, live for? Why else do we so much trouble ourselves and trouble you with this ado, and anger them that would

have made us silent? For my own part, I will make my free confession to you, to my shame, that I never grew cold, and dull, and pitiless to the souls of others, till I first grew cold and careless of my own, (unless when weakness or speculative studies cool me, which I must confess they often do.) We never cease pitying you, till we are growing too like you, and oft have need of pity ourselves.

When, through the mercy of my Lord, the prospect of the world of souls, which I am going to, hath any powerful operation on myself, O! then I could spend and be spent for others. No words are too earnest, no labour too great, no cost too dear: the frowns and wrath of malignant opposers of the preaching of Christ's Gospel, are nothing to me: but when the world of spirits disappears, or my soul is clouded, and receiveth not the vital illuminating influence of heaven, I grow cold, first to myself, and then to others.

Come then, poor sinners, and help us who are willing at any time to help you. As we first crave God's help, so we next crave your's. Help us, for we cannot help you against your wills, nor save you without your consent and help. God himself will not save you without you, and how shall we? We know that the devil is against us, and will do his utmost to hinder us, and so will all his ministers, by what names or titles

soever dignified or distinguished? But all this is nothing, if you will but take our parts; I mean, if you will take Christ's part and your own, and will not be against yourselves. Men and devils cannot either help or hinder us in saving you as you may do yourselves: if *God* and you *be for us, who shall be against us?*

And will you help us? Give over striving against God and conscience; give over fighting against Christ and his Spirit; take no more part with the world and the flesh, which in your baptism you renounced: set your hearts to the message which we bring: allow it your man-like, sober thought: search the Scriptures, and see whether the things we speak of be so or no. We offer you nothing but what we have resolvedly chosen ourselves, and that after the most serious deliberation we can make. We have many times looked round about us, to know what is the happiness of man; and had we found better for ourselves, we had offered better to you. If this world would have served our turns, it would have served yours also, and we would not have troubled you with the talk of another world: but it will not, I am sure, it will not serve your turns to make you happy, nor shall you long make that self-deceiving shift with it as now ye do.

But if you will not think of these things, if you will not use the reason of men, alas!

what can we do to save your souls?—O pity them, Lord, that they may pity themselves; have mercy on them, that they may have some mercy on themselves; help them, that they help themselves and us.—If you still refuse, will not your loss be more than ours? If we lose our labour, (which to ourselves we shall not,) if we lose our hopes of your salvation, what is this to your everlasting loss of salvation itself? And what are our sufferings for your sake, in comparison of your endless suffering?

But O! this is it that breaketh our hearts, that we leave you under more guilt than we found you; and when we have laid our life and labour to save you, the impenitent souls must have their pains increased for refusing these calls; and that it will be part of your hell, to think for ever how madly you refused our counsel, and what pains, cost, and patience were used to have saved you, and all in vain. It will be so, it must needs be so. Christ saith, It shall be easier for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for the rejecter of his Gospel-calls. The nature of the thing, and the nature of justice, certainly inform you it must be so.

O turn not our complaints to God against you! Turn us not from beseeching you to be reconciled to God, to tell him you will not be reconciled; force us not to say that we earnestly invited you to the hea-

venly feast, and you would not come: force us not to bear this witness against you, "Lord, we could have borne all our labour and suffering for them much easier if they would but have yielded to thy grace; but it was they themselves that broke our hearts, that lost our labour, that made us to preach and entreat in vain: it was easier to preach without maintenance than without success: it was they that were worse to us than all the persecutors in the world. How oft would we have gathered them, but they would not, but are ungathered still." How many holy, faithful Ministers have I known these eleven years last past, who have lived in pining poverty and want, and hardly by charity got bread and clothing, and yet if they could but have truly said, "Lord, the sermons which I preach privately, and in danger, have won many souls to thee," it would have made their burden easy. But I tell thee, senseless and impenitent sinner, thou that deniest God in thy heart, and that deniest them thy conversion, which was the end of all their labours, hast dealt much more cruelly with them than they that denied the Levites bread.

Poor sinners! I know that I am speaking all this to those that are dead in sin; but it is a death consisting with a natural life, which hath a capacity of spiritual life; or else I would no more speak to you than to a stone. And I know you are blind to sin; but

it is a blindness consisting with a reasonable faculty, which is capable of spiritual illumination; or else I would no more persuade you than I do a beast. And I know that you are in the fetters of your own lusts; your wills, your love, your hearts, are turned away from God, and strongly bewitched with the dreams and dalliances of the flesh and the world; but your wills are not forced to this capacity. Surely these wills may be changed by God's grace, when you clearly see sufficient reason to change them; else I would as soon preach (were I capable) to devils and damned souls. Your case is not *yet* desperate; O make it not desperate. There is just the same hope of your salvation as there is of your conversion and perseverance, and no more. Without it there is no hope, and with it you are safe, and have no cause for doubt and fear. Heaven may yet be yours, if you will: nothing but your own wills, refusing Christ and a holy life, can keep you out. And shalt thou do it? Shall hell be your own choice? and will you say you will not be saved?

O think better what you do! God's terms are reasonable, his words and ways are good and equal; Christ's *yoke is easy, and his burden light*, and his commands are not grievous to any, but so far as blindness and a bad and backward heart makes them so. You have no *true* reason to be unwilling; God and conscience shall one day

tell you and all the world, that you have no reason for it. You may as wisely pretend reason to cut your throats, to torment yourselves, as plead reason against a true conversion unto God. Were I persuading you not to kill yourselves, I would make no question but you would be persuaded; and yet must I be hopeless when I persuade you from everlasting misery, and not to prefer the world and flesh before your Saviour and your God, and before a sure everlasting joy? God forbid!

Reader, I take it for a great mercy of God, that before my head lies down in the dust, and I go to give up my accounts unto my Judge, I have this opportunity once more earnestly to bespeak thee for thy own salvation. I beg it of thee as one that must shortly be called away, to speak to thee no more till we come unto our endless state, that thou wouldest but sometimes retire into thyself, and use the reason of a man, and look before thee, whither thou art going; and look behind thee, how thou hast lived, and what thou hast been doing in the world till now; and look within thee, what a case thy soul is in, and whether it be fit to enter upon eternity; and look above thee, what a heaven of glory thou dost neglect, and consider thou hast God to be thine everlasting Friend or Enemy, as thou chusest, and as thou livest, and thou art always in his sight: yea, and look below thee, and

think where they are that died unconverted. And when thou hast soberly thought of all these things, then do as God and true reason shall direct thee. And is this an unreasonable request? I appeal to God, and to all wise men, and to thy own conscience, when it shall be awakened, if I speak against thee, or if all this be not for thy good: or if it be not true and sure, then regard not what I say: if I speak not that message which God hath commanded his ministers to speak, then let it be refused as contemptuously as thou wilt But if I do in Christ's name and stead beseech thee to be reconciled to God, refuse it at thy peril; and if God's beseeching thee shall not prevail against thy sloth, lust, thy appetite, against the desires of the flesh, against the dust and shadows of the world, remember it thou wilt, when, with fruitless cries and horror, thou art beseeching him too late.

I know, poor sinner, that flesh is brutish, and lust and appetite have no reason; but I know thou hast reason thyself, which was given thee to over-rule them, and that he that will not be a man, cannot be a saint, nor a happy man. I know thou livest in a tempting and wicked world, where things and persons will be daily hindering thee; but I know that this is no more to a man that by faith sees heaven and hell before him, than a grain of sand is to a kingdom, or a blast of wind to one that is flying for

his life. O man! that thou didst but know the difference between that which the devil and sin will give thee, if thou servest them, and that which God hath promised and sworn to give thee, if thou wilt heartily give up thyself to him? I know thou mayest possibly fall into company (at least among some sots and drunkards) that will tell thee, "All this is but troublesome preciseness, and making more ado than needs;" but I know withal what that man deserveth who will believe a fool before his Maker; for he can be no better than a miserable fool, that will contradict and revile the word of God; even the word of grace that would save men's souls.

And, alas, it is possible thou mayest hear some of the tribe of Levi (or rather of Cain) deriding this serious godliness as mere hypocrisy, and fanaticism, and self-conceitedness: as if you must be no better than the devil's slaves, lest you be proud in thinking that you are better than they; that is, you must go with them to hell, lest in heaven ye be proud hypocrites, for thinking yourselves happier than they.

It may be they will tell you that this talk of conversion is fitter for Pagans and infidels to hear, than for Christians and Protestants, because such men's big looks or coats may make the poison be the easier taken down: I will entreat thee but (as before God) to answer the following ques-

tions, or to get them answered, and then judge whether it be they or we that would deceive thee: and whether, as men used to talk against learning that have none themselves, so such men prate against conversion and the Spirit of God, because they have no such thing themselves.

Q. 1. I pray ask them, Whether it be a Puritan or Fanatic opinion, that men must die? And what all the pomp, wealth, and pleasure of the world will signify to a departing soul? Ask them, whether they will live on earth for ever, and their merry hours and lordly looks will have no end? And whether it be but the conceit of hypocrites and schismatics, that their carcases must be rotting in a darksome grave?

Q. 2. Ask them, Whether men have not an immortal soul, and a longer life to live when this is ended?

Q. 3. Ask them, Whether reason requires not every man to think more seriously of the place or state where he must be for ever, than of that where he must be for a little while, and from whence he is posting day and night? And whether it be not wiser to lay up our treasure where we must stay, than where we must not stay, but daily look to be called away, and never more to be seen on earth?

Q. 4. Ask them, whether God should not be loved with all your heart, and soul, and might? (Matt. xxii. 37;) and, Whe-

ther it be not the mark of an ungodly miscreant, to be "a lover of pleasure more than God," (2 Tim. iii. 4,) and "a lover of this world above him?" (1 John ii. 15,) and, whether we must not seek "first God's kingdom and his righteousness," (Matt. vi. 33,) and "labour most for the meat which never perisheth," (John vi. 27,) and "strive to enter in at the strait gate," (Luke xiii. 24,) and "give all diligence to make our calling and election sure?" (2 Pet. i. 10.)

Q. 5. Ask them, Whether without holiness any shall see God? (Heb. xii. 14; Matt. v. 8; Titus ii. 14;) and, whether the carnal mind is not enmity to God, and to be carnally minded is not death, and to be spiritually minded is not life and peace? and whether if ye live after the flesh, you shall not die and be condemned, and whether they shall not live and be saved that walk after the Spirit? and, whether any man be Christ's that hath not the Spirit? (Rom. viii. 1—10.)

Q. 6. Ask them, Whether any man hath treasure in heaven, whose heart is not there? (Matt. vi. 21;) and whether this be not the difference between the wicked and the godly, that the first make their bellies their god, and mind earthly things, and are enemies to the cross of Christ, (though perhaps not in name,) and the latter have their conversation in heaven, and being risen with Christ,

do set their affections on things above, and not on things that are on the earth, to which they are as dead, and their life is hid (or out of sight) with Christ in God, till Christ shall appear, and then they shall appear (even openly to all the world) with him in glory? (Phil. iii. 18, 19, 20; Col. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4.)

Q. 7. Ask them, Whether it be credible or suitable to God's word or working, that he that will not give the fruits of the earth without their labour, nor feed and clothe them without themselves, will yet bring them to heaven without any care, desire, or labour of their own, when he hath bid them not care for the one, and called for the greatest diligence in the other? (Matt. vi. 31, &c.) Yea, ask them, Whether these be not the two first articles in all faith and religion, "1. That God is. 2. That he is the rewarder of all them that diligently seek him."

Q. 8. Ask them, yea, ask your eyes, your ears, your daily experience in the world, Whether all or most that call themselves Christians, do in good earnest thus live to God in the Spirit, and mortify the flesh, with its affections and lusts, and seek first God's kingdom and righteousness, love him above all, and lay up treasure and heart in heaven: or rather, whether most be not lovers of the world, and lovers of pleasure, more than God, and live not after the flesh, and mind not most the things of

the flesh? I mention not now the drunkards, the flesh-pleasing gentlemen, that live in pride, fulness, and idleness, and sport and play away their precious time, nor the filthy fornicator, nor the merciless oppressor, nor the malignant hater of a godly life, nor the perjured betrayers of men's souls and the Gospel, or of their country's good, nor such other men of seared consciences, whose misery none questions;—but such as are blind and miserable: it is not those only I am speaking of, but the common, worldly, fleshly, and ungodly ones.

Q. 9. Ask them, Whether the name of a Christian will save any of these ungodly ones? And whether God will like men the better for lying and calling themselves Christians, when indeed they are none? And whether they dare preach to the people, that a Christian drunkard, or Christian fornicator, or oppressor, or a Christian worldling, needeth no conversion?

Q. 10. Ask them, Whether they say not themselves that hypocrisy is a great aggravation to all other sin? And whether God hath not made the hypocrites and unbelievers to be standards in hell? (Matt. xxiv. 51.) And, whether seeking to abuse God by a mock religion doth make such false Christians better than the poor Heathens and Infidels, or much worse? And whether he that knoweth his Master's will, and

doeth it not, shall not have the sorest stripes or punishment? (Luke xii. 47.)

Q. 11. Ask them, Whether in their baptism (which is their Christening as a covenant) they did not renounce the flesh, the world, and the devil, and vow and deliver up themselves to God, their Father, their Saviour, and their Sanctifier? And whether all or most men perform this vow? And whether a perjured covenant-breaker against God, is fitter for salvation than one that never was baptised?

Q. 12. Ask them, Whether the holy nature of God be not so contrary to sin, as that it is blasphemy to say that he will bring to heaven, and into the bosom of his eternal delights, an unholy and unrenewed soul? (2 Pet. i. 15, 16.)

Q. 13. Ask them, Why it was that Christ came into the world; whether it was not to save his people from their sins, Matt. i. 21;) and to destroy the works of the devil, (1 John iii. 8;) and to purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, (Titus ii. 14;) and to bring home straying souls to God, (Luke xv.;) and to be the way to the Father? (John xvi. 6.) And whether Christ will save that soul that is not converted by him, and cleansed from his sins? Or whether it be the dead image only of a crucified Jesus that is all their Saviour, while they will have no more of him?

Q. 14. Ask them, Why they believe, and were baptised in the name of the Holy Ghost? And whether a man can enter into the kingdom of heaven that is not born of the Spirit as well as of water? (John iii. 3, 6, 7,) and that is not converted, and begins not the world as it were anew, in a teachable and tractable newness of life, like a little child? (Matt. viii. 3.) And whether it be not a certain truth, that if any man have not the Spirit of God, he is none of his, (Rom. viii. 9.)

Q. 15. Ask them, Why Christ gave the world so many warnings of the damnableness of the Pharisees' hypocrisy, if hypocritical Christians may be saved? And what were these Pharisees? They were the masters of the Jewish church; the Rabbies, that must have high places, high tythes, ceremonies, and formal garments, and must be reverenced of all: that gave God lip-service without the heart, and made void his commands, and worshipped him in vain, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, and strictly tythed mint and cummin, while love, mercy, and justice were passed by; who worshipped God with abundance of ceremonies, and built the tombs and garnished the sepulchres of the saints, while they killed and persecuted those that did imitate them; and hated the living saints, but honoured the dead: they were the bitterest enemies and murderers of Christ, on

pretence that he was a blasphemer, and a seditious enemy to Cæsar and the common peace, and one that spoke against the temple: they were the greatest enemies of the Apostles, and silencers of those that preached Christ's Gospel, and persecuted them that called upon his name And had these no need of conversion, because they could say, God is our Father, when the devil was their father, (John viii. 44,) and that they were Abraham's seed? And are hypocritical Christians, drunken Christians, fornicating Christians, carnal, worldly, infidel Christians, (the contradiction is your own,) persecuting Christians, false-named, hypocritical Christians, as bad, yea, worse, as they abuse a more excellent profession? (Matt. xv. 7, 8, &c.)

Q. 16. Doth not the holy state of heaven require holiness in all that shall possess it? Can an unholy soul there see, and love, and praise, and delight in God for ever, and in the holy society and employment of the saints? Is he not more like a Mahometan than a Christian, that looketh for a sensual and unholy heaven?

Q. 17. What is the difference between the Church and the world? Is not the Church a holy society of regenerate souls? Yea, the Church visible is only those that in baptism vow holiness and profess it. Look these hypocrites in the face, and see whether they do not blush when they repeat in the

creed, "I believe in the Holy Ghost, I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, and the communion of Saints," who shall have the forgiveness of sins, and life everlasting. Ask them, whether they mean holy adulterers, holy worldlings, holy perjured persons? Ask them, whether they mean a communion of saints in a tavern, in a play-house, in a gaming-house, in a whore-house, or a jesting, canting, stage-play communion? If the Church be holy, be you holy, if you will be of the Church: if it be a communion of saints, make it not a communion of swine; and make not saints and their communion seem odious, either for their infirmities, or their crossness to your carnal interests or conceits.

Q. 18. Ask them, Whether there be a heaven and a hell, or not? If not, why are they pretended Christians? If there be, will God send one man to heaven, and another to hell, to so vast, so amazing a difference of states, if there be no great difference between them here? If holiness no more differenced Christians from others, than saying a sermon, or saying over a prayer, doth difference one from an Infidel, where were the justice of God in saving some, and damning others? And what were Christianity better than the religion of Antonine, Plato, Socrates, Seneca, Cicero, Plutarch, and others, if not much worse?

Go into London streets, and when you have talked with living prudent men, then go to the painter's shop, and see a comely picture; and to the looking-glass, and see the appearance of each passenger in a glass; and to the perriwig-shops, and see a wooden head with a perriwig upon the block, and you have something like the difference of a holy soul, and of a dead and dressed formal hypocrite.

Q. 19. Ask him, Whether kings and all men, make not a difference between man and man; the loyal and perfidious, the obedient and disobedient? and, whether they make not a difference themselves between a friend and a foe, between one that loveth them, and one that robbeth, hateth, or would kill them? And shall not the most Holy God make more difference between the righteous and the wicked?

Q. 20. But if they are dead in every point save carnal interest, ask them, Why they are preachers or priests? And if conversion and holiness be a needless thing, what use are they themselves of? And why must the country be troubled with them, and pay their tithes, and owe them reverence?—When these twenty questions are well answered, conclude you may be saved without conversion.

But if, poor soul, thou art fully convinced, and askest, "What shall I do to be con-

verted?" the Lord make thee willing, and save thee from hypocrisy, and I will quickly tell thee in a few words.

1. Give not over sober thinking of these things till thy heart be changed.

2. Come to Christ, and take him for thy Saviour, thy Teacher, thy King, and he will pardon all that is past, and fave thee.

3. Believe God's love, the pardon of sin, and the everlasting joys of heaven, that thou mayest feel that all the pleasure of the world and flesh are dung in comparison of the heavenly delights of faith, and hope, and holy love, and peace of conscience, and sincere obedience.

4. Sin no more wilfully; but forbear that which thou mayest forbear: (Isaiah lv. 7.)

5. Away from temptations, occasions of sin, and evil company, and be a companion of the humble, heavenly, and sincere: (Psalm cxix. 63, 115.)

6. Wait on God's Spirit in the diligent and constant use of his own means; read, hear, meditate, pray; pray hard for that grace that must convert thee: wait thus, and thou shalt not wait in vain; (Psalm xxxvii. 34, and lxix. 6.)

"Pity, O Lord, and persuade these souls; let not Christ's blood, his doctrine, his example, his Spirit, be lost upon them, and they lost for ever. Let not heaven be as no

heaven to them, while they dream and doat on the shadows of this world. And, O, save this land from a greater destruction than all our late plagues, and flames, and divisions, which our sins and thy threatenings make us fear. O Lord, in thee have we trusted, let us never be confounded."

Having thus contributed my endeavours in this preface to the furtherance of the design of this excellent book, I must tell thee, reader, that I take it for an honour to commend so masculine a birth into the world: the midwife of Alexander or Aristotle need not to be ashamed of her office. Who the author of this treatise was, how he preached, how he lived, how he suffered, (and for what) and how he died, his life and letters lately printed, fully tell you: and I earnestly commend the reading of them to all, but especially to ministers: not to tell them what men have here been forbidden to preach Christ's Gospel, and for what; nor what men they are that so many years have done it; but to tell you what men Christ's Ministers should be. But say not, he killed himself with excessive labour, therefore I will take warning, and take my ease: for, 1. He lived in perfect health all his days, notwithstanding all his labours, till after his hard and long imprisonment. 2. It was not the greatest labour of his times of liberty that hurt him, but his preaching six, seven, or eight times a week, after

he was silenced, because he could not speak to all his people at once. O make not an ill use of so excellent an example; say not, like Judas, "What needs this waste?" His labour, his life, his sufferings, his death, were not in vain. The ages to come that read his life, and read his little popular Treatise, and his Call to Archippus, shall say, They were not in vain. And though he was cut off in the midst of his age, and his longer labours and more elaborate writings thus prevented, take thankfully this small, but methodical, warm, and serious Treatise: read it seriously, and it cannot be but that it must do thee good.

I am one that have looked into books, sciences, and speculations of many sorts, and seriously tell thee, as a dying man, that after all my searches and experience, I have found that philosophical inquiries into the divine artifices and nature of things, have, among a great number of uncertainties, a great many pretty pleasant probabilities, which a holy soul can make good use of in admiring God, and may find us a lawful kind of sport: but in the moralities, which Atheists count uncertainties, the knowledge of God, and our duty and our hopes, the doctrine and practice of holiness, temperance, charity, and justice, and the diligent seeking and joyful hopes of life everlasting, is all the true wisdom, goodness, rest, and comfort of a soul. Whatever be the plea, this is the satisfying certainty,

the business, and the beautifying improvement of our lives.

RICHARD BAXTER.

READER,

HOW well were it if there were no more unconverted ones among us than those to whom this is directed! Unconverted persons, how many are there? but how few unconverted readers, especially of such books as this before thee! A Play or Romance better suits the lusts, and therefore must have more of the eye of such; what will cherish the evil heart only is most grateful, not what will change it. How many are there to whom this is directed, who will not know that they are the men! And how little hope is there that this excellent Treatise should reach its end with those that apprehend themselves not concerned in it! Art thou not one of them? Art thou a convert, or art thou yet in thy sins? What is sin? What is conversion? It may be thou canst tell me neither, and yet thou sayest a convert thou art: but to what purpose is it then likely to be, for the servants of God to treat with thee about this matter? Let them bid thee believe thou art a believer already: let them bid thee repent and turn to the Lord; that work, thou sayest, is not to do now. What can there be said to this man that is like to bring him to God? Friend, know

thyself better, or thou perishest without remedy. Thou mayest pray; but what hope is there in thy praying? Thou mayest read; but what hope is there in thy reading! Yet read on; this little hope there is, in this book there is eye-salve that may heal thee of thy blindness: in this book there is a glass that will shew thee thy face. Dost thou know thy own face when thou seest it? Behold thy very image in those marks that are given of an unconverted person: read and consider them, and then say if thou art not the man?

Be willing to know thyself, and to know the worst of thy case: wink not at the light; hide not thyself from thine own soul. Wilt thou never know thy disease till it be past remedy?

Much of our hardest work would be over if we could see the sinners to whom we are sent to be convinced sinners. If we could but open the blind eyes, there were hopes we should shortly raise the dead.

Sinner, of a truth, thou art in an evil case, whether thou knowest it or not: thou art among the dead, and there is but one step between thee and hell. Thou wilt not believe it, though it be told thee: yet once again let me beseech thee, come to the glass that is here presented to thee, and narrowly observe whether the very marks of the dead be not found upon thee.

If there be miscarriages in this first work,

if thou wilt not understand thy misery and thy danger, there is an end of all hope concerning thee. Whilst self-ignorance abides upon thee, all the counsels that are necessary to a man in thy case, will do thee no good: they are never like to prosper with thee, because thou will not count them proper for thee: who will be persuaded to do that which he believes is already done? Who will take the counsel of the physician, that doth not think himself sick? The man of God may spare his pains of persuading thee to conversion, whilst thou art confident that thou art converted already. Who will be at the pains of repentance, that concludes he hath repented? Who will be at the labours and pangs of the new birth, that is confident he is already passed from death unto life?

But, friend, let me reason a little with thee; thou art confident it it well with thee, yet why wilt thou not yield to thus much at least, to put it to the question, "Am I not mistaken?" Thou art worse than mad if thou thinkest such a question may not be put. Dost thou not know that thy heart is false and deceitful? Yet because it speaks good concerning thee, must it not be questioned whether it speaks true or no? Be so wise as to conclude, "I may be mistaken:" and thus come to the trial, whether thou art mistaken or not.

And if, upon trial by the marks th... are before thee, thou come to be undeceived, and

see thyself wrapped up in that misery which hitherto thou wouldst not suspect, the next news I expect to hear from thee is, "What shall I do to be saved?" O were it come to that once! then thou hast an answer at hand in those means thou wilt find prescribed thee: and because they are such as thou wilt hardly be persuaded to use, take in the motives that follow, and they will help down the means: consider both the one and the other, and if thou dost not find the means proper, and the motives weighty, I think I shall do thee no wrong if I tell thee thou art still of a blind mind and a hard heart.

Friend, the matter which this little book comes to treat with thee about, is of the highest importance; it is a matter of life or death. If thou sayest, "The terms upon which life is offered are hard;" consider, is it not harder to die? He is worthy to die who will lose his soul to save his labour. If thou couldst step down into the deep, and take a turn or two with those damned souls who are drenched with fire and brimstone, and bound in everlasting chains of vengeance; and shouldst ask them, Now what do you think of the terms upon which life was offered? Now what think you of that repentance, of that obedience, of that circumspection, self-denial, and the greatest severity which by the Gospel were imposed upon you? If you might once again have the same terms granted you for your redemp-

tion from this place of torment, would you yet say, Hard terms! let me rather die this death for ever than live such a life! let me broil in this furnace rather than escape with such difficulty? Shouldst thou ask them thus, that have felt what it is to be damned, what answer dost thou think they would make? O friend! never again groan under the difficulties of conversion, till thou believe them to be worse than hell. But I will no farther anticipate my worthy author.

Nor is there such need I should commend either himself or his works, for the author himself thou mayest at a small charge get acquainted with in that history of his life and death which is extant, concerning which I shall say, *Sic mihi contingat vivere, sique mori.*

And for this work of his, what commendation I shall give of it will be needed no longer than till thou hast read it over: thou wilt find such wine in it as needs no bush. This only I shall say, as far as my credit will go, it is exceedingly well worth thy most serious perusal: O mayest thou hear that voice (such a voice from heaven there is, whether thou hear it or no) *Tolle & lege,—Take up and read.* Read, friend, and read over again; read and understand; understand and pray; pray and consider, and consent unto him who, by the pen of his servant, calls to thee from heaven, "Why wilt thou die,—Turn and live." O suffer

this word of instruction and exhortation to open thy blind eyes, to turn thee from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that thou mayest receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified. *Et cum talis fueris memento mei.* When it is thus with thee, then pray for

Thy friend, and servant of thy soul,

RICHARD ALLEINE.

AN

EARNEST INVITATION TO SINNERS

TO

Turn to God,

IN ORDER TO THEIR ETERNAL SALVATION.

DEARLY beloved and longed for, I gladly acknowledge myself a debtor to you all, and am concerned, as I would be found a good steward to the household of God, to give to every one his portion; but the physician is most solicitous for those patients whose case is most hazardous; and the father's bowels are especially turned towards his dying child. The numbers of unconverted souls call for my most earnest compassion; and therefore to these, first, I shall apply myself.

But, Lord, wherewith shall I woo them? Wherewith shall I woo them? O that I could but tell! I would write unto them in tears; I would weep out every argument, verily, were I able, I would. O! how thankful should I be, if they would be prevailed with to repent and turn! "But, Lord, how insufficient am I for this work! Lord, what a task hast thou sent me to do! Alas, where-

with shall I make the heart to feel that is hard as a piece of the nether millstone! Shall I go and lay my mouth to the grave, and look when the dead will obey me and come forth? Shall I give the blind to see? From the beginning of the world was it ever heard that a man opened the eyes of the blind? But thou, O Lord, canst pierce the scales and prick the heart of the sinner: I can but draw the bow at a venture, but do thou direct the arrow between the joints of the harness, kill the sin, and save the soul of the sinner that casts his eyes on these labours."

But some of you do not know what is meant by *conversion*, and therefore for your sakes I shall shew what *conversion is*. Others cherish secret hopes of mercy, though they continue as they are; and for them I must shew the *necessity of conversion*. Others harden themselves with a vain conceit that they are converted already; unto whom I must shew the *marks of the unconverted*. Others, because they feel no harm, fear none, and so sleep on the top of the mast: to them I shall shew the *misery of the unconverted*. Others sit still because they see not their way out: to them I shall shew the *means of conversion*. And finally, for the quickening of all, I shall close with the *motives to conversion*.

CHAPTER I.

Shewing what Conversion is not.

Let the blind Samaritans worship they know not what; (John iv. 22;) let the heathen Athenians superscribe their altar, *Unto the unknown God;* (Acts xvii. 23:) they that know man's constitution cannot but know that the understanding having the empire in the soul, he that will go rationally to work, must labour to let in the light: therefore, that you may not mistake me, I shall shew you what I mean by the conversion I persuade you to endeavour after.

The devil hath made many counterfeits of conversion, and cheats one with this, and another with that; and such craft and artifice he hath, that (if it were possible) he would deceive the very elect. Now, that I may cure the damnable mistakes of some, who think they are converted when they are not, I shall shew you the nature of conversion, both what it is not, and what it is

1. *It is not the taking upon us the profession of Christianity.* Doubtless, Christianity is more than a name. If we will hear Paul, it lies not in word, but in power; (1 Cor. iv. 20.) If to cease to be Jews and Pagans, and to put on the Christian profession, had been true conversion, who better Christians than they of Sardis

and Laodicea? These were all Christians by profession, and had a name to live; but because they had but a name, are condemned by Christ. Are there not many that mention the name of the Lord Jesus, that yet depart not from iniquity? And will God receive these for true converts? What! converts from sin, when yet they live in sin! We find not only professors, but preachers of Christ, and wonder-workers, turned off because evil-workers; (Matt. vii 22, 23.)

2. *It is not the being washed in the Laver of Regeneration*, or putting on the badge of Christ in baptism. Many wear the livery of Christ, that yet never stand to their colours, nor follow their Leader. Ananias and Sapphira were baptized as well as the rest. How fondly do many mistake here, deceiving and being deceived! Dreaming that grace is necessarily tied to the external administration of baptism, and so every infant shall be regenerated, not only sacramentally, but really and properly. Hence men fancy that, being regenerated already when baptized, they need no farther work.

Friends and brethren, be not deceived; God is not mocked; (Gal. vi. 7.) Whether it be your baptism, or whatever else that you pretend, I tell you from the living God, that if any of you be prayerless

persons, or unclean, or malicious, or covetous, or riotous, or a lover of evil company: in a word, if you are not holy, strict, and self-denying Christians, you cannot be saved.

3. *It lies not in a moral righteousness.* This exceeds not the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, and therefore cannot bring us to the kingdom of God. St. Paul, while unconverted, touching the righteousness which is in the law, was blameless. The Pharisee could say, "I am no extortioner, adulterer, unjust." Thou must have something more than all this to shew, or else, however thou mayest justify thyself, God will condemn thee. I condemn not morality, but warn you not to rest here. Piety includes morality, as Christianity doth humanity; and grace includes reason; but we must not divide the tables.

4. *It consists not in an external conformity to the rules of piety.* It is too manifest men may have a form of godliness without the power. Men may pray long and fast often, and hear gladly, and be very forward in the service of God, though costly and expensive, (Isaiah i. 11,) and yet be strangers to *conversion*: they must have more to plead for themselves than that they keep their church, give alms, and make use of prayer, to prove themselves sound converts; no outward service but a

hypocrite may do it, even to the giving all his goods to feed the poor; (1 Cor. xiii. 3.)

5. *It lies not in the chaining up of corruption by education, human laws, or afflictions.* It is common to mistake education for grace; but if this were enough, who a better man than Jehoash? While Jehoida, his uncle, lived, he was very forward in God's service: but here was nothing more than good education; for when his good tutor was taken out of the way, he appears to have been but a wolf chained up, and falls into idolatry.

6. *It consists not in conviction, in a superficial change, or partial reformation.* A *Felix* may tremble under conviction, and a *Herod* amend many things. It is one thing to have sin alarmed by convictions, and another to have it captivated and crucified by converting grace. Many, because they have been troubled for their sins, think well of their case, miserably mistaking *conviction* for *conversion.* Others think, that because they have given off their riotous courses, and are broken off from evil company, and reduced to sobriety, they are now real converts, forgetting that there is a vast difference between being sanctified and civilized; and that many seek to enter into the kingdom of heaven, and are not far from it, and arrive to the *almost* of Christianity, (Acts xxvi. 28,) and yet fall short

at last. While conscience holds the whip over them, many will pray, hear, read, and forbear their delightful sins; but no sooner is the lion asleep, but they are at their vomit again. Who more religious than the Jews, when the hand of God was upon them?—yet, no sooner was the affliction over, but they forgot God, and shewed their religion to be a fit.

Hear, then, O sinners! Why would you wilfully deceive yourseles, or build your hopes upon the sand? I know he shall find hard work of it that goes to pluck away your hopes. It cannot but be ungrateful to you, and truly it is not pleasing to me. I set about it as a surgeon, when he is to cut off a putrefied member from his well-beloved friend, which of course he must do, though with an aching heart and a trembling hand. But understand me, brethren, I am only taking down the ruinous house, (which will otherwise speedily fall of itself, and bury you in the rubbish) that I may build it up fair, strong, and firm for ever. "The hope of the wicked shall perish." And hadst not thou better, O sinner, let the word convince thee now in time, and let go thy false hopes, than have Death to open thine eyes, and find thyself in hell before thou art aware? Let your conscience speak: what is it that you have to plead for yourselves. Is it that you wear Christ's livery?—that you bear his name?—that

you are of the church?—that you have knowledge in the points of religion; are civilized, perform religious duties, are just in your dealings, have been troubled in conscience for your sins? I tell you from the Lord, these pleas will never be accepted at God's bar. All this, though good in itself, will not prove you converted, and so will not suffice to your salvation. O! bethink yourselves of turning speedily and soundly: set to praying, to reading and studying your own hearts! rest not till God has made thorough work with you; for you must be other men, or else you are lost men.

But if these be short of conversion, what shall I say of the profane sinner? He must know from the Lord that made him, that he is far from the kingdom of God. May a man be civilized and not converted? Where then shall the drunkard and the glutton appear? May a man keep company with the wise virgins, and yet be shut out? Shall not a companion of fools much more be destroyed? May a man be true and just in his dealings, and yet not be justified of God? What then will become of thee, O wretched man, whose conscience tells thee thou art false in thy trade, and false of thy word, and maketh thy advantage by a lying tongue? If men may be brought to the performance of holy duties, and yet go down to perdition for resting in

them, and sitting down on this side of conversion, what will become of you, O miserable families, that live without God in the world? and of you, O wretched sinners! with whom God is scarce in all your thoughts? that are so ignorant that you cannot, or careless that you will not pray! O repent and be converted; break off your sins by righteousness: away to Christ for pardoning and renewing grace: give up yourselves to him; to walk with him in holiness, or else you shall never see God. O that you would take the warning of God! In his name I once more admonish you: turn you at my reproof: be sober, righteous, godly: wash your hands, ye sinners; purify your hearts, ye double-minded: cease to do evil: learn to do well: but if you will go on, you must die.

CHAPTER II.

Shewing what Conversion is.

I MAY not leave you with your eyes half open, as he that saw men as trees walking. The word is profitable for doctrine, as well as reproof; and therefore having thus far conducted you by the rocks of so many mistakes, I would guide you into the harbour of truth.

Conversion, then, is a thorough change both of the heart and life: I shall briefly describe it in its nature and causes.

1. *The Author, it is the Spirit of God,* and therefore it is called "the sanctification of the Spirit;" yet not excluding the other Persons in the Trinity: for the Apostle teaches us to "bless the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for that he hath begotten us again:" and Christ is said to give repentance unto Israel, and the children which God hath given him: yet this work is principally ascribed to the Holy Ghost, and so we are to be born of the Spirit: (John iii. 8.)

So then it is a work above a man's power. Never think that thou canst convert thy self: if ever thou wouldst be converted, thou must despair of doing it in thine own strength. It is a resurrection from the dead, a new creation, a supernatural work: (Gal. vi. 15.)

2. *The moving cause is internal or external.*

The internal mover is only free grace. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but of his own mercy he saved us.

God finds nothing in a man to turn his heart, but enough to provoke his loathing. Look back upon thyself: look upon thyself in thy blood: open thy sepulchre: behold thy putrid soul, thy loathsome members! Behold thy ghastly visage, thy crawling lusts, thy slime and corruption! How

then shall Holiness and Purity love thee? Be astonished, O heavens, at this! Be moved, O earth! Who but must needs cry, Grace! grace! Hear and blush, you children of the Most High; O you unthankful generation! One would think you would be doing nothing but praising and admiring God wherever you are. How can you make shift to forget such grace, or to pass it over with a slight mention? How affectionately doth Peter lift up his hands, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, who of his abundant mercy hath begotten us again;" (1 Pet. i. 3.) How feelingly doth Paul magnify the free mercy of God! "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, hath quickened us together with Christ; by grace ye are saved:" (Eph. ii. 4, 5.)

The external mover is the merit and intercession of the blessed Jesus. He hath obtained gifts for the rebellious, and through him it is that God worketh in us what is pleasing in his sight. Through him are all spiritual blessings bestowed upon us in heavenly places; (Eph. i. 3.) He intercedeth for them that believe not. Every convert is the fruit of his travail. O never was an infant born into the world with that difficulty that Christ endured for us! How emphatically he groaneth in his travail: all the pains that he suffered on his cross were

our birth-pains. He sanctified himself (that is, set apart himself as a sacrifice,) that we may be sanctified: (John xvii. 19.)

It is nothing then but the merit and intercession of Christ that prevails with God to bestow on us grace. If thou art a new creature, thou knowest to whom thou owest it, to Christ's pangs and prayers. Hence the natural affection of a believer to Christ. The foal doth not more naturally run after the dam, than a believer to Jesus Christ.

3. *The instrument is either personal or real.* The personal is the Ministry. "I have begotten you in Christ through the Gospel;" (1 Cor. iv. 15.) Christ's Ministers are they that are sent to open men's eyes, and to turn them to God.

O unthankful world, little do ye know what you are doing, while you are persecuting the Messengers of the Lord. These are they whose business it is (under Christ) to save you. Whom you have reproached and blasphemed? Against whom have you exalted your voice, and lifted your eyes on high? These are the servants of the Most High God, that shew unto you the way of salvation, (Acts xvi. 17,) and do you thus requite them? O foolish and unwise! O sons of ingratitude! against whom do you sport yourselves? These are the instruments that God uses to convert and save you.

The real instrument is the Word. We were begotton by the Word of Truth. This

is that which enlightens the eye and converteth the soul, (Psalm xix. 7, 8;) which maketh wise unto salvation; (2 Tim. iii. 15.) This is the incorruptible seed, by which we are born again. If we are washed, it is by the Word, (Eph. v. 26;) if we are sanctified, it is through the Truth; (John xvii. 17.)

You that have felt its renewing power, be for ever thankful for it: tie it about your necks; write it upon your hand. When you go, let it lead you: when you sleep, let it keep you: when you wake, let it talk with you: say with David, "I will not forget thy precepts, for by them thou hast quickened me;" (Psalm cxix. 93.) You that are unconverted, read the Word with diligence; flock to it where powerfully preached; fill the porches as the multitude of the impotent, blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water, (John v. 3;) pray for the coming of the Spirit of the Word: come off thy knees to the sermon, and come to thy knees from the sermon: the seed doth not prosper because not watered by prayers and tears, nor covered by meditation.

4. *The final cause is man's salvation, and God's glory.* We are chosen through sanctification to salvation, (2 Thes. ii. 13;) called, that we might be glorified, but especially that God might be glorified; that we should shew forth his praise, and be

fruitful in good works; (Col. i. 10.) O Christian, do not forget the end of thy calling! let thy light shine, (Matt. v. 16;) let thy lamp burn; let thy fruits be good, and many, and in season, (Psal. i. 3:) let all thy designs fall in with God's, that he may be magnified in thee.

5. *The subject is the sinner, and that in all his parts and powers, members and mind.* This change of conversion passes throughout the whole subject. A carnal person may have some shreds of good morality, but he is never good throughout the whole cloth, the whole body of holiness. Conversion is no repairing of the old building; but it takes all down, and erects a new structure: it is not the putting in a patch, or sewing on a list of holiness; but, with a true convert, holiness is woven into all his powers, principles, and practice. The sincere Christian is quite a new fabric; from the foundation to the top-stone, all fire-new: he is a new man, a new creature: all things are become new. Conversion is a deep work, a heart work; it turns all upside down, and makes a man be in a new world. It goes throughout with men; throughout the mind, throughout the members, throughout the motions of the whole heart and life.

1. *Throughout the mind.* It makes an universal change within. First it turns the balance of the judgment, so that God and

his glory weigh down all carnal and worldly interest. It opens the eye of the mind, and makes the scales of its native ignorance fall off, and turns men from darkness to light. The man that before saw no danger in his condition, now concludes himself lost for ever, except renewed by the power of grace. He that formerly thought there was but little hurt in sin, now comes to see it to be the chief of evils: he sees the unreasonableness, unrighteousness, and deformity that is in sin; so that he is affrighted with it, loaths it, flees it, and even abhors himself for it. He that could see little sin in himself, and could find no matter for confession before God, unless it were some few gross evils; now sin reviveth within him, he sees the rottenness of his heart, and desperate and deep pollution of his whole nature: he cries, "Unclean, unclean; Lord, purge me with hyssop, wash me thoroughly, create in me a new heart." He sees himself altogether become filthy, corrupt both root and branch: he writes unclean upon all his parts, and powers, and performances: he sees the blasphemy, and theft, and murder, and adultery that is in his heart, which, before, he was ignorant of. Heretofore he saw no form or comeliness in Christ, or beauty, that he should desire him; but now he finds the hidden treasure, and will sell all to buy this field.

Now, according to this new light, the

man is of another mind, another judgment than he was: now God is all with him; he hath none in heaven nor in earth like him; (Psal. lxxiii. 25.) He prefers him before all the world: his favour is his life; the light of his countenance is more than corn, or wine, or oil, the good that formerly he enquired after, and set his heart upon. Now let all the world be set on one side, and God alone on the other: let the harlot put on her paint, and present herself to the soul (as when Satan would have tempted our Saviour with her in all the glory of her kingdoms,) yet the soul will not fall down and worship her; but will prefer a naked, yea, a crucified, persecuted Christ before her. This is the convert's voice, "The Lord is my portion; whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

Secondly, *It turns the bias of the will, both as to means and end.*

1. *The intention of the will is altered.*

Now the man hath new ends and designs: now he intends God above all, and desires and designs nothing in all the world so much as that Christ may be magnified in him. He counts himself more happy in this than in all that the earth could yield, that he may be serviceable to Christ, and bring him glory in his generation. This is

the mark he aims at, that the name of Jesus may be great in the world.

Reader, dost thou view this, and never ask thyself, whether it be thus with thee? Pause awhile, and breathe on this great concern.

2. *The election is also changed*, so that he chooseth another way. He pitcheth upon God as his blessedness; upon Christ as the principal, and holiness as the subordinate means to bring him to God. He chooseth Jesus for his Lord. This choice is not made in a fright, as with the dying sinner, that only takes Christ rather than hell; but he deliberately resolves that Christ is his best choice, and would rather have him than all the good of this world. Again, he takes holiness for his path: he doth not of mere necessity submit to it, but he likes and loves it. He takes God's testimonies, not as his bondage, but as his heritage; yea, his heritage for ever; (Psal. cxix. 111.) He counts them not his burden, but his bliss; not his cords, but his cordials. He not only bears, but takes up Christ's yoke: he takes not holiness as the stomach does the loathed potion, but as the hungry does his beloved food. No time passes so sweetly with him as that which he spends in holy exercises; these are both his aliment and element, the desire of his eye, and the joy of his heart.

Put thy conscience to it as thou goest,

whether thou art the man. O happy man, if this be the case! but see thou be impartial in the search.

Thirdly, *It turns the bent of the affections.* These run all in a new channel: Jordan is driven back, and the water runs upwards against its natural course. Christ is his *hope*; (1 Tim. i. 1.) This is the prize, (Phil. iii. 8;) here his eye, here his heart is. He is contented to cast all over-board (as the merchant in the storm) so he may but keep this jewel.

The first of his *desires* is not after gold, but grace. He hungers after it; he seeks it as silver; he digs for it as hid treasure: he had rather be gracious than be great: he had rather be the holiest man on earth, than the most learned, the most famous, most prosperous. Once he said, O! if I were but in great esteem, and rolled in wealth, and swimmed in pleasure, then I should be a happy man: but now the tone is changed; O! saith the convert, if I had such measures of grace, such fellowship with God, though I were poor and despised, I should account myself a blessed man. Reader, is this the language of thy soul?

His *joys* are changed. He rejoiceth in the ways of God's testimonies more than in all riches. He delights in the law of the Lord, wherein once he had little favour. He hath no such joy as in the thoughts of

Christ, the fruition of his company, the prosperity of his people.

His *cares* are altered: he was once set for the world, and any scrap of time was enough for his soul: now he gives over caring for the asses, and sets his heart on the kingdom: now all the cry is, "What shall I do to be saved?" His great solicitude is now to secure his soul.

His *fears* are not now of suffering. Once he was afraid of nothing so much as the loss of his estate or esteem, or the pleasure of friends: nothing sounded so terrible to him as pain, or poverty, or disgrace: now these are little to him, in comparison of God's dishonour or displeasure. How warily does he walk, lest he should tread upon a snare! He feareth always, he looks before and behind, lest he should be overtaken with sin. It kills his heart to think of losing God's favour: this he dreads as his only undoing. No thought in the world pains him so much as to think of parting with Christ.

His *love* runs a new course. My Love is crucified, (said holy Ignatius;) that is, my Christ. This is my Beloved, saith the Spouse.

He can find no words sweet enough. "Let me see thee, O light of mine eyes: come, O thou joy of my spirit. Let me behold thee, O life of my soul. Appear unto me,

O my great delight. O my God, my life, and the whole glory of my soul. Let me find thee, O desire of my heart.

His *sorrows* now have a new vent. The view of his sins, the sight of Christ crucified, that would scarce stir him before, now how much do they affect his heart!

Commune then with thy own heart, and attend the general current of thine affections, whether they be towards God in Christ above all other concernments. Indeed, the great inquiry is, whether the judgment and will be steadily determined for God above all other good; and if the affections sincerely follow their choice, though it be not so sensibly as is to be desired, there is no doubt but the change is saving.

2. *Throughout the members.* Those that were before the instruments of sin, are now become the holy utensils of Christ's living temple; he that before abused his body, now possesses his vessel in sanctification and honour, in temperance, chastity, and sobriety, and dedicateth it to the Lord.

The eye that was once a wandering eye, a wanton eye, a haughty, a covetous eye, is now employed in weeping over its sins, in beholding God in his works, in reading his word, in looking up and down for objects of mercy, and opportunities for his service.

The ear that was once open to Satan's

call, and relished nothing so much as filthy (or at least frothy) talk, and the fool's laughter, is now bored to the door of Christ's house, and open to his discipline: it saith, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth," and waits for his words as the rain, and relisheth them more than the appointed food.

His heart now is become an altar of incense, where the fire of Divine love is ever kept in, and whence the daily sacrifice of prayer and praise, and sweet incense of holy desires and ejaculations, are continually ascending.

The mouth is become a well of life, his tongue as choice silver, and his lips feed many: now the salt of grace hath seasoned his speech, and cleansed his mouth from its filthy communication, flattery, boasting, railing, lying, swearing, back-biting, that once came like the flashes that proceed from the hell that was in the heart. The *throat* that was once *an open sepulchre*, now sends forth the sweet breath of prayer and holy discourse, and the man speaks in another tongue, in the language of Canaan, and is never so well as when talking of God and Christ, and the matters of another world. His mouth bringeth forth wisdom, his tongue is become the silver trumpet of his Maker's praise, his glory, and the *best member that he hath.*

3. *Throughout the life and practice.* The

man takes a new course. His conversation is in heaven. No sooner doth Christ call, but he straitway becomes a follower of him. When God hath the new heart, and writes his law in the mind, the man forthwith walks in his statutes, and keeps his judgments.

Sin hath no more dominion over him. "He hath his fruit unto holiness," and has an unfeigned respect to all God's commandments, making conscience even of little sins and little duties. His very infirmities, which he cannot help, are his soul's burden, and are like the dust in a man's eye, which though but little, yet is not a little troublesome. O man! dost thou read this, and never turn in upon thy soul by self-examination? The sincere convert is not one man at church and another at home: he is not a saint on his knees, and a cheat in his shop: he will not tythe mint and cummin, and neglect mercy and judgment, and the weighty matters of the law: he doth not pretend to piety, and neglect morality; but he turns from all his sins, and keeps all God's statutes, if not perfectly, yet sincerely, not allowing himself in the breach of any. Now he delights in the word, and sets himself to prayer, and opens his hand (if able) and draws out his soul to the hungry; and hath a good conscience, willing in all things

to live honestly, and to keep without offence towards God and man.

Here again you shall find the unsoundness of many that take themselves for good Christians: they are partial in the law, and take up with the cheap and easy duties of religion, but go not through with the work. They are as a cake not turned, half toasted and half raw. It may be, you shall have them exact in their words, punctual in their dealings, but they do not exercise themselves unto godliness; and for examining themselves, and governing their hearts, to this they are strangers. You may have them duly at the church; but follow them to their families, and there you shall see little but the world minded: or if they have a road for family duties, follow them to their closets, and there you shall find their souls are little looked after. It may be they seem otherways religious, but bridle not their tongues. It may be they come up to closet and family prayer; but follow them to their shops, and there you shall find them in a trade of lying, or some covert way of deceit

6. "The terms are either from which, or to which."

1. *The terms from which we turn in this motion of conversion*, are, *sin*, *Satan*, *the world*, and *our own righteousness*.

First, *Sin*. When a man is converted, he is

set upon revenge: his eye will he not pity, he falls out with sin; yea, with all sin: but most of all with his own sins, and especially with his bosom sin. Sin is now the butt of his indignation. His sins set abroach his sorrows. It is sin that pierces him and wounds him; he feels it like a thorn in his side, like a prick in his eyes: he is not impatient of any burden so much as of his sin. If God should give him his choice, he would chuse any affliction, so he might be rid of sin.

Before conversion, he had light thoughts of sin; he cherished it in his bosom, as Uriah his lamb: he nourished it, and it grew up together with him, and lay in his bosom, and was to him as a daughter: but when God opens his eyes by conversion, he throws it away with abhorrence, as a man would a loathsome toad, which in the dark he hath hugged fast in his bosom, and thought it had been some harmless bird. When a man is thoroughly changed, he is not only deeply convinced of the danger, but defilement of sin; and, O how earnest is he with God to be purified? He runs to Christ, and casts himself into the fountain that is open for sin and uncleanness. He abhors his once beloved sin, as a cleanly creature doe: the trough and mire wherein he sees the swine delight. The sound convert is heartily engaged against sin. He can forgive his other enemies; he can pity them: but here he is implacable; here his

hand will he not spare, though it be a right hand or a right eye: be it a gainful sin, most delightful to his nature, or support to his esteem with friends, yet he will rather throw his gain down the kennel, see his credit fall, or the flower of pleasure wither in his hand, than he will allow himself in any known way of sin. He will grant no indulgence; he will give no toleration; he draws upon sin wherever he meets it, and frowns upon it with this unwelcome salute, "Have I found thee, O mine enemy!"

Reader, hath thy conscience been at work while thou hast been looking over these lines? Hast thou pondered these things in thy heart? Hast thou searched the book within, to see if these things be so? If not, read it again, and make thy conscience speak whether or no it be thus with thee.

Hast thou crucified thy flesh, with its affections and lusts; and not only confessed but forsaken thy sins: if not, thou art yet unconverted. Does not conscience fly in thy face as thou readest, and tell thee thou livest in a way of lying for thy advantage; that thou usest deceit in thy calling; that there is some way of secret wantonness that thou livest in? Why then, do not deceive thyself, thou art in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity.

Does not thy unbridled tongue, thy intemperance, thy wicked company, thy neg-

lect of prayer, of reading and hearing the word, now witness against thee, and say, *We are thy works, and we will follow thee?* Or, if I have not hit thee right, does not one within tell thee that there is such or such a way that thou knowest to be evil, that yet thou dost tolerate thyself in, and art willing to spare? If this be the case, thou art to this day unregenerate, and must be changed or condemned.

Secondly, *Satan.* Conversion binds the strong man, spoils his armour, casts out his goods, turns men from the power of Satan unto God. The real convert serves now another master: he goes and comes at Christ's beck: he watches against the snares and baits of Satan, and studies to be acquainted with his devices: he is suspicious of his plots, and is very jealous in what comes athwart him, lest Satan should have some design upon him: he wrestles against principalities and powers; (Eph. vi. 12.) He entertains the messenger of Satan as men do the messenger of death: he keeps his eye upon his enemy, and watches in his duties, lest Satan should put in his foot.

Thirdly, *the world.* Before a sound faith, a man is overcome by the *world*; either he bows down to Mammon, or idolizes his reputation, or is a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God; (2 Tim. iii. 4.) Here is the root of man's misery by the fall—he is turned aside to the creature, instead of

God, and gives that great esteem, confidence, and affection to the creature, that is due to God alone.

O miserable man! what a deformed monster hath sin made thee! God made thee a little lower than the angels! sin, little better than the devils; a monster that hath his head and heart where his feet should be, and his feet kicking against heaven. The world that was formed to serve thee, is become thy ruler, and the deceitful harlot hath bewitched thee with her enchantments, and made thee bow down and serve her.

But converting grace sets all in order again, and puts God on the throne, and the world at his footstool: Christ in the heart, and the world under the feet. So St. Paul, "I am crucified to the world, and the world to me." Before this change all the cry was, Who will shew us any worldly good? But now he sings another tune—"Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon me," and take the corn and wine whosoever will: before, his heart's delight was in the world; then the song was, "Soul, take thy ease; eat, drink, and be merry, thou hast much goods laid up for many years;" but now all this is withered, and there is no comeliness, that he should desire it: and he tunes up with the sweet Psalmist of Israel, "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance, the lines are fallen to me in

a fair place, and I have a goodly heritage." He boasteth himself in God: nothing else can give him content. He hath written *vanity* and *vexation* upon all wordly enjoyments, and *loss* and *dung* upon all human excellencies. He has life and immortality now in chase; he trades forgrace and glory, and has a crown incorruptible in pursuit. He first seeks the kingdom of heaven and the righteousness thereof, and religion is no longer a matter by the bye with him, but the main of his care. Once he would do more for gain than godliness, more to pleasure his friend or his flesh than to please the God that made him: and God must stand by till the world were first served: but now, all must stand by; he hates father and mother, and life, and all, in comparison of Christ. Well, then, pause a little, and look within; doth not this nearly concern thee? Thou pretendest for Christ, but does not the world sway thee? Dost not thou take more real delight in the world than in him? Dost thou not find thyself better at ease when the world goes to thy mind, than when retired to prayer and meditation, or attending upon God's word and worship? No surer evidence of an unconverted state than to have the things of the world uppermost in our aim, love, and estimation.

With the sound convert, Christ hath the supremacy; how dear is his name to him! how precious is his favour! The name of

Jesus is engraven upon his heart. Here is the pearl of great price; here is his treasure; here is his hope. This is his glory, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." O it is sweeter to him to be able to say, Christ is mine, than if he could say, the kingdom is mine, the Indies are mine.

Fourthly, *your own righteousness.* Before conversion, man seeks to cover himself with his own fig-leaves, and to lick himself white with his own duties; (Mich. vi. 6, 7.) He is apt to set up his own righteousness, and does not submit to the righteousness of God. Now he casts away his filthy rags: now he is brought to poverty of spirit: all his inventory is, "Poor, and miserable, and wretched, and blind, and naked." He sees a world of iniquity in his holy things, and calls his once idolized righteousness but filth and loss, and would not for a thousand worlds be found in himself. Now he begins to set a high price upon Christ: he sees the need of Christ in every duty: he cannot live without him; he cannot pray without him: Christ must go with him, or else he cannot come into the presence of God: he sets himself down for a lost undone man without him: he is fixed in Christ, as the root of a tree spreads in the earth for stability and nutriment. Before, the news of Christ was a stale and sapless thing; but now how sweet is Christ. In a word, the voice of the convert is

that of the martyr—"None but Christ!"

The terms are either *ultimate* or *subordinate*. The *ultimate* is, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, whom the true convert takes as his all-sufficient and eternal blessedness. A man is never truly sanctified till his heart be set upon God above all things, as his portion. These are the natural breathings of a believer's heart—"Thou art my portion: my soul shall make her boast in the Lord: my expectation is from him; he only is my Rock and my Salvation; he is my Defence: in God is my salvation and glory; the Rock of my strength, and my refuge is in God."

Would you put it to an issue, whether you be converted or not? Now then let thy soul and all that is within thee attend.

Hast thou taken God for thy happiness? Where does the content of thy heart lie? Whence doth thy choicest comfort come in? Come, and with Abraham lift up thine eye eastward, and look about thee. What is that thou wouldst have in heaven, or in earth, to make thee happy? If God should give thee thy choice, as he did to Solomon; or should say to thee, as Ahasuerus to Esther, "What is thy petition, and what is thy request, and it shall be granted thee?" what wouldst thou ask? Go into the *gardens* of pleasure, and gather all the fragrant flowers from thence. Would these content thee? Go to the treasures of

Mammon; suppose thou mightest lade thyself from hence. Go to the trophies of honour; what thinkest thou of being a man of renown, and having a name like that of the great men of the earth? Would any of this, all this, suffice thee, and make thee a happy man? If so, then certainly thou art unconverted. If not, go farther; wade into the Divine excellencies, the stores of his mercies, the depths unfathomable of his all-sufficiency: doth this suit thee best, and please thee most? Dost thou say, "It is good to be here?" (Matt. xvii. 4.) "Here will I pitch my tent; here will I live and die?" Wilt thou let all the world go rather than this? Then it is well between God and thee: happy art thou, O man! happy art thou, that thou ever wast born: if God can make thee happy, thou must needs be happy; for thou hast vouched the Lord to be thy God? Dost thou say to Christ, "Thy Father shall be my Father, and thy God my God?" Here is the turning point. An unsound professor never takes up his rest in God; but converting grace cures the fatal misery of the fall, by turning the heart from its idol to the living God. Now says the soul, "Lord, whither shall I go? Thou hast the words of eternal life; (John vi. 68.) Here he centers; it is the entrance of heaven to him, to see his interest in God. When he discovers this, he saith, "Return unto thy rest, O

my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." And it is even ready to breathe out Simeon's song—"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace."

The mediate term of conversion is either *principal* or *less principal.*

The *principal* is Christ, the only Mediator between God and man. His work is to bring us to God. He is the way to the Father, the only door by which we may enter. Conversion brings over the soul to Christ as the only means to life, as the only way, the only name given under heaven. He looks not for salvation in any other but him, nor in any other with him; but throws himself on Christ alone, as one that casts himself with outspread arms upon the sea.

Thus the poor soul ventures on Christ, and resolvedly adheres to him. Before conversion, the man made light of Christ, minded the farm, friends, merchandise, more than Christ. Now Christ is to him as his necessary food, his daily bread, the life of his heart, the staff of his life. His great design is, that Christ may be magnified in him. His heart once said, as they to the Spouse, "What is thy beloved more than another?" He found more sweetness in merry company, wicked games, earthly delights, than in Christ: he took religion for a fancy, and the talk of great enjoyments for an idle dream; but now, "to

him to live is Christ." He sets light by all that is accounted precious, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.

All of Christ is accepted by the sincere convert: he loves, not only the wages, but the work of Christ: he is willing, not only to tread out the corn, but to draw under the yoke: he takes up the commands of Christ, yea, and the cross of Christ.

The unsound profefsor closes by halves with Christ; he is all for the salvation of Christ, but he is not for sanctification. This is an error in the foundation: whosoever loveth life, let him beware here; it is an undoing mistake, of which you have been often warned, and yet none more common. Jesus is a sweet name; but men love not the Lord Jesus in sincerity; (Eph. vi. 24.) They will not have him as God offers—to be a Prince and a Saviour: they divide what God has joined—the King and the Priest. Every man's vote is for salvation from suffering; but they desire not to be saved from sinning. Yea, many divide here again: they would be content to have some of their sins destroyed; but they cannot leave the lap of Delilah, or divorce the beloved Herodias. They cannot be cruel to the right eye or right hand sin. O! be infinitely tender here; your souls lie upon it. The sound convert takes a whole Christ, and takes him for all intents and purposes; without exceptions, without li-

mitatations, without reserves. He is willing to have Christ upon his own terms; upon any terms. He is willing to have the dominion of Christ, as well as deliverance by Christ: he saith with Paul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Any thing, Lord. He sends the blank to Christ, to set down his own conditions.

The *less principal* is the *laws, ordinances,* and *ways of Christ.* The heart that was once set against these, and could not endure their severity, now falls in love with them, and chooses them as a rule and guide for ever.

Four things, I observe, God works in every sound convert, with reference to the laws and ways of Christ, by which you may know your state, if you will be faithful to your own souls: therefore keep your eyes upon your hearts as you go along.

1. *The judgment is brought to approve of them as most righteous and most reasonable.* The mind is brought to like the ways of God; and the prejudices that were once against them are removed. The understanding assents to them all as holy, just, and good. His judgment is for the ways of God; and that not only the absolute, but comparative judgment: he thinks them not only best in general, but best for him: he looks upon the rules of religion not only as tolerable, but desirable; more de-

sirable than gold, yea, than much fine gold.

2. *The desire of the heart is to know the whole mind of Christ.* He would not have one sin undiscovered, nor be ignorant of one duty. It is the earnest breathing of his heart, "Lord, if there be any way of wickedness in me, do thou discover it. What I know not, teach thou me; and if I have done iniquity, I will do it no more." The gracious heart is willing to know the whole compass of his Maker's law. He receives with acceptation the word that convinceth him of any duty that he knew not, or minded not before, or discovereth any sin that lay hid before.

3. *The will is determined for the ways of Christ, before all the pleasures of sin, and the prosperities of the world.* His consent is not extorted by some extremity of anguish, nor is it only a sudden and hasty resolve, but he is deliberately proposed: his will is for Christ's laws and government: so that he takes them not up as his toil or burden, but his bliss. He had rather (if he might have his choice) live in a strict and holy life, than the most prosperous and flourishing life in the world. Christ keeps not his subjects in by force, but is King of a willing people. They are (through his grace) freely resolved for his service, and do it out of choice, not as slaves, but as the

son or spouse, from a spring of love, and a loyal mind. In a word, the laws of Christ are the convert's love, desire, delight, and continual study.

4. *The bent of his course is directed to keep God's statutes.* It is the daily care of his life to walk with God: he seeks great things; he hath noble designs; he aims at nothing less than perfection; he desires it, he reaches after it; he would not rest in any pitch of grace till he were quite rid of sin, and had perfected holiness.

A sound convert desires holiness for holiness' sake, and not only for heaven's sake. He would not be satisfied with so much as might save him from hell, but desires the highest pitch; yet desires are not enough. What is thy way and thy course? Is the drift and scope of thy life altered? Is holiness thy trade, and religion thy business? If not, thou art short of sound conversion.

And is this, that we have described, the conversion that is of absolute necessity to salvation? Then be informed, 1. That strait is the gate, and narrow the way that leadeth unto life: 2. That there are but few that find it: 3. That there is need of a divine power to convert a sinner to Jesus Christ.

Again, then be exhorted, O thou that readest, to turn it upon thine own self. What saith conscience? Does it not twitch thee as thou goest? Is this thy judgment,

and this thy choice, and this thy way, that we have described? If so, it is well. But doth not thy heart condemn thee, and tell thee there is such a sin thou livest in against thy conscience? Doth it not tell thee there is such and such a secret way of wickedness that thou makest no bones of? —such and such a duty that thou makest no conscience of?

Doth not conscience carry thee to thy closet, and tell thee how seldom prayer and reading are performed there? Doth it not carry thee to thy family, and shew thee the charge of God, and the souls of thy children and servants that are neglected there? Doth not conscience lead thee to thy shop, thy trade, and tell thee of some mystery of iniquity there? Doth it not sound thee in thy ear for thy loose company thou keepest, and the precious time thou misspendest?

O conscience! do thy duty: in the name of the living God, I command thee, discharge thine office: lay hold upon this sinner; fall upon him; arrest him; apprehend him; undeceive him! What! wilt thou flatter and smooth him while he lives in his sins? Awake, O conscience! What meanest thou, O sleeper? What! hast thou never a reproof in thy mouth? What! shall this soul die in this neglect of God and eternity, and thou altogether hold thy peace? Shall he go on still in his tres-

passes, and yet have peace? O! rouse up thyself, and do thy work: now let the preacher in thy bosom speak: cry aloud, and spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet: let not the *blood of his soul* be required at thy hands.

CHAPTER III.

Of the Necessity of Conversion.

It may be you are apt to wonder why I follow you with such earnestness, still ringing one lesson in your ears—that *you should repent, and be converted.* Were it a matter of indifferency, I would never keep so much ado: but would you not have me so solicitous for you, when I see you ready to perish? As the Lord liveth, before whom I am, I have not the least hopes to see one of your faces in heaven, except you be converted: I utterly despair of your salvation, *except* you will be prevailed with to turn thoroughly, and give up yourselves to God. Hath God said, "Except ye be born again, ye cannot see the kingdom of God," (John iii. 3,) and yet do you wonder why your Ministers so painfully travail in birth with you? Think it not strange that I am earnest with you to follow after holiness, and long to see the image of God upon you; never did any, nor shall any,

enter into heaven by any other way but this.

What is that thou dost count necessary? Is thy bread necessary? Is thy breath necessary? Then thy conversion is much more necessary. Indeed, this is the one thing necessary. Thine estate is not necessary: thou mayest sell all for the pearl of great price, and yet be a gainer by the purchase. Thy life is not necessary; thou mayest part with it for Christ to infinite advantage. Thine esteem is not necessary; thou mayest be reproached for the name of Christ, and yet be happy; yea, much more happy in reproach than in repute. But thy conversion is necessary: thy damnation lies upon it; and is it needful, in so important a case, to look about thee? On this one point depends thy making or marring to all eternity.

But I shall more particularly shew the necessity of conversion in five things, without this.

1. *Thy being is in vain.* Is it not a pity thou shouldst be good for nothing, an unprofitable burden on the earth? Thus thou art whilst unconverted; for thou canst not answer the end of thy being. Is it not for the divine pleasure thou art and wert created? Did he not make thee for himself? Art thou a man, and hast thou reason? Then bethink thyself why and

whence thy being is: behold God's workmanship in thy body, and ask thyself, To what end did God rear this fabric? Consider the noble faculties of thy heaven-born soul, to what end did God bestow these excellencies? To no other than that thou shouldest gratify the senses? Did God send men like the swallows into the world, only to gather a few sticks and dirt, and build their nests, and breed up their young, and then away? The very Heathens could see farther than this.

O man! set thy reason a little in the chair. Is it not pity such a goodly fabric should be raised in vain? Verily, thou art in vain, except thou art for God: better thou hadst no being, than not to be for him. Wouldst thou serve thy end, thou must repent and be converted: without this, thou art to *no purpose;* yea, to *bad purpose.*

First, to *no purpose.* Man unconverted is like a choice instrument that hath every string broke or out of tune: the Spirit of the living God must repair and tune it, and sweetly move it by the power of grace, or else thy prayers will be but howlings, and all thy services will make no music in the ears of the Most Holy. All thy powers and faculties are so corrupt in thy natural state, that except thou be purged from dead works, thou canst not serve the living God.

An unsanctified man cannot work the work of God: 1, *He hath no skill in it.*

He is as unskilful in the work as in the word of righteousness; (Heb. v. 13.) There are great mysteries as well in the practice as principles of godliness; now the unregenerate know not the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. You may as well expect him to read, that never learned the alphabet, as that a natural man should do the Lord any pleasing service. 2. *He hath no strength for it.* How weak is his heart! he is presently tired: the Sabbath, what a weariness is it! He is *without strength;* yea, he is dead in trespasses and sin. 3. *He hath no mind to it:* he desires not the knowledge of God's ways: he doth not know them, and he doth not care to know them. He knows not, neither will he understand; so that a man may as well expect the trees should speak, or look for motion from the dead, as for any service holy and acceptable to God, from the unconverted.

Secondly, *to bad purpose.* The unconverted soul is a very cage of unclean birds, a sepulchre full of corruption. O dreadful case! Was it such an abomination to the Jews, when *Antiochus* set up the picture of swine at the entrance of the temple! How much more abominable then would it have been to have had the very temple itself turned into a stable or a stye, and to have had the *Holy of Holies* served like the house of Baal, turned into a draught house? This is the very case of the unregenerate: all

thy members are turned into instruments of unrighteousness, servants of Satan.

O abuse insufferable! to see a heaven-born soul abused to the filthiest drudgery!—to see the glory of God's creation, the chief of the works of God, the lord of the universe, lapping with the prodigal at the trough! Was it such a lamentation to see those that fed delicately, sit desolate in the streets; and those that were clothed in scarlet, embrace dunghills? And is it not much more fearful to see the only thing that hath immortality in this lower world, and carries the stamp of God, become as a vessel wherein there is no pleasure? (which is but a modest expression of the vessel men put to the most sordid use.) O indignity intolerable! Better thou wert dashed into a thousand pieces, than continue to be abased to so filthy a service.

II. *Not only man, but the whole visible creation is in vain without this.* Beloved, God hath made most of the visible creatures in heaven and earth for the service of man, and man only is the spokesman for them. Man is in the universe like the tongue to the body, which speaks for all the members: the other creatures cannot praise their Maker but by dumb signs and hints to man, that he may speak for them. Man is the high-priest of God's creation, to offer the sacrifice of praise for all his fellow-creatures. The Lord God expecteth a tri-

bute of praise for all his works. Now all the rest bring in their tribute to man, and pay it in by his hand: so then if a man be false and faithless, God is wronged of all, and has no active glory from his works.

O dreadful thought! that God should build such a world as this, and lay out such infinite power, wisdom, and goodness thereupon, and man should be guilty of robbing and spoiling him of the glory of all! O think of this! While thou art unconverted, all the offices of the creatures to thee are in vain; thy meat nourishes thee in vain; the sun holds forth his light to thee in vain; thy clothes warm thee in vain; thy beast carries thee in vain: in a word, the unwearied labour and continual travail of the whole creation (as to thee) is in vain. The service of all the creatures that yield forth their strength unto thee, (that therewith thou shouldst serve their Maker,) is all but lost labour. Hence the whole creation groaneth under the abuse of unsanctified men, that pervert the creatures to the service of their lusts, quite contrary to the very end of their being.

III. *Without this thy religion is vain.* All thy religious performances will be lost, for they can neither please God nor save thy soul, which are the very ends of religion. Be thy services never so specious, yet God hath no pleasure in them. Is not that man's case dreadful, whose sacrifices

are as murder, and whose prayers as a breath of abomination? Many under convictions think they will begin to mend, and that a few prayers and alms will salve all; but alas, while your hearts remain unsanctified, your duties will not pass. God threatens it as one of the greatest temporal judgments, that they should build and not inhabit; plant, and not gather, and their labours should be eaten up by strangers. Is it so great a misery to lose our common labours, to sow in vain, and build in vain? How much more to lose our pain in religion, to pray, and hear, and fast in vain? This is an undoing and eternal loss. Be not deceived, if thou goest on in thy sinful state, though thou shouldst spread forth thine hands, God will hide his eyes: though thou make many prayers, he will not hear thee. If a servant do our work quite contrary to our order, he shall have rather stripes than praise. God's work must be done according to God's mind, or he will not be pleased; and this cannot be, except it be done with a holy heart.

IV. *Without this, thy hopes are vain.*

First, *Thy hopes of comfort here are in vain.* It is not only necessary to the safety, but comfort of your condition, that you be converted. Without this you shall not know peace: without the fear of God you cannot have the comfort of the Holy Spirit. If you have a false peace, continuing in

your sins, it is not of God's speaking, and then you may guess the author. Sin is a real sickness, yea, the worst of sickness; it is a leprosy in the head, the plague in the heart; it is brokenness in the bones: it pierceth, it woundeth, it racketh, it tormenteth. A man may as well expect ease when his bones are out of joint, as true comfort while in his sins.

Sin doth naturally breed distempers and disturbances in the soul. What a continual tempest is there in a discontented mind! What an eating evil is inordinate care! What is passion but a very fever in the mind? What is lust but a fire in the bones? What is pride but a deadly tympany? Or covetousness but an unfatiable and unsufferable thirst? or malice and envy, but venom in the very heart? And how can that soul have true comfort, that is under so many diseases? But converting grace cures, and so eases the mind: prepares the soul for a settled, standing, immortal peace: "Great peace have they that love thy commandments, and nothing shall offend them."

Secondly, *Thy hopes of salvation hereafter are in vain*: they are most injurious to God, most pernicious to thyself: there is death, desperation, blasphemy, in the bowels of this hope: 1. *There is death in it*: "Thy confidence shall be rooted out of thy tabernacles," (God will up with it root and branch; "it shall bring them to

the king of terrors." 2. *There is desperation in it:* "Where is the hope of the hypocrite, when God taketh away his soul?" Then there is an end for ever of his hope: "but the righteous hath hope in his death;" (Prov. xxiv. 32.) When nature is dying, his hopes are living; when his body is languishing, his hopes are flourishing: his hope is a living hope, but the other a dying, yea, a damning, soul-undoing hope: "for the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost." Wicked men are fixed in their carnal hope, and will not be beaten out of it: they hold it fast, they will not let it go; yea, but death will knock off their fingers: though we cannot undeceive them, death and judgment will: when death strikes his dart through thy liver, it will out thy soul and thy hopes together. 3. *There is blasphemy in it.* To hope we shall be saved, though continuing unconverted, is to hope we shall prove God a liar. He hath told you, that whatever you be or do, nothing shall avail to salvation, unless you become new creatutes; (Gal. vi. 15.) To say, God is merciful, and we hope will save us nevertheless, is in effect to say, *We hope God will not do as he says.*

"Why, but we hope in Jesus Christ: we put our whole trust in God, and therefore doubt not but we shall be saved."

Ans. 1. *This is not to hope in Christ, but*

against Christ. To hope to see the kingdom of God without being born again,—to hope to find eternal life in the broad way, is to hope Christ will prove a false prophet. It is David's plea—"I hope in thy word;" but this hope is against the word. Shew me a word of Christ for thy hope, that he will save thee in thy profane neglect of his service, and I will never go to shake thy confidence.

2. *God doth with abhorrence reject this hope.* God will not endure to be made a prop to men in their sins: the Lord rejected those presumptuous sinners that went on still in their trespasses, and yet would stay themselves upon Israel's God, (Isaiah xlviii. 1,) as a man would shake off the briars that cleave to his garment.

"But would you have us despair?"

Ans. You must despair of ever coming to heaven as you are; that is, while you remain unconverted. You must despair of ever seeing the face of God, without holiness; but you must by no means despair of finding mercy, upon your thorough repentance and conversion; neither must you despair of attaining to repentance and conversion in the use of God's means.

V. *Without this, all that Christ hath done and suffered will be (as to you) in vain,* (John xiii. 8; Titus ii. 14;) that is, it will no way avail you to salvation. Many urge this as a sufficient ground for their

hopes—that Christ died for sinners; but I must tell you, Christ never died to save impenitent and unconverted sinners, so continuing; (2 Tim. ii. 9.) A great divine was wont, in his private dealings with souls, to ask two questions; 1, What hath Christ done for you? 2, What hath Christ wrought in you? Without the application of the Spirit in regeneration, we can have no saving interest in the benefits of redemption. I tell you from the Lord, Christ himself cannot save you if you go on in this state.

1. *It were against his trust.* The Mediator is the servant of the Father, (Isa. xlii. 1;) shews his commission from him, and acts in his name. Now Christ would quite cross his Father's glory, his greatest trust, if he should save men in their sins, for this were to overturn all his counsels, and to offer violence to all his attributes.

First, *to overturn all his counsels;* of which this is the order, that men should be brought through sanctification to salvation. If thou canst repeal the law of God's immutable counsel, or corrupt him whom the Father hath sealed, to go directly against his commission, then, and not otherwise, mayest thou get to heaven in this condition. To hope that Christ will save thee while unconverted, is to hope that Christ will falsify his trust. Be assured, Christ will

save none in a way contrary to his Father's will.

Secondly, *to offer violence to all his attributes.* 1. *To his justice;* for the righteousness of God's judgment lies in rendering to all according to their works. Now should men sow to the flesh, and yet of the Spirit reap everlasting life, where were the glory of Divine Justice, since it would be given to the wicked according to the work of the righteous? 2. *To his holiness.* If God should not only save sinners, but save them in their sins, his holiness would be exceedingly defaced. It would be offering extreme violence to the infinite purity of the Divine Nature to have such to dwell with him. If holy David would not endure such in his house, no, nor in his sight, (Psalm ci. 3, 7,) can we think God will? 3 *To his veracity;* for God hath declared from heaven, that "if any shall say he shall have peace, though he shall go on in the imagination of his heart, his wrath shall smoke against that man:—that they (only) that confess and forsake their sins shall find mercy, (Prov. xxviii. 13;)—that they that shall enter into his holy hill, must be of clean hands, and of a pure heart;" (Psalm xxiv. 3, 4.) Where were God's truth, if, notwithstanding all this, he should bring men to salvation without conversion? O desperate sinner, that darest to hope that Christ will put the lie upon his Father, and

nullify his word to save thee! 4. *To his wisdom:* for this were to throw away the choicest of mercies on them that would not value them, nor were any way suited to them. First, *they would not value them:* the unsanctified sinner puts but little price upon God's great salvation. Now would it stand with wisdom to force pardon and life upon those that would give no thanks for them? Secondly, *they are no way suited to them.* The Divine Wisdom is seen in suiting things to each other, the means to the end; the quality of the gift to the capacity of the receiver. Now, if Christ should bring an unregenerated sinner to heaven, he could have no more felicity there than a beast, if you should bring him into a beautiful room, to the society of learned men, and a well-furnished table; whereas the poor thing had much rather be grazing with its fellow-brutes. Alas, what would an unsanctified creature do in heaven? He could take no content there, because nothing suits him. The place does not suit him; he would be quite out of his element, as a fish out of water. The company does not suit him. What communion hath darkness with light?—corruption with perfection? The employment does not suit him: the anthems of heaven fit not his mouth, suit not his ear. Canst thou charm thy beast with music? or, wilt thou bring him to thy organ, and expect that he

should keep time with the tuneful choir?—

5. *To his immutability, to his omnisciency* or *omnipotency;* for this is enrolled in the decrees of the court above, that none but the *pure in heart shall ever see God.* This is laid up with him, and sealed among his treasures. Now, if Christ yet bring any to heaven unconverted, either he must get them in without his Father's knowledge; and then where is his omniscience? or against his will; and then where were his omnipotence? or he must change his will; and then where were his immutability?

Sinner, wilt thou not give up thy vain hope of being saved in this condition? Shall the earth be forsaken for thee? or the rocks moved out of their place? (Job xviii. 4.) May I not much more reason so with thee? Shall the laws of heaven be reversed for thee? Shall the everlasting foundations be overturned? Shall Christ put out the eye of his Father's omniscience, or shorten the arm of his eternal power for thee? Shall Divine Justice be violated for thee? or the glory of his holiness be blemished? O the impossibility, absurdity, and blasphemy that is in such a confidence!—To think Christ will euer save thee in this condition, is to make thy Saviour to become a sinner, and to do more wrong to the infinite majesty of God than all the devils in hell ever did or could do; and yet wilt thou not give up such a blasphemous hope?

II. *Against his word.* We need not say, "Who shall ascend into heaven, to bring down Christ from above? or who shall descend into the deep, to bring up Christ from beneath? The word is nigh us." Are you agreed that Christ should end the controversy? Hear then his own words,—Except you be converted, you shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven; (Matt. xviii. 3.) You must be born again; (John iii. 7.) If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me; (John viii. 8.) Repent or perish; (Luke xiii. 3.) One word, one would think, were enough from Christ; but how often and earnestly doth he reiterate it! "Verily, verily, except a man be born again, he shall not see the kingdom of God;" (John iii. 3, 5.) And wilt thou yet believe thy own presumptuous confidence, directly against Christ's words? He must go quite against the law of his kingdom, to save thee in this unconverted state.

III. *Against his oath.* He hath lifted up his hand to heaven—he hath sworn, that those that remain in unbelief, and know not his ways, (that is, are ignorant of them, or disobedient to them,) shall not enter into his rest; (Psal. xcv. 11; Heb. iii. 18.) And wilt thou not yet believe, O sinner, that he is in earnest? Canst thou hope he will be forsworn for thee? The covenant of grace is confirmed by an oath, and sealed

by blood, (Heb. vi. 17; Matt. xxvi. 28:) but all must be made void, if thou be saved living and dying unsanctified.

IV. *Against his honour.* God will shew his love to the sinner, as withal to shew his hatred to sin: therefore "he that names the name of Jesus must depart from iniquity;" and he that hath hope of life by Christ, must purify himself as he is pure. The Lord Jesus would have all the world to know, that though he *pardons* sin, he will not *protect* it.

V. *Against his offices.* "God hath exalted him to be a Prince and a Saviour." He would act against both, should he save men in their sins! It is the office of a king "to be a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well. He is a Minister of God; an avenger, to execute wrath on him that doeth evil." Now should Christ favour the ungodly, (so continuing) and take those to reign with him that would not that he should reign over them, (Luke xix. 27,) this would be quite against his office. What king would take rebels in open hostility into his court? What were this but to betray life, kingdom, government, and all together?

Again; as Christ would not be a Prince, so neither would he be a Saviour, if he should do this; for his salvation is spiritual: he is called Jesus, because he saves his people from their sins: so that should he

save them in their sins, he would be neither Lord nor Jesus.

Application. Arise then: what meanest thou, O sleeper? Awake, O secure sinner! lest thou be consumed in thine iniquity. Say as the lepers, "If we sit here we shall die." Verily, it is not more certain that thou art now out of hell, than that thou shalt speedily be in it, except thou repent and be converted. There is this one door for thee to escape by. Arise, then, O sluggard, and shake off thine excuses. How long wilt thou slumber, and fold thy hands to sleep? Wilt thou lie down in the midst of the sea, or sleep on the top of the mast? There is no remedy, but thou must either turn or burn. There is an unchangeable necessity of the change of thy condition, except thou art resolved to abide the worst of it, and to try it out with the Almighty! If thou lovest thy life, O man, arise and come away!

Oh, how wilful will thy destruction be, if thou shouldest yet harden thyself in thy sinful state: but none of you can say but you have had fair warning: yet methinks I cannot tell how to leave you so. It is not enough for me to have delivered my own soul. What! shall I go away without my errand? Will none of you arise and follow me? Have I been all this while speaking to the wind? Have I been charming the deaf adder? If you be men, and

not senseless stocks, stand still and consider whither you are going. If you have the reason and understanding of men, dare not to run into the flames, and fall into hell with your eyes open; but bethink yourselves, and set to the work of repentance. What! men, and yet run into the pit, when the very beasts will not be forced in! What! endowed with reason, and yet dally with death, and hell, and the vengeance of the Almighty! Will you not hasten your escape from eternal torments? O! shew yourselves men, and let reason prevail with you. Is it a reasonable thing for you to contend against the Lord your Maker? or to harden yourselves against his word, as though the Strength of Israel would lie? Is it reasonable that an understanding creature should lose, yea, live quite against the very end of his being, and be as a broken pitcher, only fit for the dunghill? "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth," and let the creatures without sense be judges, if this be reason, that man whom God hath nourished and brought up, should rebel against him! Judge in your own selves, is it a reasonable understanding for briars and thorns to set themselves in battle against the devouring fire? (Isa. xxvii. 4;) or for the potsherd of the earth to strive with its Maker?

What shall I say? I could spend myself in this argument. O that you would

but hearken to me, and that you would presently set upon a new course! Will you not be made clean! When shall it once be? Reader, shall I prevail with thee for one? Wilt thou sit down and consider, whether it be not best to turn. Come, and let us reason together. Is it good for thee to be here? Wilt thou sit still till the tide comes upon thee? Is it good for thee to try whether God will be true to his word, and to harden thyself in a conceit that all is well with thee, while thou remainest unsanctified?

O distracted sinners! What will their end be! What will they do in the day of visitation? Whither will they flee for help? Where will they leave their glory? (Isa.x.3.) How powerfully hath sin bewitched them! How effectually hath the god of this world blinded them! How strong is the delusion! How uncircumcised their ears! how obdurate their hearts! Satan hath them at his beck. But how long may I call, and can get no answer? Though I tell them there is death in the cup, yet they will drink it up. Though I tell them it is the broad way, and endeth in destruction, yet they will go on in it: I warn them, yet cannot win them. Sometimes I think the mercies of God will melt them, and his winning invitations will overcome them; but I find them as they were: sometimes that the ter-

rors of the Lord will persuade them yet; neither will this do it. I am to them as the song of one that hath a pleasant voice, yet I cannot get them to come under Christ's yoke. "What shall I do for the daughter of my people? O Lord God, help! Alas! shall I leave them thus? If they will not hear me, yet do thou hear me. O that they may yet live in thy sight! Lord, save them, or else they perish. My heart would melt to see their houses on fire about their ears, when they were fast asleep in their beds; and shall not my soul be moved within me, to see them falling into endless perdition! Lord, have compassion, and save them out of the burning; put forth thy Divine power, and the work will be done; but as for me, I cannot prevail."

CHAPTER IV.

Shewing the Marks of the Unconverted.

Help, O all-searching Light, and let thy discerning eye discover the rotten foundation of the self-deceiver: and lead me, O Lord God, as thou didst the prophet, into the chambers of imagery, and dig through the wall of sinners' hearts, and discover the hidden abominations that are lurking out of sight. O send thy angel before me, as thou didst before Peter, and make even the iron gates to fly open of their own accord. And as Jonathan no sooner tasted the honey

but his eyes were enlightened, so grant, O Lord, that when the poor deceived souls shall cast their eyes upon these lines, their minds may be illuminated, and their consciences awakened, that they may see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and be converted, and thou mayest heal them.

This must be premised, that it is certain, men may have a confident persuasion that their hearts and states are good, and yet be unsound. Yea, they may be confident they are rich, and increased in grace. "There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness," Prov. xxx. 12. So that they are miserably deceived that take a strong confidence for a sufficient evidence. They that have no better proof than a strong persuasion that they are converted, are certainly strangers to conversion.

But some of the unconverted carry their marks in their forehead more openly; and some in their hands more covertly. The Apostle reckons up some upon whom he writes the sentence of death; as in these dreadful catalogues, which I beseech you to attend to with all diligence. Eph. v. 5, 6, "For this you know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath

of God upon the children of disobedience." Rev. xxi. 8, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." 2 Cor. vi. 6, 10, "Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God;" (see Gal. v. 19, 20.) Woe to them that have their names written in these rolls; such may know, as certainly as if God had told them from heaven, that they are under an impossibility of being saved in this condition.

These (past all dispute) are unconverted; they carry their marks in their foreheads.

1. The *Uncleau.* These are ever reckoned among the *goats*, and have their names in all the before-mentioned catalouges.

2. The *Covetous.* These are ever branded for *idolaters*, and the doors of the kingdom are shut against them by name.

3. *Drunkards.* Not only such as drink away their reason, but such as are strong for strong drink. The Lord fills his mouth with woes against these, and declares them

to have no in heritance in the kingdom of God.

4. *Liars.* The God that cannot lie has told them, that there is no place for them in his kingdom.

5. *Swearers.* The end of these, without deep and speedy repentance, is swift destruction.

6. *Railers* and *Backbiters*, that take up a reproach against their neighbour, or wound him behind his back.

7. *Theives, extortioners, oppressors*, that over-reach their brethren, when they have them at an advantage; these must know that God is the avenger of all such, (1 Thes. iv. 6.) Hear, O ye false, and purloining, and wasteful servants; hear, O ye deceitful tradesmen, hear your sentence; God will certainly hold his door against you, and turn you treasures of unrighteousness into the treasures of wrath, and make your ill-gotten silver and gold to torment you like burning metal in your bowels.

8. *All that live in the neglect of God's worship*, that hear not his word, that call not on his name, that restrain prayer before God, that mind not their own or their family's souls.

Sinner, consider diligently whether thou art or not to be found in one of these ranks; for if this be thy case, thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity; for all these carry their marks in

their foreheads, and are undoubtedly the sons of death.

And if so, the Lord pity our poor congregations. O how small a number will be left, when these are out! Alas, on how many doors, on how many faces must we write, "Lord, have mercy upon us!" Sirs, what shift do you make to keep up your confidence of your good state, when God from heaven declares against you, and pronounces you in a state of damnation? Beloved, God hath written it as with a sun-beam in the book by which you must be judged, that none such (except renewed by converting grace) shall escape the damnation of hell!

And now, I imagine, many will begin to bless themselves, and think all is well, because they cannot be spotted with gross evils: but I must tell you, that there are another sort of unsanctified persons, that carry not their marks in their foreheads, but more secretly in their hands; these frequently deceive themselves and others, and pass for good Christians. Many pass undiscovered, till death and judgment bring all to light. Brethren, I beseech you deeply to lay to heart this awakening consideration, "That multitudes miscarry by the hand of some secret sin, that is not only hidden from others, but, for want of observing their own hearts, even from themselves." A man may be free from

open pollutions, and yet die at last by the fatal hand of some unobserved iniquity. And there are these following hidden sins, through which souls go down by numbers into the chambers of death. As you love your lives, read carefully, with a holy jealousy of yourselves, lest you should be the persons concerned.

1. *Wilful ignorance.* O how many poor souls doth this sin kill in the dark! While they think verily they have good hearts, and are in the ready way to heaven! This is the murderer that despatches thousands in a silent manner, when they suspect nothing. Ah! would it not have grieved a man's heart to have seen the woeful spectacle, when the *poor Protestants* were shut up (a multitude together) in a barn, and a butcher comes, and leads them one by one (blindfold) to a block, where he slew them one after another? But how much more should your hearts bleed to think of the hundreds in great congregations, that wilful ignorance doth butcher in secret, and leads blindfold to the block? Beware this be not your case; make no plea for ignorance; if you spare that sin, know that it will not spare you; and would a man keep a murderer in his bosom?

2. *Secret reserves in closing with Christ.* To forsake all for Christ, to hate father and mother, yea, a man's own life for him; "This is a hard saying." Some will do

much, but they will not be entirely devoted to Christ; they must have the sweet sin; they have secret exceptions for life, liberty, or estate. Many take Christ thus, hand over head, and never cast up the cost; and this error in the foundation mars all, and secretly ruins them for ever.

3. *Formality in religion.* Many rest in the outside of religion, in the external performance of holy duties. And this oft-times does most effectually deceive men, and more certainly undo them than open looseness. They hear, they fast, they pray, they give alms, and therefore will not believe but their case is good. Whereas, resting in the work done, and coming short of the inward power of religion, they fall at last into the burning lake, from the confident persuasion of their being in the ready way to heaven. O dreadful case, when a man's religion shall serve only to harden him, and effectually to deceive his soul!

4. *Trusting in their own righteousness.* When men trust in their own righteousness, they reject Christ's. Beloved, you had need be watchful; for not only your sins, but your duties, may undo you; a man may as certainly miscarry by his seeming righteousness, as by gross sins: when he trusts to this as his righteousness before God, for the satisfying of Divine justice, and obtaining of his own pardon; for this

is to put Christ out of office, and make a saviour of our own duties and graces.

5. *The resting in a certain pitch of religion.* When they have so much as will save them, (as they suppose) they look no farther, and so shew themselves short of true grace, which will ever put men upon aspiring to further degrees of perfection.

6. *The love of the world.* This is the sure evidence of an unsanctified heart; (1 John ii. 15.)

But how close doth this sin lurk oft-times under a fair covert of forward profession! Yea, such a power of deceit is there in this sin, that many times, when every body else can see the man's worldliness, he cannot see it himself, but hath so many colours, and excuses, and pretences for his eagerness after the world, that he doth blind his own eyes, and perish in his self-deceit. How many are there, with whom the world hath more of their hearts than Christ, who mind earthly things, and thereby are like to end in destruction? Yet ask these men, and they will tell you confidently, they prize Christ above all; God forbid else! and yet they see not their own earthly-mindedness, for want of a narrow observation of the workings of their own hearts. Did they but carefully search, they would quickly find that their greatest content is in the world, (Luke xii. 19;) and their greatest

care and main endeavour is to get and secure the world: which is a certain demonstration of an unconverted sinner.

7. *Resentment against those that disrespect them, or are injurious to them.* O how do many, that seem to be religious, remember injuries and carry grudges, and will return men as good as they bring, rendering evil for evil, directly against the rule of the gospel, the pattern of Christ, and the nature of God. Doubtless where this evil is kept in the heart, that person is in a state of death.

Reader, doth nothing of this touch thee? Art thou in one of the fore-mentioned ranks? O search, and search again! take thy heart solemnly to task; woe unto thee, if, after thy profession, thou shouldst be found under the power of wilful ignorance, lost in formality, drowned in earthly-mindedness, envenomed with malice, or exalted in an opinion of thine own righteousness; this would be a sad discovery, that all thy religion was in vain. But I proceed,

8. *Pride.* When men love the praise of men, more than the praise of God, it is certain they are in their sins. When men see not, nor groan under the pride of their own hearts, it is a sign they are stark dead in sin O how secretly doth this sin live and reign in many hearts, and they know it not.

9. *Carnal security, or a presumptuous*

confidence that their condition is already good. Many cry peace and safety, when sudden destruction is coming upon them. Men are willing to cherish in themselves, even upon light grounds, a hope that their condition is good, and so look not out after a change, and by this means perish in their sins. Are you at peace? Shew me upon what grounds your peace is maintained. Is it Scripture peace? Can you shew the distinguishing marks of a sound believer? If not, fear this peace more than any trouble; and know, that a carnal peace doth commonly prove the most mortal enemy of the poor soul!

By this time, methinks, I hear my readers crying out with the disciples, "Who then shall be saved?" Set out from among our congregations all the profane on the one hand, and then all these sorts of close and self-deceiving hypocrites on the other, and tell me then, whether it be not a remnant that shall be saved.

And now, conscience, do thy office: speak out, and speak home to him that readeth these lines. If thou find any of these marks upon him, thou must pronounce him utterly unclean. Take not up a lie into thy mouth, speak not peace to him to whom God speaks no peace. I require thee, in the name of God, to go with me to the search of the suspected house. Wilt thou hold thy peace at such a time as this?

I adjure thee, by the living God, that thou tell us the truth. Is the man converted, or is he not? Doth he allow himself in any way of sin, or does he not? Doth he truly love, and please, and delight in God, or not? Come, put it to an issue.

How long shall this soul live at uncertainties? O conscience, bring in thy verdict. Is this man a new man, or is he not? How dost thou find it? Hath there passed a thorough and mighty change upon him, or not? When was the time? where was the place? or what were the means by which this thorough change was wrought in his soul? Speak, Conscience! or if thou canst not tell time and place, canst thou shew Scripture-evidence that the work is done? Hath the man ever been taken off from his false bottom, from the false hopes and false peace, wherein he once trusted? Hath he been convinced of sin, and of his lost and undone condition, and brought out of himself, and off from his sins, to give himself up entirely to Jesus Christ? Or, dost thou not find him to this day, under the power of ignorance, or in the mire of profaneness? Hast thou not taken upon him the gains of unrighteousness? Dost thou not find him a stranger to prayer, a neglecter of the word, a lover of this present world? Dost thou not often catch him in a lie? Dost thou not find his heart fermented with malice, or burning with lust, or going after

his covetousness? Speak plainly to all the fore-mentioned particulars: canst thou acquit this man, this woman, from being one of the characters here described? If he be found to be one of them, set him aside; he must be converted, and made a new creature, or else he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Beloved, be not your own betrayers. Do not deceive your own hearts, nor set your hands to your own ruin, by a wilful blinding of yourselves. Set up a tribunal in your own breasts, bring the word and conscience together. O! follow the search till you have found how the case stands; mistake here and perish! And such is the treachery of the heart, the subtlety of the tempter, and the deceitfulness of sin; and withal, so common and easy it is to be mistaken, that it is a thousand to one but you will be deceived, unless you be very careful and impartial in the enquiry: O! therefore, ply your work, go to the bottom, search with candles, weigh yourselves in the balance, come to the standard of the sanctuary, bring your coin to the touchstone. Satan is a master of deceit; he can draw to the life, there is nothing but he can imitate: you cannot wish for any grace, but he can fit you to an hair with a counterfeit. Trade warily, look on every piece you take: be jealous, trust not your own hearts. Run to God, to search and try

you; to examine you, and prove your reins. If other helps suffice not to bring all to an issue, but you are still at a loss, open your cases faithfully to some godly and faithful Minister, (Mal. ii. 7;) rest not till you have put the business of your eternal welfare out of question. *O Searcher of hearts, put thou this soul upon, and help him in his search.*

CHAP. V.

Shewing the Miseries of the Unconverted.

SO unspeakably dreadful is the case of every unconverted soul, that I have sometimes thought, if I could but convince men that they were yet in a great measure unregenerate, the work would be done.

But I sadly experience, that such a spirit of sloth and slumber posesses the unsanctified, that though they be convinced they are unconverted, yet they carelessly sit still: and what through pleasures, or worldly business, or noise and clamour of earthly cares and affections, the voice of conscience is drowned, and men go no farther than some cold wishes, and general purposes of amending.

It is therefore of high necessity that I not only convince men that they are unconverted, but endeavour to bring them to a sense of the fearful misery of this state.

But, What tongue can tell the heirs of

hell sufficiently of their misery! Where is the ready writer, whose pen can decypher their misery that are without God in the world? "Who knoweth (saith Moses) the power of thine anger?" And how shall I tell men that which I do not know? Yet so much we know, as one would think would shake the heart of that man that had the least degree of sense.

But could I uncover the face of the deep and the devouring gulf of Tophet, in all its terrors; and open the gates of the infernal furnace, alas, he hath no eyes to see it. He knows not the things of God, because they are spiritually discerned. He is a child of darkness, and walks in darkness. Yea, the light in him is darkness.

Shall I sound in his ear the terrible trumpet of God's judgments, that one would think would make both ears to tingle, loose his joints, and make his knees smite one against another! Yet, alas! he perceives me not, he hath no ears to hear.

Which way then shall I come at the miserable objects that I have to deal with? Who shall make the heart of stone to relent? Or the lifeless carcase to feel and move? That God who is able of stones to raise up children unto Abraham, that loves to work like himself, beyond the hopes and belief of man: he is able to do this. Therefore I bow my knee to the most high God; and as our Saviour prayed at the sepulchre of Lazarus, so doth

your mourning minister kneel about your graves, and carry you in the arms of prayer to that God in whom your help is found.

O thou all powerful JEHOVAH, that workest, and none can let thee! that hast the keys of death and hell; pity thou the dead souls that lie here entombed, and roll away the grave-stone, and say, as to Lazarus, when already stinking, *Come forth.* Lighten thou this darkness, O inaccessible Light, and let the day-spring from on high visit the dark regions of the dead, to whom I speak, for thou canst open the eyes that death itself hath closed, thou that formed the ear canst restore the hearing: say thou to these ears, *Ephphatha*, and they shall be opened. Give them eyes to see thy excellencies; a taste that they may relish thy sweetness: a scent that they may savour thy ointments; a feeling that they may discern the privilege of thy favour, the burden of thy wrath, the intolerable weight of unpardoned sin: And give thy servants order to prophecy to the dry bones, and let the effects of this prophecy be as that of thy prophet, when he prophesied the *Valley of dry bones* into a living army exceeding great. But I must proceed, as I am able, to unfold that mystery, which no tongue can fully unfold, no heart can sufficiently comprehend. Know, therefore, that while thou art unconverted,

1. *The infinite God is engaged against thee.*

Thou art not only without God, but God is *against thee.* O! if God would but stand neuter, though he did not own or help the poor sinner, his case were not so deeply miserable, though God should give up the poor creature to the will of his enemies, to do their worst with him; though he should deliver him over to the tormentors, that devils might tear and torture him to their utmost power and skill, yet this was not half so fearful. But God will set himself against the sinner; and, believe it, "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." There is no friend like him, no enemy like him. As much as heaven is above the earth, so much more horrible is it to fall into the hands of the living God, than into the paws of bears and lions, yea, furies or devils. Thy destruction shall come from the presence of the Lord; (2 Thess. i. 9.) "Tophet is deep and large, and the wrath of the Lord, like a river of brimstone, doth kindle it?" (Isa. xxx. 33.) If God be against thee, who shall be for thee? If one man sin against another, the Judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him? (1 Sam. ii. 25,) "Thou, even thou, art to be feared; and who shall stand in thy sight when thou art once angry?"

Sinner! methinks, this should go like a dagger to thy heart, to know that God is thine enemy: O whither wilt thou go? Where wilt thou shelter thyself? There is no hope for thee, unless thou lay down thy weapons, and sue out thy pardon, and get Christ to stand thy friend, and make thy peace: if it were not for this, thou mightest go into some howling wilderness, and there pine in sorrow, and run mad for anguish of heart and horrible despair: but in Christ there is a possibility of mercy for thee, yea, a proffer of mercy to thee, that thou mayest have God to be more for thee, than he is now against thee: But if thou wilt not forsake thy sins, nor turn thoroughly, and to some purpose, to God, by a sound conversion, the wrath of God abideth on thee, and he proclaimeth himself to be against thee, as in the prophet Ezekiel, v. 8, "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I, even I am against thee!"

1. His *Justice* is like a flaming sword unsheathed against thee: "If I whet my glittering sword, and my hand take hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to mine adversaries, and will reward them that hate me; I will make mine arrows drunk with blood," &c. (Deut. xxxii. 41, 42.)

Divine Justice is very strict, it must have satisfaction to the utmost farthing; it denounceth indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish to every soul that doth

evil. It curseth every one that continueth not in every thing that is written in the law, to do it. The Justice of God to the unpardoned sinner, that hath a sense of his misery, is more terrible than the sight of the Judge and bench to the robber, or of the irons and gibbet to the guilty murderer. When Justice sits upon life and death, O what dreadful work doth it make with the wretched sinner! "Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth," Matt. xxii. 13. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," Matt. xxv. 41. This is the terrible sentence that Justice pronounceth. Why, sinner, by this severe Justice must thou be tried! And, as God liveth, this killing sentence shalt thou hear, unless thou repent and be converted.

2. *The power of God is against thee.* The glory of God's power is to be displayed in the wonderful destruction of them that obey not the Gospel, 2 Thess. i. 8, 9. He will make his power known in them, Rom. ix. 22. O man! art thou able to make thy party good against thy Maker? No more than a reed against the cedars of God, or a cock-boat against the tumbling ocean.

Sinner, the power of God's anger is against thee, and power and anger together make fearful work! It were better thou hadst all the world in arms against thee,

than to have the power of God against thee. There is no escaping his hands, no breaking his prison. "The thunder of his power who can understand?" Job xxvi. 14. Unhappy man, that shall understand it by feeling it! "If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand. He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength; who hath hardened himself against him and prospered? Who removeth the mountains, and they know it not; who overturneth them in his anger: who shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble; who commandeth the sun, and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars? Behold he taketh away, who can hinder him, who will say unto him, what doest thou? If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud-helpers do stoop under him," Job ix. 3, 4, &c. And art thou a fit match for such an antagonist? "O! consider this, you that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you," Psalm l. 22.

3. *The truth of God is against thee.* If he be true and faithful, thou must perish if thou goest on. Unless he be false to his word, thou must die, except thou repent. If ye believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself. That is, he is faithful to his threatenings, as well as promises, and will shew his faithfulness in our confusion, if we believe not. God hath

told thee, as plain as it can be spoken, that "except thou be converted, thou shalt in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven:" and he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself. Beloved, as the immutable faithfulness of God in promise affords believers strong consolation, so it is to unbelievers for strong consternation and confusion. O sinner, tell me, what shift dost thou make to think of all the threatenings of God's Word, that stand upon record against thee? Dost thou believe they are truth, or nut? If not, thou art a wretched infidel! And therefore, give over the name and hopes of a Christian. But if thou dost believe them, O heart of steel that thou hast, that canst walk up and down in quiet, when the truth and faithfulness of God is engaged to destroy thee! That if the Almighty can do it, thou shalt surely perish and be damned. Why man! the whole *Book of God* doth testify against thee, while thou remainest unsanctified: It condemns thee in every leaf, and is to thee like Ezekiel's roll, written within and without, lamentation, and mourning, and woe.

Now put all this together, and tell me if the case of the unconverted be not deplorably miserable? As we read of some persons that had bound themselves in an oath and in a curse to kill Paul, so thou must know, O sinner, to thy terror, that all the attributes of the infinite God are bound in an

oath to destroy thee, Heb. iii. 18. O man! what wilt thou do? whither wilt thou flee? If God's omnisciency can find thee, thou shalt not escape: if the true and faithful God will save his oath, perish thou must, except thou believe and repent: if the Almighty hath power to torment thee, thou shalt be perfectly miserable in soul and body to all eternity, unless it be prevented by speedy conversion.

11. *The* whole Creation of God *is against thee.* "The whole Creation (saith Paul) groaneth and travaileth in pain," Rom. viii. 22. But what is it that the Creation groaneth under? Why, the fearful abuse that it is subject to, in serving unsanctified men. And what is it that the Creation groaneth for? Why, liberty from this abuse: for the creature is unwillingly subject to this bondage. If the unreasonable and inanimate creatures had speech and reason, they would cry out under it as a bondage insufferable, to be abused by the ungodly, contrary to their natures and the ends which the great Creator made them for. It is a passage of an eminent divine, "There is never a creature, but if it had reason to know how it is abused till a man be converted, it would groan against him: the land would groan to bear him, the air would groan to give him breath, their houses would groan to lodge them, their beds would groan to ease them, their food

to nourish them, their clothes to cover them, and the creatures would groan to give them any help and comfort, so long as they live in sin against God."

Methinks this should be a terror to an unconverted soul; to think he is a burden to the creation; Luke xiii. 7, "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" If the poor inanimate creatures could but speak, they would say to the ungodly, as Moses to Israel, "Must we fetch you water out of the rock, ye rebels?" Thy food would say, "Lord, must I nourish such a wretch as this, and yield forth my strength for him to dishonour thee withal? No, I will choak him rather, if thou wilt give me permission." The very air would say, "Lord, must I give this man breath to set his tongue against heaven, and scorn thy people, and vent his pride, and wrath, and filthy communication, and oaths and blasphemy against thee? No: if thou but say the word, he shall be breathless for me." A wicked man, the earth groans under him, and hell groans for him, till death satisfieth both, and unburdens the earth, and stops the mouth of hell with him. While the Lord of Hosts is against thee, be sure the Host of the Lord is against thee, and all the creatures are, as it were, up in arms, till upon a man's conversion the controversy being taken up between God and him, he

makes a covenant of peace with the creatures for thee.

III. *The roaring Lion hath his full power upon thee.* Thou art fast in the paw of that lion that is greedy to devour; "In the snare of the devil, led captive by him at his will." You pity the poor Indians that worship the devil for their god, but little think it is your own case. Why it is the common misery of all the unsanctified, that the devil is their god. Not that they intend to do him homage; they will be ready to defy him, and him that should say so of them; but all this while they serve him, and come and go at his beck, and live under his government; "his servants ye are, to whom ye yield yourselves to obey." O how many then will be found the real servants of the devil, that take themselves for children of God! Doubtless the liar intends not the service of Satan, but his own advantage: yet it is he that stands in the corner unobserved, and putteth the thing into his heart.

Dost thou live in the practice of any known sin? Know that thou art of the devil. Dost thou live in strife, or envy, or malice? Verily he is thy father. O dreadful case! However Satan may provide his slaves with divers pleasures, yet it is but to roll them into endless perdition. The Serpent comes with the apple in his mouth,

but thou seest not the deadly sting in his tail! He that is now thy temper, will one day be thy tormentor. O that I could but give thee to see, how merciless a tyrant thou gratifiest, all whose pleasure is, to set thee on work to make thy damnation sure, and to heat the furnace hotter and hotter, in which thou must burn for millions and millions of ages.

IV. *The guilt of all thy sins lies like a mountain upon thee.* Poor soul! thou feelest it not, but this is that which seals thy misery upon thee. While unconverted, none of thy sins are blotted out.

How light soever you may make of it now, you will one day find the guilt of unpardoned sin to be a heavy burden. This is a millstone, which "whosoever falleth upon shall be broken; but upon whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder," Matt. xxi. 44. What work did it make with our blessed Saviour: It pressed the very blood out of his veins, and broke all his bones. And if it did this in the green tree, what will it do in the dry!

O think of thy case in time. Canst thou think of that threat without trembling, "Ye shall die in your sins?" John vii. 24. O better were it for thee to die in a jail, in a dungeon, than die in thy sins. If death, as it will take away all thy other comforts, would take away thy sins too, it were some mitigation; but thy sins will follow thee.

when thy friends leave thee, and all worldly enjoyments shake hands with thee; thy sins will not die with thee, as a prisoner's other debts will, but they will go to judgment with thee, there to be thy accusers! and they will go to hell with thee, there to be thy tormentors. Better to have so many fiends about thee, than thy sins to fall upon thee and fasten on thee. O the work that these will make! O look over thy debts in time, how much thou art in the books of every one of God's laws; how is every one of God's commandments ready to arrest thee, and take thee by the throat, for thy innumerable bonds it hath upon thee? What wilt thou do then, when they shall altogether lay sin against thee? Hold open the eyes of conscience to consider this, that thou mayest despair of thyself, and be driven to Christ, and fly for refuge, to "lay hold on the hope that is set before thee."

V. *Thy raging lusts do miserably enslave thee.* While unconverted, thou art a very servant to sin, it reigns over thee, and holds the under its dominion, till thou art brought within the bonds of God's covenant.

What a woeful spectacle was the poor wretch that was possessed with the legion! Would it not have grieved thy heart to have seen him among the tombs cutting and wounding himself? This is thy case, such is thy work; every stroke is a thrust at thy

heart. Conscience indeed is now asleep; but when death and judgment shall bring thee to thy senses, then wilt thou feel the raging smart and anguish of every wound.

VI. *The furnace of eternal vengeance is heated ready for thee.* Hell and destruction open their mouths upon thee, they gape for thee, they groan for thee, waiting as it were with a greedy eye, as thou standest upon the brink, when thou wilt drop in! If the wrath of men be as the roaring of a lion, more heavy than the sand, what is the wrath of the infinite God! If the burning furnace heated in Nebuchadnezzar's fiery rage, when he commanded it to be made yet seven times hotter, was so fierce as to burn up even those that drew near to it to throw the three children in, how hot is that burning oven of the Almighty's fury! Surely this is seventy times seven more fierce. What thinkest thou, O man, of being a faggot in hell to all eternity? "Can thy heart endure, or can thine hands be strong in the day that I shall deal with thee, saith the Lord of Hosts?" Canst thou abide the everlasting burnings; canst thou dwell with consuming fire? When thou shalt be as glowing iron in hell, and thy whole body and soul shall be as perfectly possessed by the Almighty's burning vengeance, as the fiery sparkling iron when heated in the fiercest forge? Thou canst not bear God's whip, how then wilt thou endure his scor-

pions? Thou art even crushed, and ready to wish thyself dead, under the weight of his finger, how then wilt thou bear the weight of his loins? How wilt thou endure, when God shall pour out all his vials, and set himself against thee, to torment thee?

When he shall make thy conscience the tunnel by which he will be pouring his burning wrath into thy soul for ever! and when he shall fill all thy powers as full of torment, as they are now full of sin! when immortality shall be thy misery, and to die the death of a brute, and be swallowed up in the gulf of annihilation, would be such a felicity, as a whole eternity of wishes, and an ocean of tears, shall never purchase? Now thou canst put off the evil day, and canst laugh and be merry, and forget the terror of the Lord; but how wilt thou hold out, or hold up, when God will cast thee into a bed of torments, and make thee to lie down in sorrow? When roarings and blasphemy shall be the only music, and the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, shall be thy only drink? When thou shalt draw in flames for thy breath, and the horrid stench of sulphur shall be thy only perfume? In a word, when the smoke of thy torment shall ascend for ever, and thou shalt have no rest night or day, no rest in thy conscience, no ease in thy bones,

but thou shalt be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach, for evermore!

O sinner! stop and consider: If thou art a man, and not a senseless block, consider; bethink thyself where thou standest; why, upon the very brink of this furnace. As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between thee and this! Thou knowest not when thou liest down, but thou mayest be in before the morning: Thou knowest not when thou risest, but thou mayest drop in before night. Darest thou make light of this? Wilt thou go on in such a dreadful condition, as if nothing ailed thee? If thou puttest it off, and sayest, *This doth not belong to me*, look again over the foregoing chapter, and tell me the truth: Are none of these black marks found upon thee? Do not blind thine eyes, do not deceive thyself; see thy misery while thou mayest prevent it: think what it is to be a vile out-cast, a damned reprobate, a vessel of wrath, into which the Lord will be pouring out his tormenting fury while he hath a being!

Divine wrath is a fierce (Deut. xxxii. 22,) devouring (Isaiah xxxiii. 14.) everlasting (Matt. xxv. 41,) unquenchable fire, (Matt. iii. 12,) and thy soul and body must be the fuel upon which it will be feeding for ever, unless thou consider thy ways, and speedily turn to the Lord by a sound conversion.

And as this is true indeed? Is this thy misery? Yea, it is as true as God is. Better open thine eyes, and see it now, while thou mayest remedy it; than blind and harden thyself, till (to thy eternal sorrow) thou shalt feel what thou wouldst not believe: And if it be true, what dost thou mean, to loiter, and linger in such a case as this?

Alas for thee, poor man! how effectually hath sin undone thee, and deprived thee even of thy reason to look after thine own everlasting good! O miserable caitiff! what stupidity hath surprised thee! O let me knock up and awaken this sleeper. Who dwells within the walls of this flesh? Is there ever a soul here, a rational, understanding soul? Or, art thou only a walking ghost, a senseless lump? Art thou a reasonable soul, and yet so far brutified, as to forget thyself immortal, and to think thyself to be as the beasts that perish! O unhappy soul, that wast the glory of man, the mate of angels, and the image of God! that wast God's representative in the world, and hast the supremacy amongst the creatures, and the dominion over thy Maker's works! art thou now become a slave to sense, a servant to so base on idol as thy belly, for no higher felicity than to heap together a little refined earth, no more suitable to thy spiritual, immortal nature, than dirt and sticks? O why dost thou not be-

think thee, where thou shalt be for ever? Death is at hand, the Judge is even at the door! Yet a little while, and time shall be no longer. And wilt thou run the hazard of continuing in such a state, in which if thou be overtaken, thou art irrecoverably miserable?

Come then, arise, and attend thy nearest concernments: tell me, whither art thou going? What! wilt thou live in such a course, wherein every act is a step to perdition; and thou dost not know but the next night thou mayest make thy bed in hell? O! if thou hast a spark of reason, consider and turn, and hearken to thy friend, who would shew thee thy present misery, that thou mightest escape, and be eternally happy.

Hear what the Lord saith: "Fear ye not me, saith the Lord! Will ye not tremble at my presence?" Jer. v. 22. O sinners! do you make light of the wrath to come? I am sure there is a time coming, when you will not make light of it. Why, the very devils believe and tremble. What! are you more hardened than they? Will you run upon the edge of the rock? Will you play at the hole of the asp? Will you put your hand upon the cockatrice-den! Will you dance upon the fire till you are burnt? Or dally with devouring wrath as if you were at a point of indifference whether you did escape or endure it? There is nothing so

distracted as the wilful sinner, that goeth on in his unconverted state, as if nothing ailed him. Is it wisdom to dally with the second death, or to venture into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, as if thou wert but going to wash thee, or to swim for thy recreation? Wilt thou, as it were, jump into eternal flames, as the children through the bonfire? What shall I say? I can find out no expression, no comparison, whereby to set forth the dreadful distraction of that soul that will go on in sin.

Awake, awake, O sinner! arise and take thy flight: there is but one door that thou mayest flee by, and that is the strait door of Conversion. Unless thou turn unfeignedly from all thy sins, and come unto Jesus Christ, and take him for the Lord thy righteousness, and walk in him in holiness and newness of life,—as the Lord liveth, it is not more certain that thou art now out of hell, than that thou shalt without fail be in it, but a few days or nights hence. O set thy heart to think of thy case. Is not thine everlasting misery or welfare that which doth deserve a little consideration. Look again over the miseries of the unconverted. If the Lord hath not spoken by me, regard me not; but if it be the very Word of God, that all this misery lies upon thee, what a case art thou in! Is it for one that hath his senses, to live in such a condition, and not to make all possible expedition for pre-

venting his utter ruin? O man! who hath bewitched thee, that in the matters of this present life thou shouldst be wise enough to forecast thy business, and foresee thy danger; but in matters of everlasting consequence should be careless, as if they little concerned thee? Why, is it nothing to thee to have all the attributes of God engaged against thee? Canst thou do well without his favour? Canst thou escape his hands, or endure his vengeance? Dost thou hear the creation groaning under thee, and hell groaning for thee, and yet think thy case good enough? Art thou in the paw of the lion, under the power of corruption, in the dark noisome prison, working out thy own damnation, and is not this worth considering? Dost thou laugh at hell and destruction, or canst thou drink the envenomed cup of the Almighty's fury, as if it were but a common potion?

Gird up now thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Art thou such a Leviathan, as that the scales of thy pride should keep thee from thy Maker's coming at thee! Wilt thou esteem his arrows as straw, and the instruments of death as rotten wood? Art thou the chief of all the children of pride, even that thou shouldst count his darts as stubble, and laugh at the shaking of his spear? Art thou made without fear, and contemnest his

barbed irons? Art thou like the horse that paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength? Dost thou mock at fear, and art not affrighted, neither turnest back from God's sword, when his quiver rattleth against thee, the glittering spear and the shield? Well, if the threats of the Word will not awaken thee, I am sure Death and Judgment will. O what wilt thou do when the Lord cometh forth against thee, and in his fury falleth upon thee? If when Daniel's enemies were cast into the den of lions, both they and their wives and their children, the lions had the mastery of them and brake all their bones in pieces ere ever they came at the bottom of the den; what shall be done with thee, when thou fallest into the hands of the living God, when he shall crush thee into a thousand pieces in his wrath.

O, do not then contend with God! *Repent and be converted*, so none of these evils shall come upon thee. "Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found; call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon," Isaiah lv. 6, 7.

CHAPTER VI.

Containing Directions for Conversion.

Before thou readest these *Directions*, I charge thee before God and his holy angels, thou resolve to follow them (as far as conscience shall be convinced of their agreeableness to God's word) and call in his assistance that they may succeed: and as I have sought the Lord, and consulted his Oracles, what advice to give thee, so must thou entertain it with that awe, reverence, and purpose of obedience, which the Word of the living God doth require.

Now then attend: "Set thine heart unto all that I shall testify unto thee this day: for it is not a vain thing, it is your life." This is the end of all that has been spoken hitherto, to bring you to make use of God's means for your conversion. I would not trouble you, nor torment you before your time, with the thoughts of your eternal misery, but in order to your making your escape. Were you shut up under your present misery without remedy, it were but mercy to let you alone, that you might take that poor comfort you are capable of in this world; but you may yet be happy, if you do not wilfully refuse the means of your recovery: behold, I hold open the door to you; arise, take your flight: I set the way of life before you, walk in it, and you shall live and not die. It grieves me

to think you should be your own murderers, and throw yourselves headlong, when God cries out to you, spare thyself!

Would it not grieve a person of any humanity, if in the time of a raging plague he should have a receipt that would infallibly cure all the country, and recover the most hopeless patients, and yet his friends and neighbours should die by hundreds about him, because they would not use it? Men and brethren, though you carry the certain symptoms of death, yet I have a receipt that will cure you all: follow but these directions, and if you do not then win heaven, I will be contented to lose it.

Here then, O sinner! and as ever thou wouldst be converted, embrace this counsel.

Direction I. *Set it down as an undoubted truth, that it is impossible for thee ever to get to heaven in this unconverted state.* Can any other but Christ save thee? And he tells thee he never will do it, except thou be converted. Doth he not keep the keys of heaven? And canst thou get in without his leave; as thou must, if ever thou come thither without a thorough renovation?

Direction II. *Labour to get a lively sense and feeling of thy sins.* Till men are weary and heavy-laden, and sick of sin, they will not come to Christ for ease and cure. They must set themselves down for dead men, before they will come to Christ

that they may have life. Labour therefore to set all thy sins in order before thee, never be afraid to look upon them, but let thy spirit make diligent search. Inquire into thy heart, and into thy life; enter into a thorough examination of thyself, and all thy ways, that thou mayest make a full discovery; and call in the help of God's Spirit; for it is his work to convince of sin. Spread all before the face of thy conscience, till thy heart and eyes be set abroach: leave not striving with God, and thy own soul, till it cry out, under a sense of thy sins, "What must I do to be saved?" To this purpose,

Meditate on the numerousness of thy sins. David's heart failed when he thought of this, and considered that he had more sins than hairs upon his head. This made him cry for the multitude of God's tender mercies. Look backward; where was ever the place, what was ever the time, in which thou didst not sin? Look inward, what part or power canst thou find in soul or body, but it is poisoned with sin? What duty didst thou ever perform, into which poison was not shed? O how great is the sum of thy debts, who hast been all thy life running upon thy books, and never didst or canst pay off one penny? Look over the sin of thy nature, and all its cursed brood, the sins of thy life: call to mind thy omissions, commissions, the sins of thy

thoughts, words, and actions, the sins of thy youth, and the sins of thy years. Be not like a desperate bankrupt, that is afraid to look over his books: read the records of conscience carefully. These books must be opened sooner or later.

Meditate on the aggravations of thy sins, as they are the grand enemies of the God of thy life, and of the life of thy soul. In a word, they are the public enemies of all mankind. O man! how canst thou make so light of sin? This is the traitor that sucked the blood of the Son of God, and sold him; that mocked him, that scourged him, that spat in his face, that digged his hands, and pierced his side, that pressed his soul, that mangled his body; that never left him, till it had bound him, condemned him, nailed him, crucified him, and put him to an open shame. This is that deadly poison, so powerful of operation, as that one drop of it shed on the root of mankind, hath corrupted, spoiled, poisoned, and undone his whole race at once. This is the bloody executioner, that hath killed the Prophets, burnt the Martyrs, murdered all the Apostles, all the Patriarchs, all the Kings and Potentates; that has destroyed cities, swallowed up empires, butchered and devoured whole nations. Whatever was the weapon it was done by, sin was it that did the execution. Dost thou yet think it but a small thing? If Adam and all his

children could be dug out of their graves, and their bodies piled up to heaven, and an inquest were made, What matchless murderer was guilty of all this blood? it would be found in the ſkirts of ſin. Study the nature of ſin till thy heart inclines to fear and loath it; and meditate on the aggravations of thy particular ſins, how thou haſt ſinned againſt all God's warnings, againſt thy own prayers, againſt mercies, againſt corrections, againſt light, againſt love, againſt thine own reſolutions, againſt promiſes, vows, and covenants of better obedience. Charge thy heart home with theſe things till it bluſh for ſhame, and be brought out of all good opinion of itſelf.

Meditate on the deſert of ſin. It crieth to heaven, it calls for vengeance. Its due wages are death and damnation; it pulls the curſe of God upon the ſoul and body. The leaſt ſinful word or thought lays thee under the wrath of the Almighty. O what a load of wrath, what a weight of curſes, what a treaſure of vengeance, have all the millions of thy ſins then deſerved!

Above all other ſins, fix the eye of conſideration on the ſin of thy nature. It is to little purpoſe to lop off the branches, while the root of corruption remains untouched. In vain do men lade out the ſtreams, when the fountain is running that fills up all again. Study how deep, how cloſe, how permanent is thy natural pollution, how

universal it is: Cry out, with Paul's feeling, upon thy body as dead. Look into all thy parts and powers, and see what unclean vessels, what dunghills, what sinks they are become. The heart is never soundly broken till thoroughly convinced of the heinousness of original sin. Here fix thy thoughts, this is that which makes thee backward to all good, prone to all evil; that sheds blindness, pride, prejudice, unbelief, into thy mind; enmity, inconstancy, obstinacy, into thy will; inordinate heats and colds into thy affections; insensibleness, benumbedness, unfaithfulness, into thy conscience; and, in a word, hath put every wheel in thy soul out of order, and made it instead of an habitatioh of holiness, to become a very hell of iniquity. This is what hath defiled, corrupted, perverted all thy members, and turned them into weapons of unrighteousness, and servants of sin. And wilt thou yet be in love with thyself, and tell us any longer of thy good heart? O never leave meditating on the desperate contagion of original corruption, till with the deepest shame and sorrow thou smite on thy breast, and with Job, abhor thyself, and repent in dust and ashes.

Direction III. *Strive to affect thy heart with a deep sense of thy present misery.* Read over the foregoing chapter again and again, and get it into thy heart. Remember, when thou liest down, that for ought

thou knowest thou mayest awake in flames! and when thou risest up, that by the next night thou mayest make thy bed in hell. Is it a trifling matter to live in such a fearful case; to stand tottering upon the brink of the bottomless pit, and to live at the mercy of every disease, that if it will but fall upon thee, will send thee forthwith into the burnings? Suppose thou sawest a condemned wretch hanging over Nebuchadnezzar's burning fiery furnace by nothing but a thread, which was ready to break every moment, would not thy heart tremble for such a one? Why, thou art the man. This is thy very case, O man, O woman, that readest this, if thou be yet unconverted. What if the thread of thy life should break? (why, thou knowest not but it may be the next night, yea, the next moment) where wouldst thou be then? Whither wouldst thou drop? Verily into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, where thou must lie scalding and sweltering in a fiery ocean while God hath a being, if thou die in thy present case.

Direction IV. *Settle it upon thy heart, that thou art under everlasting inability ever to recover thyself.* Never think thy praying, reading, hearing, confessing, amending, will do the cure: these must be attended to, but thou art undone if thou restest in them. Thou art a lost man, if thou hopest to escape drowning, on any other plank

but Jesus Christ. Thou must unlearn thyself, and renounce thine own wisdom, thine own righteousness, thine own strength, and throw thyself wholly upon Christ, as a man that swims casts himself upon the water, or else thou canst not escape. While men trust in themselves, and establish their own righteousness, and have confidence in the flesh, they will not come savingly to Christ. Can the lifeless carcase loose the bands of death? Then mayest thou recover thyself, who art dead in trespasses and sins, and under an impossibility of serving thy Maker acceptably in this condition. Therefore when thou goest to pray, or meditate, or to do any of the duties to which thou art here directed, call in the help of the Spirit, as despairing to do any thing pleasing to God in thine own strength; yet neglect not thy duty, but lie at the pool, and wait in the way of the Spirit. Strive to give up thyself to Christ; strive to pray, strive to meditate, strive a hundred and a hundred times, try to do it as well as thou canst; and whilst thou art endeavouring in the way of thy duty, the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and help thee to do what of thyself thou art utterly unable to perform, Prov. i. 23.

Direction V. *Forthwith renounce all thy sins.* If thou yield thyself to the practice of any sin, thou art undone. In vain dost thou hope for life by Christ, except thou

depart from iniquity. Forsake thy sins, or else thou canst not find mercy. Thou canst not be married to Christ, except divorced from sin; give up the traitor, or you can have no peace with heaven. Cast the head of Sheba over the wall: keep not Delilah in thy lap: thou must part with thy sins or with thy soul; spare but one sin, and God will not spare thee. Never make excuses; thy sins must die, or thou must die for them. If thou allow of one sin, though but a little, a secret one, though thou mayest plead necessity, and have a hundred shifts and excuses for it, the life of thy soul must go for the life of that sin. And will it not be dearly bought?

O sinner, hear and consider; if thou wilt part with thy sins, God will give thee his Christ. Is not this a fair exchange? I testify unto thee this day, that if thou perish, it is not because there was never a Saviour provided, nor life tendered, but because thou preferedst (with the Jews) the murderer before thy Saviour, sin before Christ, and lovedst darkness rather than light. Labour therefore to find out thy sins, enter into thy closet and consider, What evil have I lived in? What duty have I neglected towards God? What sin have I lived in against my brother? And now strike the dart through the heart of thy sin, as Joab did through Absalom's. Never stand looking upon thy sin, nor rolling the

morsel under thy tongue, but spit it out as poison, with fear and detestation. Alas! what will thy sins do for thee, that thou should stagger at parting with them? They will flatter thee, but they will undo and cut thy throat while they smile upon thee, and poison thee while they please thee, and arm the justice and wrath of the infinite God against thee. They will open hell for thee, and pile up fuel to burn thee. Away with them, crucify them, and let Christ only be Lord over thee.

Direction VI. *Make a solemn choice of God for thy blessedness.* With all possible devotion and veneration avouch the Lord for thy God. Set the world, with all its glory, with all its pleasures and promotions on the one hand. And set God, with all his infinite excellencies on the other? And see that thou deliberately make thy choice. Take up thy rest in God; sit thee under his shadow; let his promises and perfections turn the scale against all the world. Settle it upon thy heart, that the Lord is an all-sufficient portion, that thou canst not be miserable while thou hast God to live upon: Take him for thy shield, and exceeding great reward. God alone is more than all the world; content thyself with him; let others carry the preferments, the riches and glory of the world, place thou thy happiness in his favour, and the light of his countenance. Take him as God, to be the

chief in thy affections, estimations, intentions; for he will not endure to have any set above him. In a word, Thou must take him in all his *personal Relations*, and in all his *essential Perfections*.

1. *In all his personal Relations.* GOD THE FATHER must be taken for thy Father. O come to him with the prodigal, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am not worthy to be called thy son: but since of thy wonderful mercy thou art pleased to take me, that am of myself a dog, a swine, a devil, to be a child; I solemnly take thee for my Father, commend myself to thy care, and trust to thy providence, and cast my burthen on thy shoulders. I renounce all confidence in myself, I repose my confidence in thee." Again, GOD THE SON must be taken for thy Saviour, for thy Redeemer, and Righteousness. He must be accepted as the only way to the Father, and the only means of life. Lastly, GOD THE SPIRIT must be taken for thy sanctifier, for thy Advocate, thy Counsellor, thy Comforter, the Teacher of thy ignorance, the Pledge and Earnest of thy inheritance.

2. *In all his essential Perfections.* Consider, how the Lord hath revealed himself to you in his Word: will you take him as such a God? O sinner, here is the most blessed news that ever came to the sons of men, "The Lord will be thy God," Gen.

xvii. 7, Rev. xxi. 3, if thou wilt but close with him in his excellencies. Wilt thou have the merciful, the gracious, the sin-pardoning God, to be thy God? *O yes,* (saith the sinner) *I am undone else.* But the Father tells thee, "I am the holy and sin hating God; if thou wilt be owned as one of my people, thou must be holy, holy in heart, holy in life; thou must put away all thy iniquities, be they ever so near, ever so natural, ever so necessary to the maintaining thy fleshly lusts: Unless thou wilt be at defiance with sin, I cannot be thy God." What doth thine heart answer: "Lord, I desire to have thee as such a God: I desire to be holy as thou art holy, to be made partaker of thy holiness. I love thee not only for thy goodness and mercy, but for thy holiness and purity. I take thy holiness for my happiness: O be to me a fountain of holiness, set on me the stamp and impress of thy holiness; I will thankfully part with all my sins at thy command: my wilful sins I do forthwith forsake: and for mine infirmities, I will strive against them in the use of the means; I detest them, and will pray against them, and never let them have quiet rest in my soul." Beloved, whosoever of you will thus accept of the Lord for his God, shall have him.

Again he tells you, "I am the all-sufficient God," Gen. xvii. 1. Will you lay all at my feet, and give it up to my disposal,

and take me for your only portion? Will you own and honour my All-sufficiency? Will you take me as your happiness and treasure, your hope and bliss? I am a sun and a shield; all in one; will you have me for your all? If thou art willing to sell all for the pearl of great price—If thine heart answers, "Lord, I desire no other portion but thee: take the corn, and the wine, and the oil, whosoever will, so I may have the light of thy countenance: I pitch upon thee for my happiness, I gladly venture myself on thee, and trust myself with thee: I set my hopes in thee, I take up my rest with thee; let me hear thee say, *I am thy God, thy salvation*, and I have enough, I have all I wish for; I will make no terms with thee, but for thyself: let me but have thee sure, let me be able to make my claim, and see my title to thyself, and for other things I leave them to thee; give me more or less, any thing or nothing. I will be satisfied in my God." Take him thus, and see, he is thy own.

Direction VII. *Accept of the Lord Jesus in all his offices, with all his inconveniences, as thine:* Upon these terms Christ may be had. Sinner, thou hast undone thyself, and art plunged into the most deplorable misery, out of which thou art never able to climb up; but Jesus Christ is able and ready to help thee, and he freely tenders himself to thee. Be thy sins ever so many,

ever so great, or of ever so long continuance, yet thou shalt be certainly pardoned and saved, if thou dost not wretchedly neglect the offer that in the name of God is here made to thee. The Lord Jesus calleth to thee; look to him and be saved. Yea, he is a suitor to thee, and beseecheth thee to be reconciled. He crieth in the streets, he knocketh at thy door, he wooeth thee to accept of him and live with him. If thou diest, it is because thou would not come to him for life.

Direction VIII. *Resign up all thy powers and faculties, and thy whole interest to be his.* "They gave their ownselves unto the Lord," 2 Cor. viii. 5. "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice." The Lord seeks not yours, but you; resign therefore thy body, with all its members, to him; and thy soul, with all its powers, that he may be glorified in thy body, and in thy spirit, which are his, 1 Cor. vi. 20. In a right closure with Christ, all thy faculties give up to him. The judgment subscribes, "Lord, thou art worthy of all acceptation, chief of ten thousand; happy is the man that finds thee. All the things that are to be desired, are not to be compared with thee," Prov. iii. 13, 15. The understanding lays aside its corrupt reasonings and cavils, and its prejudices against Christ and his ways. It is now past questioning, and carries it for Christ against all the world.

It concludes it is good to be here; and sees such a treasure in his field, such a value in his pearl, as it is worth all, Matt. viii. 14. "O here is the best bargain that ever I made; here is the richest prize that ever man was offered; here is the most sovereign remedy that ever mercy prepared; he is worthy of my esteem, worthy of my choice, worthy of my love, worthy to be embraced, adored, admired for evermore," Rev. v. 12. "I approve of his articles, his terms are righteous and reasonable, full of equity and mercy." Again, the Will resigns: it stands no longer wavering, nor wishing and woulding, but is peremptorily determined: "Lord, thy love hath overcome me, thou hast won me, and thou shalt have me: Come in, Lord; to thee I freely open; I consent to be saved in thine own way: Thou shalt have any thing, nay have all, let me have but thee." The memory gives up to Christ; "Lord, here is a storehouse for thee: out with this trash, lay in the true treasure, let me be a granary, a repository of thy truth, thy promises, thy providences." The conscience comes in, "Lord, I will ever side with thee, I will ever be thy faithful register, I will warn when the sinner is tempted, and smite when thou art offended. I will witness for thee, and judge for thee, and guide into thy ways, and will never let sin have quiet in this soul." The affections also come in to

Christ; "O! saith Love, I am sick for thee. O! saith Desire, now I have my longing; here is the satisfaction I sought for, here is the desire of nations, here is bread for me, and balm for me, all that I want:" Fear bows the knee with awe and veneration. "Welcome, Lord; to thee will I pay homage, thy word and rod shall command my motions, thee will I reverence and adore: before thee will I fall down and worship." Grief likewise puts in, "Lord, thy displeasure, and thy dishonour, thy people's calamities, and my own iniquities, shall be my only cause of lamentation. I will mourn when thou art offended, I will weep when thy cause is wounded." Anger likewise comes in for Christ. "Lord, nothing so enrages me as my folly against thee, that I should be so besotted and bewitched as to hearken to the flatteries of sin, and temptations of Satan against thee." Hatred, too, will side with Christ: "I protest mortal enmity against thine enemies, that I never will be friends with thy foes; I vow an immortal quarrel with every sin, I will give no quarter, I will make no peace with them." Thus let all thy powers give up to Jesus Christ.

Again; thou must give up thy whole interest to him: if there be any thing that thou keepest back from Christ, it will be thine undoing. Unless thou wilt forsake all, thou canst not be his disciple. Thou

must hate father and mother, yea, and thine own life also in comparison of him, and as far as it stands in competition with him, Matt. x. 37; Luke xiv. 26, 27. In a word, thou must give him thyself, and all that thou hast, without reservation, else thou canst have no part with him.

Direction IX. *Make choice of the laws of Christ as the rule of thy words, thoughts, and actions.* This is the true convert's choice; but here remember these three rules: 1. *You must choose them all:* there is no getting to heaven by a partial obedience. Read Psalm cxix. 6, 160; Ezek. xviii. 21. None may think it enough to take up with the cheap and easy part of Religion, and let alone the duties that are costly, and self-denying, and that grate upon the interest of the flesh; you must take all or none. A sincere convert, though he makes most conscience of the greatest sins and weightiest duties, yet he makes true conscience of little sins; and of all duties, Matt. xxiii. 23. 2. *For all times,* for prosperity, and for adversity, whether it rain or shine. A true convert is resolved in his way, he will stand to his choice, and will not set his back to the wind, and be of the Religion of the times. "I have stuck to thy testimonies, I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes always, even to the end. Thy testimonies have I taken as a heritage for ever," Psa. cxix. 31, 111, 112.

"I will have respect to thy statutes continually," Psalm cxix. 117.

Direction X. *Let all this be completed in a solemn covenant between God and thy soul.* Psalm cxix. 106, Nehem. x. 29. For thy better help therein, take these few directions.

First, Set apart some time, more than once, to be spent in secret before the Lord.

1. In seeking earnestly his special assistance and gracious acceptance of thee.

2. In considering distinctly all the terms of the covenant, expressed in the form hereafter proposed.

3. In searching thy heart, whether thou art sincerely willing to forsake all thy sins, and to resign up thyself body and soul, unto God, and his service; to serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of thy life.

Secondly, Compose thy spirit into the most serious frame possible.

Thirdly, Lay hold on the Covenant of God, and rely on his promise of giving grace and strength, whereby thou mayest be enabled to perform thy promise.

Fourthly, Resolve to be faithful; having engaged thy heart, opened thy mouth, and subscribed with thy hand unto the Lord, resolve in his strength never to go back.

Lastly, Being thus prepared, on some convenient time set apart for that purpose, set upon the work; and in the most solemn

manner possible (as if the Lord were visibly present before thine eyes) fall down on thy knees, and spreading forth thine hands towards heaven, open thine heart to the Lord in these or the like words.

O most dreadful God! for the passion of thy dear Son, I beseech thee, accept of thy *poor Prodigal*, now prostrating himself at thy door. I have fallen from thee by mine iniquity, and am by nature a son of death, and a thousand-fold more the child of hell by my wicked practies. But of thine infinite grace, thou hast promised grace to me through Christ, if I will but turn to thee with all my heart. Therefore upon the call of thy Gospel, I am now come in; and throwing down my weapons, submit myself to thy mercy.

And because thou requirest, as the condition of my peace with thee, that I should put away mine idols, and be at defiance with all thine enemies, which I acknowledge I have wickedly sided with against thee; I here, from the bottom of my heart, renounce them all, firmly covenanting with thee, not to allow myself in any known sin, but conscientiously to use all the means that I know thou hast prescribed for the death and utter destruction of all my corruptions. And whereas I have formerly inordinately and idolatrously let out my affections upon the world, I do here resign

up my heart to thee, that madest it; humbly protesting before thy glorious Majesty, that it is the firm resolution of my heart, and that I unfeignedly desire grace from thee, that when thou shalt call me hereunto, I may practise this my resolution through thy assistance, to forsake all that is dear to me in this world, rather than to turn from thee to the ways of sin; and that I will watch against all its temptations, whether of prosperity or adversity, lest they should withdraw my heart from thee. Beseeching thee also to help me against all the temptations of Satan, to whose wicked suggestions I resolve, by thy grace, never to yield myself a servant. And I renounce all confidence in my own righteousness, and acknowledge, that I am myself a hopeless, helpless, undone creature, without righteousness or strength.

And forasmuch as thou hast, of thy bottomless mercy, offered most graciously to me, wretched sinner, to be again accepted by thee, through Christ, if I will accept of thee; I call Heaven and Earth to record this day, that I do here solemnly avouch thee for the Lord my God; and with all possible veneration, bowing the neck of my soul under the neck of thy most sacred Majesty, I do here take thee, the Lord Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for my portion and chief good; and so give up

myself, body and soul, to thy service, promising and vowing to serve thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.

And since thou hast appointed the Lord Jesus Christ the only means of coming unto thee, I do here, upon the bended knees of my soul, accept of him as the only, new, and living way by which sinners may have access to thee; and do hereby solemnly join myself in marriage-covenant to him.

O blessed Jesus! I come to thee hungry, and poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked; a most loathsome polluted wretch, a guilty and condemned malefactor, unworthy for ever to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord, much more to be solemnly married to the King of Glory: but since such is thine unparalleled love, I do here with all my power accept thee, and do take thee for my head and husband, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, for all times and conditions, to love, honour, and obey thee before all others, and this to the death. I embrace thee in all thy offices, I renounce my own worthiness, and do here avow thee to be the Lord my Righteousness: I renounce my own wisdom, I renounce my own will, and take thy will for my law.

And since thou hast told me that I must suffer, if I will reign, I do here covenant with thee to take my lot as it falls with

thee; and by thy grace assisting, to run all hazards with thee, verily purposing that neither life nor death shall part between thee and me.

And because thou hast been pleased to give me thy holy laws as the rule of my life, and the way in which I should walk to thy kingdom, I do here willingly put my neck in thy yoke, and set my shoulder to thy burden; and, subscribing to all thy laws, as holy, just, and good, I solemnly take them as the rule of my thoughts, words, and actions: promising, that though my flesh contradict and rebel, yet I will endeavour to order and govern my whole life according to thy direction, and will not allow myself in the neglect of any thing that I know to be my duty.

Only because (through the frailty of my flesh) I am subject to so many failings, I am bold humbly to protest, that unallowed miscarriages, contrary to the settled bent and resolution of my heart, shall not make void this covenant; for so thou hast said.

Now, Almighty God, Searcher of hearts, thou knowest that I make this covenant with thee this day, without any known guile or reservation; beseeching thee, that if thou spiest any flaw or falsehood therein, thou wouldst discover it to me, and help me to do it aright.

And now, glory be to thee, O God the Father, whom I shall be bold from this day forward, to look upon as my God and Fa-

ther, that ever thou shouldst find out such a way for the recovery of undone sinners. Glory be to thee, O God the Son, who hast loved me, and washed me from my sins in thine own blood, and art now become my Saviour and Redeemer. Glory be to thee, O God the Holy Ghost, who, by the finger of thine Almighty power, hast turned about my heart from sin to God.

O dreadful JEHOVAH! the Lord God Omnipotent, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! thou art now become my covenant-friend; and I, through thine infinite grace, am become thy covenant-servant. *Amen.* So be it; and the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven."

THIS Covenant I advise you to make, not only in heart, but in word; not only in word, but in writing; and that you would with all possible reverence spread the writing before the Lord, as if you would present it to him as your act and deed; and when you have done this, set your hand to it, keep it as a memorial of the solemn transactions that have passed between God and you, that you may have recourse to it in doubts and temptations.

Direction XI. *Take heed of delaying thy conversion, and set upon a speedy and present turning.* Remember, and tremble at the sad instance of the foolish virgins,

that came not till the door of mercy was shut, Matt. xxv. and of Felix, who put off Paul to another season; and we never find that he had such another season. O come in while it is called to-day, lest thou shouldst be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin; lest thy day of grace should be over, and the things that belong to thy peace should be hid from thine eyes. Now mercy is wooing of thee; now Christ is waiting to be gracious, and the Spirit of God is striving with thee; now conscience is stirring; now Christ is to be had for the taking. O strike in with the offers of grace: O now or never! If thou make light of this offer, God may swear in his wrath thou shalt not taste of his supper.

Direction XII. *Attend conscientiously upon the Word, as the means appointed for thy Conversion,* 1 Cor. iv. 15. Attend not customarily, but conscientiously; with this desire, design, hope, and expectation, that thou mayest be converted by it. To every sermon thou hearest, come with this thought: "O! I hope, God will now come in: I hope this day may be the time, this may be the man by whom God will bring me home." When thou art coming to the ordinances, lift up thy heart thus to God: "Lord, let this be the Sabbath, let this be the season wherein I may receive renewing grace; O let it be said, that to-day such an one was born unto thee!"

Direction XIII. Strike in with the Spirit,

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Jesus Christ. S
Lord! leave not the
thou seest that I am
that I am not troubled en
yet deeper, Lord; O go to the
my corruptions, and let out the h
of my sins." Thus yield up thyself to
workings of his Spirit, and hoist thy sails to
his gales.

Direction XIV. *Set upon the constant and diligent use of serious and fervent prayer.* This is one of the first things conversion appears in; it sets men on praying. Therefore set to this duty; let never a day pass over thee, wherein thou hast not, morning and evening, set apart some time for set and solemn prayer in secret. Call thy family also together daily to worship God with thee. Wóe be unto thee, if thine be found among the families that call not on God's name, Jer. x. 25. But cold and lifeless

company
. Thou wilt
thou declinest
ever expect thy
thou flee the oc-
e playing on the
with the snare, thy
taken. Where God
his providence, to temp-
e occasions be such as we
cannot remove, we may expect special assistance; but when we tempt God by running into danger, he will not engage to support us. And of all temptations, one of the most fatal and pernicious is evil company. O what hopeful beginnings have these often stifled! O the souls, the estates, the families, the towns that these have ruined! How many poor sinners have been enlightened and convinced, and were just ready to give the devil the slip, and have even escaped the snare, and yet wicked company have pulled them back again, and

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