

SERMON XLV, XLVI, XLVII, XLVIII

FREE GRACE THE TEACHER OF GOOD WORKS

Tobias Crisp

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." {Tit.2:11,12}

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy;" lest after the sweet invitations and wooing of you in Christ's name, that you might be espoused unto him; lest, "as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty," namely, bewitching her to a presumptuous licentious adventuring on God's gentleness, whilst she tasted of the forbidden fruit; "so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ," {II Cor.11:2,3;} by presuming too much upon him, and adventuring to continue in sin, in hope that grace may abound. For the prevention of which dangerous miscarriage, which hath been the unhappy lot of many thousands, I thought good to step in with this text, which I am persuaded will prove a seasonable warning to some at least. It is a reason, or argument, whereby the apostle Paul enforces and strengthens what he had formerly delivered, having given proper rules unto several distinct offices and ranks of persons, as ministers, {Tit.1:7,} aged men, {2:2,} aged women, {2:3,} young women, {2:4,} young men, {2:6,} to Titus himself, {2:7,} and to servants, {2:9,} in all which he suits his doctrine to their several conditions. Now that these several precepts might receive entertainment, he tells them, that God therefore manifested his grace that brings salvation.

In the words themselves there are two general things observable, the free bountiful love of God unto man, {2:11;} and the end of this love, {2:12;} in the former observe, first, the fruits of his love, or the thing wherein he manifests it, salvation; secondly, the cause of it, the grace of God bringeth it; thirdly, the means of participating thereof, appearance; and fourthly, the persons to whom it is manifested, to all men.

The end of this love of God, here expressed in general, is our sanctification, consisting of two branches, mortification and renovation. Mortification is here specified under two heads, answering the two tables of the law; the first is an abnegation of ungodliness, which comprehends the branches of the first table; the second is a denial of worldly lusts, which comprehends the branches of the second table. The second branch of the end of the grace of God is renovation, specified under three heads; the first respects a man's self, he must live soberly; the second respects our neighbors, righteously or justly; the third respects God, godly. This end is amplified two ways; from the means of attaining it, the teaching that the grace of God brings with it; and the time it teacheth, and we must put this end to practice, "in this present world." From the former part of the text, observe, that it is the grace of God appearing, which bringeth salvation to all men.

This doctrine being the corner-stone of the whole gospel, and the rock whereon the anchor of faith must fasten, to preserve soul and body from shipwreck, had need be handled carefully and soundly; for an error in the foundation is of far greater consequence than in the superstructure, wherein I shall endeavour to be as cautious as may be; and, because it is the well-spring of comfort, and the grand charter that comprehends all our prerogatives, which have their dependence hereon, I will labour to make it as plain and manifest as may be; to this purpose some particulars are to be discussed for the unveiling of their obscurity. 1. What is meant by the grace of God. 2. What the appearing of it is. 3. What it is for this grace appearing to bring salvation. 4. Unto whom it brings salvation.

1. Grace, in the scripture, is diversely taken; sometimes it signifies comeliness, or that which makes a thing illustrious; so Solomon useth the word, "my son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother; for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head;" {Pv.1:8,9; so, 3:22 & 4:9;} but so it is not here. Grace, in the scripture, is sometimes divine qualities in a believer; so the apostle takes it when he saith, "therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also; {II Cor.8:7,} speaking of liberality. And thus grace and works are all one, and therefore this cannot be the grace here mentioned, by which we are to be saved; for the apostle opposeth these two, "by grace ye are saved, not of works." {Eph.2:9} Sometimes, again, grace signifies free unmerited favour, which hath no other impulsive or moving cause, but the good pleasure of God's will, Eph.1:5,6, and so it is taken as oft as grace and works are opposed; thus the apostle expounds the meaning of grace, "being justified freely by his grace," Rom.3:24, and thus we are to understand it in the text; sometimes {for a punctual illustration of it} grace signifies that good pleasure of God's will which is revealed in the gospel; as it is recorded of Paul and Barnabas, Acts 14:3, when they preached the gospel at Iconium; "the Lord gave testimony to the word of his grace;" so Paul commends the elders "to the word of his grace," Acts 20:32, "which is able to build them up, and to give them an inheritance;" and so it is opposed to the rigor and severity of the law, which stands on these terms, "do this and live;" which yet is the good pleasure of his will. Finally, the grace of God is taken most strictly for the free favour of God revealed in the gospel, appointing Christ his Son to compass our justification, sanctification and redemption; for this cause it is that the grace of God is so oft called the "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," I Pet.1:10, because through him, "we have access to the grace wherein we stand," and this comes to us by him, according to that of John, Jn.1:14-17, "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The sum of all is, that it is the mere free motion of God's own will and pleasure, to show undeserved favour; for, by Christ, this is the grace of God here mentioned; this is the sole fountain from whence, as all other our comforts; so this, in special of salvation flows. Whatever is annexed thereto, as an adjuvant cause, is so far from helping, as it makes void the efficacy of this, whereof I shall speak more fully hereafter.

2. This appearance of grace, or free kindness, and love of God our Saviour, for our reconciliation and salvation, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy hath he saved us," Tit.3:4, 5, is nothing but the bringing of the same to light, or a making of it manifest; which that you may the more fully understand, note, that the appearance or manifestation of God's grace, and free favour, is to be considered two ways. 1. When it is made visible and discernible. 2. When it is actually seen and discerned. In the first consideration it appears in the gospel published, wherein all may find this favour; and thus it is apparent even to such as shut their eyes and turn from it; and of this manifestation Christ speaks, saying, "light is come into the world, and men love darkness more than light," Jn.3:19, even as a king's mind and pleasure is apparent, when it is extant in his statutes, proclamations and charters, though some men will not regard it. But this is not all the appearance of the grace of God that brings salvation, although without this it could never have been found; it must not only be visible, but also actually discerned.

Now the grace of God in Christ is actually discerned two ways. By a mere intellectual perception or vision; or by a cordial apprehension thereof. It appears by an intellectual perception, when men understand the freeness of God's grace and bounty aright; what it is which is only an appearance to the knowledge, which, by the common principles of natural reason, is attainable where the gospel is published; for when any rational man hears plain sense, he may easily understand it, and perceive the meaning of it; in this sense the grace of God appears unto all attentive persons that have the use of reason; thus it appeared to the Pharisees, for had they not understood what Christ meant, when he taught this free grace of God, they would never have raged so against him; for distaste always presupposes some fore-knowledge; had he spoke altogether beyond their understanding, they could not have conceived any cause of indignation; this, therefore, is not the appearing of grace here intended; for, instead of bringing salvation, it became an occasion of their farther condemnation. It is the cordial manifestation and apprehension of the free grace of God,

understood aright, that was manifested in the gospel, that brings salvation; and then the grace of God appears, when God opens the heart, and sets up the lustre of it there, with such a clear brightness, that it apprehends it as it is.

Now this differs as much, if not more, from a mere intellectual apprehension, as a blind man's knowledge of the sun, and a good sighted man seeing of it with his eyes; for a blind man may know, by discourse, what kind of a thing the sun is, but he cannot be certain whether there is such a thing or no; but he that hath a cordial apprehension of free grace, is as sure there is such a thing as he that sees the sun, I mean out of the case of desertion. But, more particularly, the appearing of free grace to the heart, is such a manifestation thereof, as leaves its own savor there, and so enamors it with the excellency and usefulness thereof, to supply its own overgrown defects, that it pants after a propriety therein as the dearest thing in the world; it sees so much in this grace, as that it concludes it to be the one thing necessary, and is willing to embrace it upon any terms; such a winning appearance, which enters into the soul that brings salvation; for then the soul makes after it, and is not at rest till it closes with it; for this is the end God aims at, in proclaiming and delineating his free grace to the view of the world, to draw men to a love and desire of it; and therefore, to who whosoever he intends to communicate it, he persuades the heart so effectually, that it cannot choose but be ravished with the glorious and comfortable appearance of it. So that salvation then comes to a man's heart, when the free love of God in Christ appears so lovely and useful, as that all things seem but as dross and dung in comparison of it; therefore nothing is desired and prized like unto it; for then, and only then, it appears in its own lively colors; when thus much is not seen in it, the main of it is yet hid, and appears not. There are many in the world who understand the meaning of the doctrine of free grace, yet see but the shell of it, no beauty nor savor in it, and therefore in heart say of it, as the strangers to the church concerning Christ, the subject of free grace, "what is thy beloved more than another beloved?" So they say of free grace, what is in this doctrine more than in ordinary matters of discourse? But the church sees more in him, and in it, and says, "my beloved is the chiefest among ten thousand." Thus free grace appeared unto Paul, "but what things were gain to me, I counted loss for Christ; yea, {saith he,} doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and count them but dung that I may win him;" Phil.3:7-9, "and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ." The same apostle tells us, "that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." {Eph.2:7}

3. What is this salvation which the grace of God appearing brings? To understand it aright; note, that this word is diversely taken in scripture, for sometimes it signifies, deliverance out of temporal dangers and afflictions, so Ps.74:12, "for God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth." Sometimes Christ himself, Lk.1:69, as Zacharias sings thus, God "hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David." So sings old Simeon, Lk.2:30, "for mine eyes have seen thy salvation," having taken Christ up in his arms. Sometimes the whole state of grace, or conversion; so Christ says, speaking of Zacchaeus, Lk.19:9, "this day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham." So Paul, Rom.11:11, "salvation is come unto the Gentiles," speaking of the rejection of the Jews, and calling of the Gentiles. And, II Cor.6:2, "now is the day of salvation." Sometimes the blessed estate of the saints in heaven, Heb.1:14, "are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation;" and, Heb.5:9, when Christ is called, "the Author of eternal salvation."

So that salvation is temporal, spiritual and eternal; all which may be very well understood by it here ascribed to the grace of God appearing; for it is the efficient cause of all; no supply of temporal good comes either by chance, or man's wisdom, industry, or power, but only from God's free grace and bounty. "For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge; he putteth down one, and setteth up another." {Ps.75:6,7} "For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me." {Ps.44:6} "Give us help from trouble; for vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do valiantly; for he it is that shall tread down our enemies." {Ps.60:11,12} "There be many that say, who will show us any good? LORD, lift thou up the light of

thy countenance upon us." {Ps.4:6} And again, "our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth." {Ps.124:8} In a word, that all comes by grace, appears in the caution Moses gives Israel in the wilderness; "speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out {the Canaanites} from before thee, saying, for my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land...not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land;" but that the Lord "may perform the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." {Deut.9:4,5}

So likewise the work of conversion, in respect both of justification and sanctification, which are the salvation of God, are of mere grace. The apostle tells us, Rom.3:24, "we are justified freely by his grace," not of ourselves, it is the free gift of God; "the free gift is of many offences unto justification." {Rom.5:16} Therefore pardon of sins is called forgiveness, which is the free acquitting of a debt, without any payment; and as justification, so sanctification is of grace, or free bounty; so saith Paul of himself, "by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." {I Cor.15:10} Run through the several branches of sanctification, and you shall find that every particular is begun, continued and perfected, through the favour and bounty of God in Christ. "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever;" {Ps.73:26;} saith David. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength;" {Is.40:29;} saith Isaiah. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;" {II Cor.3:5;} saith Paul.

So, likewise Christ our salvation is brought unto us of mere free grace, "for unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." {Is.9:6} So speaking of that Son, he saith, "I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people." {Is.42:6} So the apostle tells us, Eph.5:2, that "Christ hath given himself for us," and what is freer than a gift? "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." {Jn.6:51} Finally, eternal salvation is of grace and free bounty, according to that of John, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand;" {Jn.10:28;} "I will give thee a crown of life." {Rev.2:10} "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness," what of rewards; no, but which "the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." {II Tim.4:7,8} Thus you see what the salvation is that grace appearing brings, and that it is all of grace.

4. The last thing considerable in this point is, to whom the grace of God appearing brings salvation, "all men." Now that you may understand what is meant by all men, note, that the apostle here means not {by all} every particular man in the world, {for it is manifest, that all shall not be saved,} but some of all sorts of men, as the coherence plainly shows; for this text is produced as an argument, to enforce, or encourage those several ranks and degrees of persons, to wit, ministers, old, young, servants, to have a care to do the several duties pressed on them; the strength of which argument lies in this, that grace brings salvation to the believing in every rank and degree; even servants and young folk have their share in this grace, as well as ministers and old people. This "all" in scripture is many times interpreted by some, as Christ "wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;" {Rev.5:9,} "of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." {Rev.7:9} That is, of all nations, tongues, people, and languages, Jews, Gentiles, bond, free, barbarian, Scythian, and the like; for Christ is all, and amongst all, {Col.3:11} to whom "the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" is sent. {Eph.1:13} "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or

free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." {I Cor.12:13} "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." {Gal.3:28,29} It were endless, to multiply places to this purpose; in a word, therefore, this general phrase of all men, must be understood as that passage of Peter, when he saw Cornelius, a Gentile, with his house, received the faith; "of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." {Acts 10:34,35} The sum therefore, is briefly this, the free bounty of God, truly apprehended as it is, brings all good, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, to men of all degrees, ranks, and qualities, that so apprehend it.

From hence you may learn whereunto to trust, and whither to go for all manner of salvation, even this fountain of God's free grace and bounty in Christ; all other refuges are but broken cisterns, that cannot hold this water of life. Now, because this is the tree of life, and well-spring of salvation, of which whosoever receiveth is nourished to eternal life; therefore hath Satan ever stirred all his wit and strength to divert the sons of men from it; some by terror, persuading them they have no part nor portion in this matter, and so drives them away, at least as far as he can possibly, till the Lord himself break in upon him, defeats him, and so draws them in, and by a holy winning violence fastens this his grace upon them; others he deludes with fantastical dreams, that they are already filled with grace, when they have never yet tasted of it, and persuades them no more to look after it; others again, he deals cunningly withal, {such especially in whom he sees and finds an eager pursuit of salvation, not to be withstood,} and persuades them, that this is too easy a way to be safe, for that salvation is of more worth than to be had for nothing; and therefore puts them upon an establishing of their own righteousness, and a purchasing of this salvation, by the works of the law, and by these means gulls many thousand souls; in the meantime, having misused and misled them, he makes himself merry, and laughs at them in his sleeve; for he knows well, so long as he can mislead men out of this path, his prey is sure enough.

But, beloved, be not ye children in understanding, seeing the Holy Ghost here teacheth you better; let him not make such fools of you, but put down the bucket of faith, and draw up salvation out of this well. This grace is the fountain of living waters; do not trouble yourselves about broken cisterns that will hold no water; suck not at dry breasts, that can give no milk, but at this full breast of consolation. You will say, this spring indeed is comfortable to those, to whom it is set open, but to me it is a fountain sealed. This is a common objection of many poor souls in desertion, which wonderfully afflicts and torments them; but let me reason with such a while. No man ought to lay an accusation against another, but what he can sufficiently prove, much less against himself; and it is lamentable to see what power Satan hath got over faithful persons, to make them such zealous accusers, and false witnesses, to the overthrowing of themselves, when nature itself, without grace, is so tender of a man's own welfare; but, beloved, you that are so eager in your accusations, and so peremptory, muster up your proofs, and see how you can make this accusation good; for you must know, that all proof which is not fetched from the scripture is false, and where can you find one proof there, that this fountain is sealed up unto you? I am sure you do not find your names recorded in God's black book, as I may so call it, of his rejection. But you will say, I find by general descriptions of such to whom God will show no favour, that these reflect on my condition, and so grace and favour belong not to me, and consequently there is no salvation for me; for I am worse than you think I am, and no unclean thing can enter into the heavenly Jerusalem. I answer, if sin can exclude persons from salvation, then who can be saved? "For where is he that liveth and sinneth not?" You will say, I have not only sin in me, but it reigns in me. I answer, it may be in this thou art a false witness against thyself, for many accuse themselves in this particular, who cannot prove it; nay, if they would judge deliberately, upon due search they must confess the contrary. You will say it reigns, for I cannot keep it down, but it breaks out in spite of me, do what I can, though I pray against it, and resist it. Will you call this the reigning of sin? Then it reigned in the apostle Paul, when the "good he would do, he could not, and the evil he would not do, that he did." {Rom.7:19-25} Yet he quits himself thus, "it is not I, but sin that dwells in me," and he gives thanks to God for it. Then also sin reigns where the spirit

lusteth against the flesh, as well as the flesh against the spirit; then it also reigns in all believers who in many things sin all. For doubtless they strive against it, and sometimes are foiled; but you must know, that an invading enemy never reigns till the field be quit; nor then neither, so long as new forces are raised, and make a fresh onset. It is not every fall that loses the victory, much less the fall of some few soldiers, whilst the commander stands his ground; it may be thy mind is taken, and hood-winked, and some members are led captive to evil; but the commanding will with fightings and denials holds out, and will not yield; here indeed is a loss to be repaired, but not of the battle, so long as the heart remains carefully steadfast and upright; besides, if the heart with some violent overcharging should be taken, yet it gives the slip, and musters up all its strength again, and falls afresh to combating, the reign of sin is yet prevented. Know, in a word, that as long as souls fight Christ's battles, though they get many a knock, yet they are his warriors, and not under sin's regiment. You will say, but I cannot fight against sin. But, what means then this lowing of the soul, this inward fretting and chafing of spirit, these groans and sighs? Do you call these consent to sin? When Moses came down from the mount, Joshua tells him, that he hears the noise of war in the camp; but Moses answers him, it is not the noise of them that cry for being overcome, but the voice of them that sing, do I hear. So, I say, frettings and out-cries of heart are the noise of war, but singings and mirth the noise of consent to sin; as the people, when they crowned Solomon king, made great shouts of joy. Moreover, though it be most true, that salvation belongs not to such as give themselves full scope to continue in sin to the end, yet it may belong to one, who at the present is under the full power of sin, otherwise could no man be saved; for when they are called, God finds them polluted in their blood, and wallowing in their mire; he enters then into covenant with them, and spreads his skirt over them, and they become his. {Ez.16:1-13} So that man's filthiness is no hindrance of God's gracious call; he justifies the ungodly, or none; for he can find no other on earth. In the text you find, that salvation is brought to all sorts of men; do but consider the parable of the prodigal, the most lively picture of a convert; his father sees him first, nay, the consideration of a father, who hath enough, when he is ready to starve, is the first moving cause of his returning, though he had run riot, and therefore might justly expect nothing but severity. "And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you; for the LORD is a God of judgment; blessed are all they that wait for him." {Is.30:18} The father spies him afar off, he stands ready to welcome a sinner, so soon as his heart looks but towards him; he that will draw nigh to them that are afar off, will certainly draw nigh to them that draw near to him. "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the LORD my God." {Jer.31:18} Nay, the father had compassion on him, his bowels yearn towards him, whilst he is afar off; nay, he runs to meet him, he prevents a sinner with speed; mercy comes not on a foot-pace, but runs; it comes upon wings, as David speaks, "he rode upon a cherub, and did fly; yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind; {Psal.19:10,} as Gabriel was caused to fly swiftly to bring answer to Daniel's prayer. {Dan.9:21} The son's pace is slow, he arose and came; the father's is swift, he ran; the son had most need to run; bowels moving with mercy, out-pace bowels pinched with want. God makes more haste to show mercy, than we to receive; whilst misery walks, mercy flies; nay, he falls on his son's neck, hugging and embracing him. Oh; the depth of grace! Who would not have loathed such a person to touch or come near him, whilst he smells of the swine he kept? Could a man come near him without stopping his nose? Would it not make a man almost rid his stomach, to smell his nastiness; yet, behold, the Father of sinners falls upon the neck of such filthy wretches; mercy and grace is not squeamish; the prodigal comes like a rogue, yet the father embraces him like a bride; he falls a kissing of him, even those lips that had lately been lapping in the hog trough, and had kissed baggage harlots. A man would have thought he should rather have kicked him than kissed him; yet this token of reconciliation and grace he gives him, with this seal he confirms his compassion; nay, he calls for the best robe, and kills the fatted calf for him. The son's ambition was to be but as a hired servant, and lo, he is feasted in the best robes. God will do far better for a sinner than he can imagine himself, "above all he is able either to ask or think." How then does poverty, nakedness, emptiness, pinch thee, because of thy riot? Canst thou see enough in thy father's house, and therefore begin to pant in

heart after him? Wouldest thou fain have admittance? The Father of mercy is ready to deal thus with thee, therefore object not unworthiness; for who more unworthy than such a son?

And so we come to the second branch of the text, to the end of that free love of God, in giving salvation, or the inseparable fruit, which follows this grace; it teacheth to deny ungodliness. And, before I fall upon the particular fruits here mentioned, it will not be amiss to observe something in general from the connection of God's free grace, and the fruit that follows. Let us therefore take this general point into our consideration, that wheresoever the grace of God brings salvation, it is not bestowed in vain; but inclines the heart to new obedience, and makes him fruitful in his life, in all well pleasingness. By the particulars mentioned in the text, you plainly see how natural this general doctrine ariseth from it; which I have rather pitched upon, that I might prevent that licentious soul-destroying misconceit, which even in the apostle's time, men were apt to infer from the free grace of God bringing salvation; which he observing, strikes at it with a holy vehemence and indignation; their inference was this; "if we be saved by grace, then we may continue in sin, that grace may abound," Rom.6:1-3, which conclusion carnal reason is very apt to raise from the premises; but the apostle answers it first with a warning, "God forbid;" and then with strong arguments, "how shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein;" and so goes on. The truth is, the doctrine of free grace, by the devilish cunning of that old serpent, who knows his own bane and ruin is contained in this sovereign antidote, hath been marvelously abused divers ways, in all ages; some, as before mentioned, overthrowing it with licentious inferences; against which presumption, as the apostle in many other passages, so in the text especially, opposeth himself; others abuse it, by establishing a righteousness of their own in the room of it; against which he contends vehemently, especially in the whole epistle to the Galatians.

It will not be amiss, therefore, before we make good the point in hand, to evacuate these abuses, by vindicating and setting the doctrine of free grace at liberty; and to this end you must understand in what sense good works, or inherent righteousness, are necessary attendants on free grace; necessary indeed they are, not causally, but consequently; not to be substituted in the room of free grace for attaining salvation, as if that was a licentious doctrine, not to be allowed; as disagreeing with the mind of the Holy Ghost, and therefore should rely only on them. For if God be extreme to mark what is done amiss, who can stand, "seeing no man liveth and sinneth not?" Nay, seeing that all our righteousness is as a filthy rag, and when we have done all, we are unprofitable servants; and therefore cannot claim salvation as a debt due for them; neither are our works of righteousness necessary attendants on grace as co-assistants, as if they concurred with free grace to produce salvation; and that salvation is not attainable by the favour of God alone, but by works of ours, to make up what is wanting in that to effect it. Against both these conceits of the necessity of our righteousness, the apostle bends all his strength, Eph.2:8, "by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." "And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace." {Rom.11:6} "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." {Gal.5:4} The whole fourth chapter to the Romans is nothing but a clearing of this, as all the epistle to the Galatians; so that it is manifest, that our righteousness or obedience, hath not the least stroke in justification, or salvation, efficiently. You will say, that salvation is promised unto good works. I answer, that even from the promises of salvation it is manifest that obedience has no causing stroke, for then it were due to it of debt, not of promise, or grace; the promise of it is a sufficient argument that it proceeds from bounty, otherwise we need not expect it by promise, but claim it as due. You will say, to what purpose serves our inherent righteousness then? Doth grace make works void? Some indeed, as I said before, err on this hand, as others do on the other; but know, that we, with the apostle, do not by grace make void obedience, but establish it rather; for the grace that brings salvation teacheth obedience also; only we endeavour to abolish that sinister dangerous end, which some propound to themselves in obeying; whereby both Christ is robbed of the glory of his all-sufficient merits, either wholly or in part, by annexing our obedience thereto, as not sufficient without it; as also our obedience becomes vain, and of none effect at all; for, in justification, works serve for no use, nay, they damnify, being brought in for that

purpose, as they evacuate that grace, which only can serve it. You will say then, wherein consists the necessity of obedience? I answer, works are necessary.

1. On one side only, they necessarily follow the free grace of Christ, in that God in Christ hath engaged himself to establish and set up obedience in the heart and life of such on whom he entails salvation by grace, as appears in Isaiah, chapters 35, 40, 41, and in Jeremiah, chapter 31 & Ezekiel, chapter 20. Now where God himself hath inseparably joined salvation, and a holy life, and hath promised the one as well as the other, they must of necessity go together; for what God hath joined together, who can separate? No man can disjoin what he hath united.

2. Obedience is necessarily annexed to free grace; that is, there is a proportion and con-naturalness between free grace and holiness, that they mutually clip each other, as the psalmist speaks; "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." {Ps.85:10} That is, God's mercy and truth in our inward parts; his peace with us, and our righteousness towards him, agree in one; it is a certain rule, and natural response. God's love to his selected ones hath an assimilating virtue to win love to him again, as the heat of one coal kindles another; the loadstones do not more naturally draw iron after them, than the divine loadstone of God's free love draws our love; "we love him, because he first loved us," saith John; kindness begets kindness.

3. Finally, obedience is necessary, on our part, in regard of ourselves. In respect of employment, our condition being a state of subjection to the will of God, therefore we obey him, because then we are warrantably employed, as a servant follows his master's business, because he is a servant; we must be in action, and obedience is the proper action that best suits our condition; therefore we must needs obey; if we were our own, and not under authority, we might choose our own business; but being under command, we must do the will of him that is over us. Likewise, in respect of thankfulness for what we have already received; so far our obedience is necessary; God hath set us free, given us his Son, made us heirs, settled heaven on us, made both our present and future happiness, having undertaken to furnish us with all things useful; so that our improvement thereof in holiness, is not our business for the furthering any good to ourselves, God having reserved the whole provision of grace to his own care; therefore all we can do, must serve to express our thankfulness unto him, who hath so loved. This Paul intimates, saying, "ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." {I Cor.6:20} "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." {I Cor.10:31} The end of obedience must be the setting forth of his praise, or the magnifying of him, showing forth the glory of his grace, which is the end why God redeemed us. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." {II Cor.1:20} But most excellent to the purpose is that of the apostle, "knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God; for which cause we faint not." {II Cor.4:14-16} What higher or better end can a man aim at, seeing his own turn is already served by Christ? Therefore all our obedience ought ultimately to level at the exalting of God, who hath exalted us. This increase he expects of the talents he commits to us; so that our care must not be so much what becomes of ourselves, but that God be honored; yea, though it occasion tribulation, yet therein rejoice, for that he will care well enough for us.

So, in respect of our own present comfort; we rejoice in the way of obedience. Doth Paul rejoice when the church doth well, and stand fast? Much more then may they themselves rejoice; "I will run the way of thy commandments, {saith David,} when thou shalt enlarge my heart;" {Ps.119:32;} for as nothing cuts the heart more than a benumbed straightness and dullness, and uncouthness in duty; so nothing cheers the hearts of God's children more, than a free readiness of spirit to do the will of God; because their delight is in the law of the Lord; it is sweeter than the honey-comb; it is meat and drink to them that do his will; so that meat cannot glad the hungry more, than enlargement in obedience makes glad the panting soul.

Again, in obedience, God speaks comfortably, he speaks peace, and commends with a "well done, good and faithful servant;" so he commended Abraham, Moses, David, and others; and now God's good word and countenance bring much more joy with it, than the best commendation a prince can give his subject. Moreover it is a comfortable evidence that we are in Christ; for our fruit will show upon what root we grow; the Spirit then bears solid witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, if the fruit be right. Now, I need not tell you, what joy there is in such sweet testimonies, which silence all heart-cutting fears. Observe that admirable passage of Isaiah, who having published the promised help of God to cure lameness, dumbness, and faintness in God's service, concludes thus, "and the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." {Is.35:10} And in chap.41:10, saith he, "fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." I might add that holiness must necessarily attend grace in respect of others. Our light must so shine, that they might see our good works, and glorify our Father; {Mt.5:16;} that we may be examples to win them, or convince them of their evil, by our holy conversation in Christ; that the weak may not only not be offended, but also built up, of which the apostle Paul is very cautious; and that the enemy may not blaspheme, and be encouraged, or hardened in an evil way. Thus you see what ends obedience serves for, and what not; and how the doctrine of free grace and obedience must go hand-in-hand together, and kiss each other.

The use of this general doctrine, we shall have fitter occasion to apply in handling the particulars; first, let us observe this position of the apostle; the grace of God teacheth, such as are saved by it, to deny ungodliness. For the better apprehending whereof let us take into consideration these particulars. 1. What ungodliness is? 2. What it is to deny it? 3. What the grace of God, teaching this, is? 4. Why this must be denied? 5. Why the grace of God must teach a denial of it?

1. This vice of ungodliness is well ranked in the first place by the apostle, being the capital ring-leading mother-vice, that begets and brings forth all other; let God for dependence on his will be once cast off, and it is the opening of the sluices for all manner of evil to overflow; as you see it notably verified in the Jews in Jeremiah's time, who shows what an inundation overflows from the leaving of God; but thou saidst, "there is no hope," there is the casting of God off; then follows, "no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go." {Jer.2:25} He harps on the same strings in chapter 18, as they said, "there is no hope; but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart." {Jer.18:12} But that you may the better perceive what this ungodliness is, note, that it consists of two branches, privative and positive. The privative ungodliness in the apostle's phrase is a "living as without God in the world," and this is twofold also, in judgment and in practice. A privative ungodliness in judgment, is plain and proper atheism; of which kind the psalmist speaks, "the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good." {Ps.14:1} Such are the grossest sort of ungodly, who have put out the common light of nature. "Ye worship ye know not what." {Jn.4:22} The privative ungodliness in practice, is such a life as hath no regard unto God, either to fetch anything from him, or to return anything to him; when men live solely upon, and unto the creature, as if there were no God, being put quite out of the thoughts of men; of which the psalmist speaks also, "the wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God; God is not in all his thoughts." {Ps.10:4} The Lord's "judgments are far above out of his sight." {vs.5} There you may see the fearful knit of it also; of this sort it is that the apostle means in the passage abovementioned, "being without God in the world." {Eph.2:12} These two branches made up a privative ungodliness completely; the one hath always the other attending it, but so as to live in defiance of its power; for many will not deny a God, but yet will live as without God. In this latter branch is included all omission of worship, reverence, fear, and confidence, and love of him, whether for matter, manner, or other requisite circumstances; all such omission in privative ungodliness, which is not confined unto his person, but extends also unto his divine will; in brief, this privative ungodliness is due to the lack of spiritual knowledge and divine perception; as it hath respect unto God himself.

Positive ungodliness is more than a bare being without God, or want of that original rectitude required; there is something positive in it, and it is a contrariety, whether in judgment or practice, unto God, and his will revealed. I will touch the nature of this kind of ungodliness, with its difference from the former. And first in the judgment; it is one thing not to know or understand that there is a God, and who he is; another thing positively to determine judgment that there is no God, or that he is not the true God, who is revealed; this latter is positive ungodliness in the highest degree, wherein there is an intellectual act of contradiction; so likewise for the judgment to affirm, that anything else is God save the Lord; for a positive ungodliness may be either negative or affirmative; in a word, all reasonings and disputes, which either resolve the mind, or raise doubts in it against the nature, person, attribute, or will of God, are ungodliness in judgment. Positive practical ungodliness is, when in our wills and lives we do not only not embrace him, nor follow his revealed will, but actually reject him, and his will, and embrace something else in his room, and walk contrarily to him; namely, if we set up another god instead of him, admiring it more than him, ascribing more to it than him, esteeming it above him, being over-ruled by it rather than him, standing in more awe of it than him. So likewise when he commands worship and reverence, we refuse to give it him, or such as he requires, behaving ourselves saucily or unmannerly towards him; when he bids us hearken, or obey, we stop or deafen our ears against him, and pull in the shoulder, are stiff-necked with iron sinews, and walk contrary unto him, profaning and polluting his worship, name, and Sabbaths; finding our own pleasures, and doing our own works on his holy day, and instead of offering pure sacrifices, we offer the sacrifices of fools, even halting, blind, proud, and filthy services. Thus, you see a summary of the ungodliness that must be denied, as it hath reference to the first table, for hereunto I conceive it is limited by the apostle in this text; for that the breaches of the second table are contained in the other branch of worldly lusts; although I deny not but that ungodliness hath a longer extent in many other places of scripture. But I come to show.

2. What it is to deny this ungodliness. Here by the way, the apostle saith not, that the grace of God, for the present, utterly abolishes and destroys all ungodliness, but teacheth us to deny it; intimating, that ungodliness may consist with the grace of God, in respect of its being, so it do not reign but be denied; a comfortable note to such as are exercised with buffetings of temptation, whereby they may find matter of greatest comfort, in which usually they feel most anxiety; because of buffetings, commonly troubles of soul arise, like beating waves, whereas the opposition is the work of the grace of God in them; for denial, {which the grace of God teacheth,} in general, is not only a not consenting, or agreeing to ungodly motions, but also a bending of all a man's force and might against such resurrections; of these two things doth a divine denial of ungodliness consist. I say, there is not a yielding or consenting to the motion; that is, although the beloved of the Lord with Paul, are violently carried captive sometimes into some ungodliness; yet all the rhetoric or threats of the devil, or the world, shall not overcome them, so far as to like and take pleasure in ungodliness; well may they hold them a while by force under ungodliness, but to affect it, embrace it of choice to prefer it before godliness; they can no sooner be won to this, than a bird pent up in a cage can be won to prefer the cage more than the open air, or a fish to prefer dry land rather than the water, which yet by force they may be held unto. Paul was never brought so far as to say, "the evil I would do, that do I," but hold here, even in that captivity of his, "the evil I would not do, that do I." It is true, there is something of the will in every act of ungodliness; namely, a not sufficient willing of that act, which is a defect in the will, for that it should imperiously over-rule all sinful motions, and have them under command; there are also sometimes some broken velocities in the will of God's beloved ones to some ungodly motions; but then the judgment is mistaken, and so the affections are misplaced for a time; but these are distempered fits, or disturbed motions out of their place. In a word, if the will at any time incline to ungodly motions, there is a more predominant act of it to the contrary side; for although there be some remainder of a corrupt will, yet is it in a great measure captivated to the power of the renewed will; whilst that is mutinous, this sways the scepter, and suppresses the mutinies; some renitences in the corrupt will against the renewed, do not infer an agreement unto ungodly motions, with consent and choice. And this is the first branch of denying ungodliness.

In denying ungodliness, there is more than a bare refusal; there is also a repulse given to some ungodly motions upon the soul; which assault is the enforcement of some ungodliness, either by bewitching baits or alluring enticements, or terrifying threats, apt to awe the soul, that it dare not say nay. When the soul is thus hard pressed, a repulse given hereto is properly a denial; fair promises made to the embracing of ungodliness, cannot equipoise those made to godliness, which are true and certain; therefore in a godly denial, the believer takes notice, that ungodliness offers too little to win him; therefore he bids it away, and sends it packing. On the other side, in a holy denial of ungodliness, the believer sees, that whatever ungodliness threatens, if it be not admitted, though it could execute so much fury as it pretends; yet being weighed in the balance with the fruit of departing from godliness, its threatenings are found but flea-bites, in comparison of the weight of wrath ready to fall on such as depart from the living God. Suppose the denial of ungodliness cause the destruction of the body, which is the most and worst it can do; what is that to the casting of soul and body into hell-fire forever? If a man must suffer, what side soever he takes, it is no more than even natural instinct will teach him to choose the least of evils. These and such like considerations in denial of ungodliness, cause a repulse with distaste and offence. Many wicked men depart from ungodliness sometimes, but it is like the parting with intimate friends, with yearning of heart after it, sore against their minds, it is a great trouble and grief to them; but the godly man's heart leaps within for so good a riddance of so troublesome a guest, like the plucking of a thorn out of a man's foot, or the voiding a stone out of the bladder, which caused pain and anguish; for the troublesome assaults, and restless solicitations of ungodliness, are as pricks in his sides, and thorns in his eyes.

Besides this distaste in denial, there is perpetual struggling, and heaving, with all a man's might, to get rid of ungodliness. There are strong cries, and many times tears of moan and anger against it, joined with inward wrestlings for mastery, and fightings within, as the apostle Paul speaks of himself; one while by prayer, imploring aid from heaven against ungodly motions, that they may not prevail; another while laying at them by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, after Christ's example; another while cutting off all provision to weaken or starve them, that their strength may abate and decay; yea, if need be, there is, in this denial, fasting and beating down a man's own body, when treacherously it begins to take part with ungodliness. In a word, every stone is turned, every ordinance is tried, every opportunity is laid hold on for advantage in denying ungodliness, to discomfit and give it the overthrow; so you see what the denying of ungodliness is. But these are harsh reruns, you say; you told us before of salvation by free grace, and now it seems there must be firm tugging and fighting for it. All this hinders not, but that salvation is of free grace. This is first made sure by grace, and this denial of ungodliness follows, as the matter of our employment in this life. Some will say, if salvation be made sure first, then this toil and labour may be spared. But let such know, that he who settles salvation upon men, also teaches them this lesson of denying ungodliness. Seeing therefore, God will not have this labour spared, it must not be spared. But, it may be said, I cannot, for my heart, deny ungodliness; it is so bewitching, I cannot say nay. Indeed, this denial of ungodliness is an impossible thing to man; strength of nature cannot reach it; flesh and blood neither reveals it, nor works it; nay, the law of works though it reveal this denial, yet works it not; it is attainable only by that grace of God which bringeth salvation. So much is intimated by that expression, "it teacheth."

3. Now what this teaching is we will briefly open. For the clearing whereof, consider, that two things are required to teaching. A diffusion of sufficient light from the teacher to enlighten the ignorant; and such a manner of revealing it as suits with the capacity of him that is instructed; both which imply, a sufficient ability in the teacher to teach; and a dexterity, or faculty to wind himself and his notions into the apprehension of him that is taught; so as that he communicates his own skill unto the other. Improperly a man may be said to teach, when he explains and opens hidden notions, though hearers learn not; but teaching being a relative term, a man cannot properly be said to teach, except some be taught.

To come to our purpose, the free grace of God in Christ, that is, Christ through God's free grace teacheth, when having sufficient light in himself to know how to dissipate ungodly motions, and

withal a notable dexterity, or faculty, to know how to reveal this his skill to men; that although they are dull of capacity, yet he can so make them understand, as to participate in the selfsame skill, in kind, though not in perfection. Simply to have the theory of the same skill to deny ungodliness, is not to be properly, or fully taught of Christ; for it is with divine teaching as it is with human, the teaching is diverse as the matter taught. In human teaching the teacher instructs either in scientific or mechanical arts, either such as concern the theory or the practice. Now in teaching the liberal sciences, as logic, &c., it requires no more but instilling the same notions he hath, into the understanding of him that learns, who is then taught when he truly, understands these sciences; but it is otherwise in teaching mechanical arts, to wit, handy crafts; for the teacher in imparting his skill, must bring the learner to be able to do as himself can, else he hath not taught him. Thus is it with divine teaching; Christ hath his doctrinal truths which properly concern the understanding; as that there is a God, who he is, and what the mystery of the Trinity is, and what the incarnation of Christ, with the like; so far as the knowledge of these is required, Christ's teaching is no more but a distilling of a clear and right apprehension of them; but then there are some practical truths of his, wherein to be skillful requires his teaching also; about these Christ not only reads his lectures of them, but infuses a sagacity to act, or his skill to work; as the scribe doth not only open the mysteries of orthography, but guides the scholar's hand also in writing, till he can guide it well himself; so Christ teacheth practical divine arts; he leaves not his scholars till they can do themselves {though not of themselves} as he instructs and teacheth them.

For the farther clearing of this note, that this teaching is instrumental or original; the former kind of teaching is imperfect, the latter complete and effectual; the instrumental is by outward means, the original and effectual teaching, which proceeds from God's favour in Christ is the immediate act of God's Spirit; many attain the former who come short of the latter; the external teaching is either by the word itself, or by the ministers of it. The teaching of the word itself is by its own arguments, or by the ministers, by explanation of the word, and the arguments thereof; which, by a common light, may teach unto conviction to rational regarders; but, of themselves, they cannot effectually infuse the christian skill of denying ungodliness; for as neither Paul's planting, nor the watering of Apollos gave increase; so neither can the letter of the word, without the Spirit, which is the animating or quickening soul of the word. It is the internal teaching of the Spirit, which alone gives efficacy to the denial of ungodliness; neither word nor minister avail anything, but this Spirit. If you ask how this is wrought by the Spirit of Christ? I answer, that Christ, having merited salvation and sanctification for the elect, takes order, and provides such a guide, as is every way complete for the perfecting the saints, that is, his Spirit; and because they are rational creatures he is to deal withal, he deals with them, not by a compulsive violence to forsake ungodliness, but persuasively to win them; God shall persuade Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; {Gen.9:27;} so that the work of the Spirit must be teaching, not forcing, as irrational creatures are forced and necessitated. Now, because there is such a stubborn refractoriness in the hearts of all men naturally, to be ruled and persuaded, and such natural crossness; all the difficulty lies in winning men to be willing, or to be persuaded, which no created power can reach unto; the main teaching therefore of the Spirit, is to instill so much into a vessel of mercy, as shall win him to a willingness to deny ungodliness; so as not to be able to say nay, through the resolute bent of the will thereto.

Now, how the Spirit doth this, we will consider a little; the Spirit makes manifest to the soul, partly by restoring sight, partly with the clearness of light, what horrid loathsomeness there is in ungodliness; and that not with some obscure glimmerings, but with a full delineation and anatomizing of its hidden ugliness; not with an itching, rhetorical strain to captivate the fancy, as man's wisdom sometimes may do, which the apostle calls enticing words, but with such an evidence as is attended with demonstration and power; so that though he leave the heart without an absolute necessary compulsion, {for so a man cannot deny ungodliness,} yet he so convinceth, as that all whatsoever pleads for ungodliness is silenced, and the pleadings of the Spirit against ungodliness, with the decipherings of it, are so prevalent, and carry such a weight along with them, that the soul thus taught by the Spirit, cannot choose but be overruled freely to agree with it; which is such a drawing of

the Spirit, as sets the soul a running upon ungodliness with a holy violence. Such a necessary, yet voluntary tractableness, by the prevalency of the Spirit, was fore-prophesied and promised by Christ; "I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes;" and "they shall be all taught of God." This latter passage, our Saviour established by his own mouth. In brief, the Spirit of Christ, hath such a prevailing power on such as it teacheth, with the clear light and conviction it brings to the heart, as that it stirs up such a necessary, yet voluntary antipathy and indignation against ungodliness, as there is in men naturally against poison, or desperate mischief; who are not by any compulsion forced to shun them, and yet of necessity they cannot choose, but shun and fly from them; and yet it is as voluntary and free an eschewing thereof, as any free choice a man can make.

4. There must of necessity be such a denial of ungodliness in all that shall be saved by grace, because the Lord hath coupled them together; so that for the same reason that we expect salvation freely from him, we must conclude, that this denial of ungodliness must be practiced; for the ground of both is one, even the same good pleasure of God's will. If any conclude a certainty of salvation, because God hath revealed his good will therein {which is the only ground of expecting the same} whereupon a believer may safely build; this will of his being a firm rock that cannot fail, he must, by the same reason, conclude an equal certainty and necessity, that ungodliness must also be denied, there being the same will of God revealed concerning it. If his revealed will be of force to conclude one thing, it is of like force to conclude another that is equally founded on it. If a man imagine that God may, and will dispense with, denying ungodliness, after he hath declared his mind, that ungodliness must be denied; he hath no ground to think but he also may, and will, dispense with his own promise, of saving by grace, though he hath peremptorily declared himself herein; and so he must become changeable, and so there can be no footing to depend on the dispensing with his word; for he that will be false in one thing, may be so in another, and what trust can there be reposed in such an one? But God is far from such changeableness; his revealed will hath an universal stability, and cannot totter. To whom the promise of salvation is made, it is impossible but it shall be performed, and they shall be saved, because he hath said it; and so who are thus saved, it is impossible but they must deny ungodliness, because he hath said that also.

Ungodliness must be denied, because it is a manifest fighting against God, which procures not only his displeasure, but also incenses him as an enemy. A consent unto, and practice of ungodliness, is more than a breaking of his bonds in sunder, and casting off his cords from us; it is a kind of lifting up the heel against him, and of persecuting him, as Christ proclaimed from heaven to Paul, when he practiced that ungodliness, enraging against the truth. Now Gamaliel, Paul's master though he was of the wicked council of the ungodly persecutors, yet this inconveniency he saw, in opposing the godliness of the disciples, they would be found to fight against God; and therefore very pithily persuades them to desist from this course, and to take heed to themselves in this matter. {Acts 5:34-39} Now, what the issue of this lifting up the heel against God will prove, hear the Lord himself speaking by the psalmist, "he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." {Ps.2:4,5} Our Saviour tells us, that such enemies as shake off his yoke, and will not have him reign over them, must be brought and slain before him. "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." {Lk.19:27} So that they do but "kick against the pricks;" {Acts 9:5;} and therefore, in this regard, there is abundance of reason to deny ungodliness; and if this were not the bitter fruit of the enmity of ungodliness, yet it is but reasonable to deny it, for its enmity against God, seeing all his kindness, especially this of saving by grace, deserves better than such an unkind requiting of such evil for his good with an ingenuous spirit. This is a most piercing argument to deny ungodliness. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." {Rom.12:1} "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." {II Cor.7:1} Who spits not at the villainy of Judas in betraying so good a master? And who abhors not the conspiracy of such a subject, whose life his prince hath spared of mere grace? If Ezra's argument be of

such force to restrain ungodliness, namely, "seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this, should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations?" {Ezra 9:13,14} How much more should this argument work, seeing thou, our God, hast crowned us with glory and dignity, and hast done marvelous things for us, should we practice ungodliness against thee, and not deny the same?

The denying of ungodliness is necessary, because not denying it brings many a woe, and breeds much trouble in this life, as may be seen in David's case, who caused the enemy to blaspheme; you know that it is ungodliness that separates God and man, and causeth God to hide his face. "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." {Is.59:2} Observe the truth hereof in other examples, as the church in the Canticles, {chap.5,} and Manasseh, Hezekiah, and old Eli, yea, all the whole nation of the Jews, from their infancy to their expiration. It is the practice, and not denying of godliness, that ushers in the messengers of wrath, and puts dismal denunciations into their mouths, as you may see in Moses, Nathan, and all the prophets. Now, if it were certain there were no miscarriage in the world to come for ungodliness; yet the dear rate to be paid, even in this life, for it hath argument enough to a judgment, not wholly blinded, to convince of the necessity of denying ungodliness; who would buy David's sin at his rate, or Francis Spira's denying of Christ, when he verily thought there could not be worse torments in hell than what he felt in this life, which soon scorched up his flesh, and consumed his vitals?

Now finally, this denial of ungodliness must be taught by divine grace, because it is impossible for flesh and blood to attain the skill and dexterity of this mystery; "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;" {Rom.8:7;} and therefore "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God;" for these are only "spiritually discerned." {I Cor.2:14} It is a military discipline, neither naturally infused, neither learned of the principles of reason; the doctrine of this mystery, and the sagacity to learn it, are of God alone; and it is so hidden a thing, that the world derides it as vanity and folly, yea, amongst such as go for wise men in the world. So our Saviour affirms in his prayer to his Father, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." {Mt.11:25} This being so, how is it possible to attain to denial of ungodliness, but from a teaching that is divine; especially considering, that besides the imparting notions of the mysteries of this art, there is also required an over-ruling power to draw us to the things revealed, which are so harsh and contrary to our inclinations, which are so corrupt, and that not by compulsion, as I said, but persuasively; for when the heart is known, it makes so much against the natural inclination of a man, that he rather distastes the practice of this mystery of denying ungodliness, than affects it. It is so against the shock that the trade will seem an Egyptian bondage; let men but observe their own dispositions, and this will be too manifest; for example, consider when you are in necessity, what dependence is there upon the creature, and what diffidence in the Creator! What fear is there of men, and what presumption upon God! What fondness of the world, and contempt of God, and his ordinances! What irreverence, wearisomeness and dislike of God's worship; which are all ungodly, things. Who is able to deny and put off these things from himself? Nay, who naturally can find in his heart to disclaim and renounce them, and make it his daily trade to pluck down ungodliness? Alas; they are strong holds which the heart of man builds and fortifies, out of his natural enmity against God; it must, therefore, be God alone who is mighty, who must pull down and demolish these strong holds. Will, skill, and power, must come from him, or it will never be done.

Use 1: Doth divine grace teach all to deny ungodliness that shall be saved? Then must I read the fearful doom of all who have not learned this lesson, and are not yet taught it of God; even that harsh censure Peter passed on Simon Magus, that such are yet "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity;" {Acts 8:23;} and have not their part in this matter. I say, as yet, this is their fearful condition; and if they continue thus untaught this lesson, there can be no salvation by grace for them. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that

doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." {Mt.7:21} When to such as the Lord opens not to, he will say, "depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I know you not." Men commonly dream of a strange kind of gospel, that never came into God's mind; that seeing Christ hath died, they may live as they list, fighting against God and godliness, letting themselves loose to all impiety, and yet go to heaven. Certainly, had God opened such a gap to let in such an inundation of impiety, he could never have justly complained of the deluge of it, that overflows the world; far be it from the holy God, whose purity abhors it, to allow such licentiousness to men; no, no, God's aim was at the damning up the fountain of sin; Jesus Christ "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." {Tit.2:14} Not because we are holy, but that we might be holy.

Some licentious ungodly wretches, I know, reply, though to their own ruin, {for to such the gospel proves a stone of offence} that Christ justifies the ungodly, and we are saved by grace without works; but, alas; they observe not how cunningly the devil equivocates to lull them asleep in their ungodly practices. It is true, indeed, that Christ justifies the ungodly, that is, he finds them ungodly when he imputes his righteousness unto them; but he doth not leave them ungodly, "but teacheth them to deny ungodliness;" he affords no cloak to persistence or perseverance in ungodliness, but will come in flaming fire "taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." {II Thes.1:8} He that denies not ungodliness, him will Christ deny before his Father which is in heaven. Why then wilt thou be deluded with such gross sophistry, in so clear a sunshine of the gospel? Is not the light so bright that thine own heart checks thee? And if thine heart condemn thee "God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." {I Jn.3:20} It is true also, that we are saved by Christ without works, but here also Satan equivocates as grossly as in the other case; for although faith only saves without works efficiently, yet not consequently, as I said before; that is, though faith only saves, yet that faith must not be alone that saves, but must be attended with its fruits, to wit, denying ungodliness; else it is so far from saving, that it is but a dead faith, and he is but a vain man that hath no better, as James well affirms. The person believing will deny ungodliness, though this denial works not his salvation; as the apple makes not the apple tree, but the apple tree brings forth the apple, and not the apple the tree, yet the apple tree must bear apples, or else it is no true apple tree. Our Saviour speaks to the same purpose, "a good tree bringeth forth good fruit;" he doth not say, the fruit makes it a good tree, yet the good fruit is inseparable. I speak not of quantities, or degrees, as neither doth our Saviour, but of the truth, to wit, a real and sincere denial of ungodliness. It is very certain, as thorns and thistles bear no grapes, or figs, so neither do true vines or fig trees bear thorns or thistles. Some accident, either inward distemper, or outward temptation, may indeed putrefy or wither their fruit. Some again, sufficiently convinced of this truth, are apt to think there is time enough yet to deny ungodliness; one of the enough there is indeed, time little enough. It may be thou art plummeting into the grave with age, and thy sun is setting, and all thy time past thou hast walked in ungodliness; God hath not been in all thy thoughts; insomuch that thou art even tanned with ungodliness now, and accustomed to do evil, it is become a second nature to thee; and is it time enough yet to deny ungodliness? Is not the mastery of it exceeding difficult? Is it not too deeply rooted? And canst thou cast it out at pleasure? Can such an old familiar, with which thou hast had so long acquaintance, and taken so sweet content, be so easily shaken off? Though delays of this nature are to all men dangerous, yet to none so dangerous as to those who, being old in age, are old in ungodliness too; they are apt to think themselves too wise to be caught, and count it a shame to turn over a new leaf; which will proclaim all their former wisdom to be but folly; but whilst they think themselves so wise, I am sure they become fools, in thinking there will be time enough yet to cast off the viper of ungodliness, which may destroy them, God only knows how soon; but, unto all procrastinators of ungodliness, let them know, they are warned in time, God yet knocks and calls; how soon he may withdraw himself, who knows? Remember what he said to Ephraim, that he "is joined to idols; let him alone;" {Hos.4:17;} and what he saith to the same people of the Jews, by the prophet Isaiah, "why should ye be stricken anymore; ye will revolt more and more." {Is.1:5} Again, "make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their

eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed." {Is.6:10} It grieves me to read so sad a lecture, but the security of many constrains me, lest they should perish in their ungodliness.

Use 2: Hence gather also, that if any man would deny ungodliness, he must go to the school of grace to learn it, whereby he may discern one notable and comfortable difference between legal and evangelical righteousness; in matter they agree, for as the law, so the gospel expects a denial of ungodliness; but the law leaves a man to shift as well as he can for himself; as for help, besides his own wit and strength, he must look for none, and the law exhibits none; the tale of bricks must be delivered in, or they must bow down their backs to the smiter; as for straw, and other accommodations, they must seek it where they may, none shall be given; and therefore well may the rigor thereof be accounted a burden, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear; from which insupportable burden, our dear Lord and Saviour hath purchased our glorious liberty at no mean price; even this liberty, that by grace we shall be taught and enabled to the denial of ungodliness, under the gospel. God is not so hard a master as to expect a crop where he sows not, nor increase where he doth not give a stock of talents to trade; nor sends us on a warfare at our own provision; but first he steels us against the adversary with skill, courage, and fortitude. Augustine had sufficient ground to pray as he did, *Da, Domine, quod jubes, et jube quod vis*, {as the Lord that sets us on work enables and furnishes us to do the work;} which yet is no new gospel, but as ancient as a visible church, typified in God's fore-furnishing Noah with an ark, that he might be saved when the world of the godly perished, and left him not to his own wit to shift for himself; so also requiring a sacrifice of Abraham, he provides him a burnt offering; in his sending his people Israel on that tedious journey from Egypt to Canaan, he divides the sea, and Jordan, for them to make them a way; and to supply them, he sends manna from heaven, and water out of the rock; and when Joshua is to enter upon the conquest of that land, he appears in a vision to him, and bids him not fear nor be discouraged; for {saith the Lord,} "I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." {Jos.1:5}

Whenever he requires anything of such as are in covenant with him in Christ, he will take order there shall be no lack of anything that may accommodate them to the performance of it, "it is God that girdeth me with strength, {saith David,} and maketh my way perfect;" {Ps.18:32;} "I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me;" {Ps.57:2;} "through God we shall do valiantly; for he it is that shall tread down our enemies." {Ps.108:13} "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." {Ps.73:26} Christ tells Peter that Satan hath desired to sift him as wheat, "but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." {Lk.22:31,32} "I laboured more abundantly than they all; {saith the apostle Paul;} yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." {I Cor.15:10} "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." {Phil.4:13} It is observable, that whereas, according to the nature of covenants, each party covenanting mutually bind themselves by the covenant of their several parts; but, in the new covenant of the gospel of free grace, betwixt God, and those that are justified by grace, it is otherwise; God indeed binds himself "to blot out their transgressions, and to remember their sins no more;" but whereas we should bind ourselves to remove away our stony hearts, and to walk with soft hearts before him, to get his law into us, and never to depart from him, which is our part of the covenant, it being our duty to God; yet, he undertakes by promise to furnish us out of his own store with all this. "I will sanctify my great name - I will take you from among the heathen - I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean - a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses." {Ez.36:23-30} Which answers this clause in the text that the grace of God shall teach us to deny that ungodliness which he expects to be denied; and therefore unto this grace must we fly for sufficiency to denial, if ever we attain it; the power is not in our own hands, nor the skill; ungodliness is a devil which will not be cast out, but by seeking aid from above, from whence comes every good, and every perfect gift,

even from the Father of lights. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might;" {Eph.6:10;} seeing in denial of ungodliness you "wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." {vs.12} You shall indeed faint if you draw not living water from this well-spring of life; but this shall renew your strength, as is typified in Samson, fighting against the Philistines, who after he had with his jaw-bone slain a thousand of them, he fainted, until God opened or "clave an hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water there out; and when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived;" {Judges 15:19} Let me therefore urge you, as once Jacob did his sons, when the famine was in Canaan, and no food was to be found at home, "why do ye look one upon another; {saith he;} behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt; get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die." {Gen42:2} Or, as the famished lepers that went to the camp of the Syrians; who "said one to another, Why sit we here until we die?" {II Kings 7:4} In like manner, I say, why stand you still, looking either carelessly or remorsefully on yourselves, or on one another, when all strength in the world fails to vanquish ungodliness, which devours worse than a famine. You have heard, as well as I, that there is spiritual food for strength in the gospel; go to it then, and fetch from thence, that you may live and not perish; this bread though in the Father's house sends the enfeebled, half-starved prodigal thither, seeing he could subsist no longer of himself.

You may say, how shall I partake of this skill and help of God to deny ungodliness? I answer, be in God's way, and come to his school, {as I said,} where he teacheth to deny ungodliness. They that never go to his school, or put themselves under a master that cannot teach, shall never know letters or be skillful in any art, but will ever be to seek; and it is not every one, but he only that is skilled that way, that can teach the ignorant; they that know not letters themselves, and are not skillful in a mystery, can never teach others; therefore it is but vain to seek to such. The Spirit of God alone hath this skill, to teach the denial of ungodliness; all the world besides is to seek in it; the popish masters, like vaunting fraudsters, have set up a school of their own, and devised new rules out of the forge of their own brains, to compass this; to wit, single life, whippings, monastical solitariness, hideous phantoms, and the terror of purgatory flames, with crossings, and holy water, and a world of trash; by all which they rack and cruciate poor souls, and leave them desperate; for all this will never do it, because God is not with it; these being lessons that he never gave, neither did they ever come into his mind. Indeed their school is erected, and rules devised, not so much to teach, as to make a gain of their proselytes. Go therefore to Christ's school, where are ordinances instituted by himself for the purpose to teach; but go not to human inventions, though ever so specious or probable. The blind men, you know, recovered their sight, and had their blindness cured, when they lay by the way-side where Christ came; at other times, when they were out of Christ's way, some flashing they might have, but no cure; so the lame man, lying at the gate of the temple, gets his limbs, and is made to leap. This makes the church in Cant.1:7,8, {being yet powerless,} to move this seasonable query to Christ, "tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon; for why should I be as one that turneth aside?" Whereunto Christ makes answer; "if thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherd's tents." They that shun the means, and come not to God's ordinances, must needs remain ungodly persons, and be mere strangers to the denial of ungodliness; though I do not say, that the mere coming to them, and living under them, is sufficient to be taught this.

There must be a concentrated attendance on these ordinances, which is a serious and earnest bending of the mind, with all a man's might, to the lectures of the Spirit. To make one a scholar, is requisite, not only going to school, but also minding his book, and his master's instructions; he that gives not his mind to it, shall never attain it; much more is this giving of our minds to the teaching of the Spirit requisite, that we may be taught by him, all the lessons being supernatural, and above the reach of common reason; they are all paradoxes to nature; they are mysteries of so high a strain, that will put even teachers of Israel to a stand; the very disciples of Christ, as well as Nicodemus, were at a loss; when Christ reads his lectures, they are very riddles. Now you know that the more mystical

and intricate any science is, the more wary and heedful must the mind be that will learn it; hence it is that the Lord so often inculcates an attending, "lest at any time we should let them slip." {Heb.2:1} You find likewise, that such as have been taught by the Spirit, have been still attentive; as the Jews in Nehemiah's time, when the book of the law was distinctly read, and the sense given, so that the people were caused to understand. The text saith that "the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law;" so "they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." And that "all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law." {Neh.8:3-9} So when God opened the heart of Lydia, the text saith, that the Lord opened her heart, so "that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." {Acts 16:14} So Christ's hearers were very attentive to hear him, or did hang upon him, as the margin reads it. This attentiveness is sometimes called, an inclining of the ear, sometimes a regarding and marking, sometimes a comparing of things together, or pondering, or weighing of them, which was the attention of those of Berea, who made a scrutiny or a search, according to Scripture, "daily, whether those things were so." {Acts 17:11} Certainly this careless heedlessness, and not minding either the outward or inward lectures of the Spirit, but {according to the proverb} having a wool-gathering mind, is one great cause of so much non-proficiency in the school of Christ, and of such idiotism in the mystery of denying ungodliness, and in all other divine mysteries; so that of many we may say, as Paul of some of the Hebrews, whereas for the time they might even be teachers, that have yet need that one teach them "again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." {Heb.5:12} Even as careless boys hardly get beyond their letters in the time they might have been able to read well, had they but minded their books. Would you then be taught this lesson to deny ungodliness? Regard and mark well, with a busy mind, what the Spirit saith to the churches; for that is properly to have an ear to hear; ponder, therefore, and lay up his saying in your hearts; thus was Mary taught. "Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart." {Lk.2:19} The letting of the thoughts be scattered, and forage in every bye corner; gazing on every object that is presented, leave but a sottish carcass in the place, as far to seek as at the first; thus attention is necessary to teachableness, but it is not sufficient; for many attend, but receive not instruction.

Therefore, to be taught this lesson to deny ungodliness by the Spirit of God requires submission, not to contradict his principles, or rules, but to subscribe to them, and take them for settled principles. He that will be still caviling with his master, saying, this is not a true rule, and that will not hold current, he shall never be taught by him till he will yield. There are too many in the world of this troupe, that will deny principles, either contradicting them, or they will not receive them, except they be proved; now it is impossible that such an one should be taught; for in all sciences there are some principles that can have no other demonstration than a native light, or good authority, by which matters depending in that science must be confirmed and proved; therefore, it is a rule in all arts, *contra principia negantem non est disputandum*, {against one who denies the principles, there can be no debate,} there is no dealing with a man that denies principles; yet in human science the firmest are but natural principles, which in respect of nature's obscurity and mutability, may possibly be subject to error; nevertheless they must be received, because they are instructible, or else there is no learning such a science. Much more necessary, therefore, is it, that the learners of divine mysteries {and this of denying ungodliness among the rest} that they contradict not, nor reject divine principles, nor yet expect any rational demonstration of them; for no science builds on faith as divinity doth; partly because the authority on which they depend, to wit, the Lord's own appointment, is infallible, and cannot deceive, so that for this cause they are more free from exception, and more firm, than what hath ever so manifest demonstration in itself.

For example, the shield of faith quenches the fiery darts of ungodliness, and purifies the heart from it. Godly sorrow works up a zeal against it, and stirs up indignation and vehement desire to be rid of it; the word of God is "quick and powerful, sharper than a two edged sword," to clip it from the soul, and to rip up the odious poison of it, being applied by faith against it; these, with others, are infallible principles, taught by the Spirit of God; and he that will learn this lesson, must not dispute the

certain efficacy of them, much less contradict or reject them as vain and frivolous; if learners will take upon them to control, or teach their teacher, the Spirit of God, they may be ever learning, but shall never come to the knowledge of the truth, or be skillful in divine practice; for the loose despising atheist shall remain an atheist still; and the proud deviser of new, though more rigid courses, leaving the principles of the Spirit of Christ, may rack his brain, and macerate his body, but ungodliness shall dwell with him still. The humble learners of the Spirit of God are the greatest proficients, for "the meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way." {Ps.25:9} "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." {I Pet.5:5} Doubtless our Saviour, when he tells us, that "except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven;" {Mt.18:3;} principally means an un-contradicting teachableness; with whom all go for unquestionable maxims taught; as they never dispute whether they be right or no. I say not this as if every word that ministers speak must go for an oracle, but what the Spirit of God speaks out of the word of God.

Be not discouraged at the harshness and uncouthness of the lessons the Spirit sets you at first; in all sciences, the first lessons are hardest, they seem to be an indissoluble knot; the way is more tedious, because the path is yet rough, and not trodden, after a little use, it will be a great deal more easy; even as Greek seems a harsh language, almost impossible to be learned at first, yet in a little time it comes on smoothly. In like manner, the instructions of the Spirit to deny ungodliness, seem very crabbed at first; flesh and blood cannot brook them, as they are rough in the handling like new tools, till a little use hath made them plain and smooth; and so the rules of denying ungodliness were thus uncouth to all, even the best proficients, at first; none ever learned the art, that break not through the first and sharpest brunt with difficulty; it was a galling yoke at first, but in time Christ made it easy to them, and so he will to thee. If mere use can make harshest lessons easy, heavy burdens, not only tolerable, but lightsome also, and often treading, makes the roughest ways smooth; as long imprisonment will take away much of the bitterness of it, and the like; much more will the divine supernatural help of grace, make the harsh lecture of denying ungodliness easy, nay, a recreation. Fresh soldiers at first take arms with heavy hearts, but after a little experience, the sound of drums and trumpets calling to battle is music in their ears; especially when the general makes them see the certain advantages, then they set light by the brunt, or a few knocks.

The next point that the text affords to us is this, that the grace of God teacheth such as are saved by it to deny worldly lusts. We shall be the more brief in opening this point, because many branches hereof were fully opened in the last; here we shall have no more to do but to consider, what are worldly lusts, which are to be denied. In the clearing whereof John will give us light, who reduces them to three heads; to wit, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life;" and these are not of the Father, but of the world; {I Jn.2:16;} so then, to know what worldly lusts are, we must search a little into these three particulars.

What is meant by the lusts of the flesh? The flesh, when lust is ascribed to it, is taken three ways; sometimes mystically for the whole corrupted part of man, or so much as lies under the law and power of sin, and is opposed to the regenerate part of man, which is renewed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost; so the apostle understands it in that passage, "the flesh lusteth against the spirit." {Gal.5:17} The lusts of the flesh, thus understood, are all inordinate and irregular inclinations and motions whatsoever, springing from the fountain, man's depraved and polluted nature, and are opposed to injections from without, whether of Satan, or any external objects; for some sinful motions have their original immediately from a man's self, without derivation or dependence from, or upon, any other cause; and in some respect, or in regard of some inordinate inclination, man is a cistern that receives polluted waters from other heads; as when Satan tempts, or outward baits entice; but most sinful inclination have their seeds within a man's self and many weeds grow up from the nature of that soil, without any sowing. An exact distinguishing of these internal natural lusts of the flesh, from Satan and the world's injections, hath not yet been reached by any that I can find, because Satan doth so mix his injections with our natural inclinations. But James is very clear in the thing, that the flesh hath proper lusts of its own, "every man is tempted, {saith he,} when he is drawn away of

his own lust, and enticed." {Jas.1:14} Now these kinds of lusts, as well as others, may be well called worldly; partly, as they are worldly men with whom they reign; partly also, as they have their being in this world only. The denial or resistance of these, the grace of God teacheth to such as shall be saved.

Sometimes again, flesh is taken synecdochically, to wit, a part for the whole. And so the flesh imports that branch of corrupt nature, from whence spring, in particular, inordinate, unclean motions, or lascivious inclinations to adultery, fornication, and such like; so Jude takes it, speaking of some that gave "themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh;" that in so running "these filthy dreamers defile the flesh;" {Jude 7,8;} that is, they defile themselves with uncleanness. More plainly Peter, speaking of men that walk after the lusts of uncleanness, that "they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness." {II Pet.2:18} Flesh thus considered as the fountain of uncleanness, the lusts of it are unclean inclinations, desires, delights, and pleasing contemplations therein; thus must our Saviour's speech be understood, "I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart;" {Mt.5:28;} only note, that an inclination to propagation is not simply sinful; for God himself makes marriage, simply considered in itself honorable, and therefore reputes not all such desires absolutely sinful, but the inordinate desires, or lusts after the flesh, doth the grace of God teach to deny.

Flesh sometimes is taken naturally for the body of a man, and then the lusts of it are all inordinate desires, after such things as please the body, as meat, drink, raiment, means of health, and welfare of it in any kind; this inordinate desire is not of the Father, but of the world; this lust of the flesh our Saviour labors to suppress, "therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat; or, what shall we drink; or, wherewithal shall we be clothed?" {Mt.6:31} And take "no thought for the morrow;" {vs.34;} that is, be not either over solicitous with distraction, to the excruciating or disquieting yourselves hereby; or be not excessively greedy of these things, or for anything more than is needful. So that this kind of lust consists of these branches, when our desires and cares are so extreme and turbulent about these things as make us neglect, forget, or slight better things; or when they become a burden and torture to us; and when they keep not within any fit limits or bounds. As for example; this is the lust of the flesh, that is, of the world, when our heart is so taken up with the desire of food, raiment, health, that we disturb ourselves about them, and mind nothing so much, or so eagerly, as making provision for them; neglecting or undervaluing the spiritual food, raiment, and health of our souls; so likewise when our desires are not content with food and raiment that is convenient, but are aspiring to superfluity, even to more, for quantity and variety, than will serve the turn; or, to what is better, finer, and more delicate, than what is needful; so a gluttonous, drunken and voracious desire, comes under this kind of the lusts of the flesh; as also impatience in sickness, both in respect of the continuance of it, or the lack of such remedies, or means, which we conceive may recover us.

Another sort of worldly lusts to be denied are, as John speaks, "the lusts of the eye;" and they are conversant about the things which by the eye the heart is over affected with; and they are things that are our neighbor's, and not our own; or things that are our own. These, as they are conversant about our neighbour, or anything that is his. Perhaps thine eye beholds the beauty and conveniency of thy neighbor's house; the goodly, useful, rich furniture; the rarity, pleasantness, fruitfulness, good situation, and abundance of his lands; the plenty and variety of his fare; the strength, good qualities, and serviceableness of his attendants; the amiableness, good disposition, meekness, helpfulness of his wife. Now there may be a twofold lust of the eye. Enviousness of heart at him, because of these good things which thine eye beholds. The apostle tells us of the spirit of a man, that lusts to envy, and this envious lust of the eye must be denied, and grace alone will teach the denial. Or, the eye lusts after these when the sight of them stirs up a wishing them to be his own; so Ahab lusted for Naboth's vineyard, and Absalom for his father's kingdom.

Another sort of worldly lusts, he calls the "pride of life;" now this is thinking of ourselves above what is meet, for anything in the world, spiritual or natural gifts; as knowledge, utterance, skill, feature, proportion, strength, or the like; or riches, friends, parentage, place, titles, office; when any

bear themselves loftily, scornfully, with overtopping conceits, slighting others; this is a kind of ambitious lust, seeking its own exaltation above measure.

Now grace will teach, though not utterly to vanquish, yet to deny these; it will teach as a monitor or a remembrancer, when they begin to stir; and be as a secret voice, giving warning of an insurrection in the soul, that it may prepare for an encounter at the beginning of the mutiny, before it hath got a head. Again grace teacheth to deny these, by infusing divine skill to get the best advantages of them. There is no worldly lust, but hath a fair pretext to cover its vileness; as covetousness is called good husbandry, drunkenness good fellowship, pride is handsomeness, oppression is seeking a man's own, uncleanness is called love, and the like; whereby the soul is got asleep, as Delilah did Samson, till it is betrayed into the hands of Satan; but, through grace, the Spirit of God discovers this mask or visor of lust, and leaves it open in his own ugliness. They that are taught of God cannot be cozened with all the cunning insinuations and fair glosses lust covers itself with; they appear through the thickest mists, what they truly are, for the lambskin shall not be able to hide the wolfishness in lust. The Spirit gives them such a quick piercing eye, as to see through all the seemingly genuine pretenses, which insight all the world is not able to procure, but only the Spirit of God, through grace; even as none but the Lord discovered the wife of Jeroboam to Ahijah the prophet, when she came to him in a disguise. {I Kings 14:5,6} We descry and discover in our ministry the secret treachery, and hidden poison of lust; but not one of a hundred takes notice thereof, or will believe our report, but only such, as {besides that} hear, and are inwardly convinced by the secret illumination of the Spirit; which is as great an advantage as the Israelites had of the Syrians, when the prophet still revealed the consultations their king held in his bed-chamber. {II Kings 6:12}

Again, the Spirit, by grace, gives this advantage by teaching where the strength of lust lies; what provision pampers and fattens it; how every lust hath its proper fuel or pasture, to keep it in growth; and that the deceitful heart and treacherous porters the senses, are secretly in league with lust, to steal out at every opportunity, to forage for its provision, and to bring it in. As for instance, the Spirit discovers, that unclean lusts have strength from excess of meat or drink, too much familiarity with loose persons, filthy discourse, wanton dalliance, obscene books; this will make a spark grow to a flame, and a hunger starved lust grow fat and mighty; and that the filthy heart by musing, the lustful eye by prying, the wanton ear by listening, bring in this fuel. I say, the Spirit of grace makes a full discovery, that by these means lust comes to be so strong, and in so full plight; some glimmering fancies men may have hereof, without the effectual work of the Spirit, but a convincing and affecting discovery is only by that. But he stays not in discovering where the strength lies, but teaches how to weaken it; namely, by cutting off this provision, and shortening lust of his allowance, and keeping a strict guard and watch over these treacherous favourers of it; as the grooms taking away a horse's provender, soon makes him lean and abate his courage; so the Spirit puts the soul on this practical part of policy, as a general not only tells his soldiers, they must intercept the provision that may feed the besieged city, and fall on the convoys; but he marches out before them, and puts them on the project, and breaks the way for them; and as Delilah taught the Philistines how to weaken Samson, herself breaking the ice for them, cutting off his locks. All the rudiments in the world are not sufficient instructions to bereave lust of this strength, but the Spirit. Some austere spirits have dealt very rigidly with themselves to weaken this strength of lust; witness Jerome, who relates his case himself, speaking of fasting, and other harsh means, for weakening lust, he says, by his own bitter experience, that of themselves they have no efficacy, but only rose and increased the more. Nothing therefore, no not the use of God's own means, can avail to the weakening of lust, except the effectual operation of the Spirit strike the stroke; and from this must the effectual discovery and abatement of the strength of whatsoever lust be fetched.

We have done with the two great hydras, ungodliness, and worldly lusts, whose heads grace takes off for such as are saved by it; which having thus cleared the coast, and made the passage free from devourers, the same grace leads them to God's green pastures, that therein they may be fat and flourishing; where it takes care of three things, that they may be complete. 1. In respect of themselves, that they may lie down quietly without disturbance. 2. In respect of others, that they may

not be offensive, but useful to them. 3. In respect of God, that they may be fit for their Master's use, and delightful in his eye.

The first care of the grace of God, which concerns believers, is to teach and win them to sobriety, whereby they may undisturbedly enjoy themselves with comfort. The doctrine is, that the grace of God teacheth such, as shall be saved, to live soberly; wherein let us consider. What sobriety is; what it is to live soberly; and how grace teaches it?

Sobriety sometimes is taken strictly for a temperate and moderate use of meat and drink, without excess, and is opposed to gluttony and drunkenness; but, most frequently in scripture, it is of a far larger extent, and is understood of a general moderation in all things we have to do with; thus Paul understands temperance, which is all one with sobriety; "and every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate {or sober} in all things." {I Cor.9:25} In this general sense it is to be understood in this place; for the apostle you see accumulates all which concerns a man's self in an orderly conversation, under this one virtue, sobriety. In general, it is an universal moderating a man's self, or keeping himself in due limits, in all things whatsoever he hath to do with; and it answers that rule of the apostle, "let your moderation be known to all men," which he expounds in the next verse, "be careful for nothing;" that is, be so indifferent in the use of all the things of this world, that nothing may distract you. This sobriety, or temperate moderation, is twofold; internal; and external. The former is a sobriety of the mind; the latter of the conversation. Give me leave to clear these, that the latitude may appear; and first for the sobriety of the mind. Note, for the foundation of what I have to say, that the apostle is very clear, that there is a sobriety in the mind, and that he intends such in the text. For in verse 7, he requires sober-mindedness, and the text is an encouragement to it, from the efficacy of grace to compass it. Writing to the Romans he speaks to the same purpose, "for I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." {Rom.12:3} Now thinking, {you know,} is an act of the mind; consider we therefore, what the sobriety of the mind is.

It consists in the moderation of its inquisition; that is, the mind in its search or enquiry into things keeps itself within due limits, and wades not deeper than its reach. As the eye is not satisfied with seeing, so {many times} the mind is not contented or satisfied with prying into hidden or concealed secrets; but it is a good rule, *noli altum sapere*; {that is, do not be high-minded, but fear.} The Holy Ghost gives a good reason of it, "the secret things belong unto the LORD our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." {Deut.29:29} A man may be too saucy, and go beyond sobriety, in attempting to uncover either the things of God, which he hath locked up in the hidden closet of his own breast; or the things of men, which are fit to be reserved to themselves. For example; the unity of the divine nature, and trinity of persons; the eternal generation of the Son, and procession of the Holy Ghost; the conception of Christ by the Holy Ghost; the election and reprobation of particular persons, clasped and sealed up in the reserved books of life and death; these, and many the like, are secrets, wherein the sobriety of the mind, as an awful bridle, should hold in the career of man's inquisitiveness, and bound his itching sense which would be prying. The setting bounds to the mount where God descended and the charge to the people not to dare to make an approach was a type of this sober-mindedness. Howbeit many will not be satisfied, but are so given to enquiry, that faith must be jostled out by sense and reason; nothing is true with them but what by rational search they can find out to be so; but one of the ancients suits such un-sober minded men well, *scrutator majestatis imprimatur a gloria*; {that is, he that pries too far into the majesty, shall be confounded with the glory;} a man may look so boldly on the sun as he may not only dazzle but blind his eyes, or unawares fall into a ditch; let this then be the first branch of sobriety of mind, to be moderate in our enquiries, and be content to search only into things allowed to be known, being what is revealed.

Sobriety of mind consists in the moderation of our judgment; this stands in the deliberateness of it. Deliberate judgment is opposed to a rash or over-hasty one; when a man will conclude things before he hath well weighed the premises, or circumstances, inferring such a conclusion. It is a kind of

drunkenness in men to make a judgment hand over head, or blind-fold; but sober minds judge deliberately; they will see good cause for what they determine; they will do a thing so, as that they may not be forced to undo it again for lack of consideration. A sober judgment is according to knowledge; when a man judgeth no further of anything than he can understand. As it is the property of drunkards to do they know not what, so is it of a drunken mind void of sobriety. What Jude saith of speaking, is as true of judging evil; he tells us of some, whom he ranks with brute beasts that "speak {and judge} evil of those things which they know not." {Jude 10} A man hath a sober judgment when he is not too peremptory and stiff in his opinion, but submits to better judgments. Sobriety of judgment stands in thinking of a man's self, and others, according as God hath dealt to every man; in this Paul declares the soberness of his mind or judgment; "for we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves." {II Cor.10:12} "We will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us." {II Cor.10:13} All high thoughts and over-weening of a man's own parts, or gifts, above what is meet, together with all undervaluing of others, are void of sobriety; but a true sobriety is apt to think better of another than himself, because he sees more defects of his own, than he doth of another; but I make it not a rule; for a man may know something of himself, and others, that may, with sobriety, admit of thinking better of himself.

A sober mind consists in the moderation or good temper of the heart. Now the heart is thus sober when it keeps itself in a mediocrity, and breaks not out into excess; as a man is said in the vulgar sense to be sober, when he drinks not excessively, but only as much as will suffice. This sobriety of heart stands in the moderation of his will and affection; there is a kind of drunkenness in the heart of man, when it is insatiable; and that, in the arrogance of it, that it must not be crossed in anything, but will swallow all that is pleasing to his appetite, though it be never so unreasonable and harmful. A sober mind will confine itself to things lawful, honest and expedient, and bridles in itself to what agrees not therewith. So, the heart is drunk and insatiable, when the desires thereof are excessive; namely, when they are turbulent, disquieting and distracting the heart; as a man is drunk when he drinks so much as distempers the body. It was drunkenness in Rachel's heart, that she was so turbulently desirous of children, so that she cries out, "give me children, or else I die." {Gen.30:1} So of Ahab, that was so desirous of Naboth's vineyard, that he is sick for it. {I Kings 21:1-7} Sober desires are such as leave the heart in a quiet temper. Drunken desires of the heart are, when they are never satisfied, nor know when they have enough; but the more they have, the more they crave; which is a right property of vulgar drunkenness. Sober desires {I mean of earthly things} sail so low, and aim at so few and short marks, and that with such indifference, as that a very little satisfies and gives contentment. A sober heart is far from enlarging her desires, as hell, the grave, or a barren womb, which ever cry, give, give. Likewise, the desires of the heart are drunken when they are impatient and outrageous, if crossed; as none more mad than drunkards, if they cannot have presently what drink they call for; when men fret, and chafe, hang the lip, are sullen, and malcontent if their desires are frustrated, such are drunken desires, that heart is not sober. I might as easily show you a like drunkenness in all the affections and passions; but it shall suffice at present to consider, that affections so far swerve from sobriety, as they are transported beyond their bounds, in any excess whatsoever.

There is an external sobriety, and that is of the conversation, which consists in a moderate, temperate use of all things; for clearing whereof, note, this sobriety is not so much a mere abstinence from excess, as a refraction or restraint of a man's self from all manner of excess; which implies some appetite or inclination to break out beyond bounds, and a curbing a man's self by a kind of compulsive restraint, which is self-denial. There is a great difference between abstinence and forbearance of a thing, which a man hath no inclination or power unto; and sobriety, as it is a virtue which presupposes a vice, enticing the contrary way. For example, suppose wine be loathsome to a man, his abstinence is not sobriety properly; but being inclined thereto, and strongly enticed, he puts a knife to his throat, and forces himself to forbear, in spite of all provocations; this is a virtuous sobriety; this certainly is that which the grace of God teacheth; for teaching implies a man is yet to seek, and hath not attained

the thing to be taught; whereas there is no need of teaching that which a man cannot naturally choose but follow. This sobriety consists of many branches, as, the bridling and moderating a man's appetite, having provocations of excessive eating and drinking, which our Saviour calls a taking "heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life." {Lk.21:34} Of this Solomon speaks, "when thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee; and put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite." {Pv.23:1,2} Likewise, "be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh; for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags." {Pv.23:20,21} This sobriety of the appetite is a moderate use of the creature; that is, such an use as serves for health, and the better disposing and enabling a man to all good and lawful offices towards God and men; and it stands in the midst of two extremes, defect and excess. The defect is the pinching a man's self, not allowing himself what is needful. Such, though they think themselves the soberest men, being remotest from excess, yet they err too much on the other hand to be sober men; it is a certain rule, *in medio consistit virtus* {that is, the excellence of things is in the middle.} The other extreme is excess, much more in use than the former, and that in quality or quantity; excess in quantity is eating or drinking more than is meet; in quality, when men content not themselves with that which is good and wholesome nourishment, befitting their several ranks and places, and are grown over-dainty, and despise that which is not rare; sobriety in this kind hath no certain stint, but extends or dilates, according to the diversity of men's tempers and ranks; one man of a weak brain and sickly stomach, may exceed the bounds of sobriety in use of the same quantity of meat or drink, which another of a stronger temper may use with sobriety; that which will but quench the thirst of one man, may make another man's head light; that meat which will but satisfy one man's nature, and harden it for labour, may overcharge and dull another; that variety and daintiness which doth but beseeem a man's table of ability and good rank, is profuse lavishness and wasteful expense to a meaner person. In sum then, a man exceeds sobriety, either when he useth the creatures beyond that conveniency his temper requires, or the means God hath given him.

Besides this vulgar sobriety, there is a sobriety also of speech, whereof Paul speaks in his defense before Festus, "I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness." {Acts 26:25} This sobriety consists, in soft words; few words; and in seasonable words. Add hereto a sobriety in behavior, which is a mild and grave carriage, without either loftiness, or vain levity. Finally, there is also a sobriety in a man's dealing in buying and selling; in buying, when a man keeps within his compass, and wades not beyond his depth, either of skill or ability; and in selling, when a man is moderate in his gains, and works not on the necessity of persons; but these heads shall suffice, that we may keep some moderation in handling of this point.

The next thing to consider is, what it is to live soberly. This phrase intimates an activity of sobriety; living here is put for exercise; it is not enough to have power to be sober, though that be necessary, but this power must be reduced into act, as occasion serves. To live soberly intimates a continuation in sobriety; this, and the whole life must go hand-in-hand together, or a man must be sober all his life; one act doth not make up a living soberly, as one swallow doth not make a summer; and it should be as precious to a man as his life; if any solicit him to intemperance, he should say, bereave me of sobriety, bereave me of my life too; what will it avail me to live and not live soberly?

The last thing to be considered is, how grace teaches to live soberly. To clear this; note, grace teacheth, by instruction, giving rules for the thing, clearly making us to understand and know, that sobriety is a duty enjoined, and must be observed. Philosophers, it is true, from the glimmerings of natural light, gives rules to teach this, as well as other moral virtues; but they fail in the ground work or foundation of their rules, making right reason the foundation, and deriving the power of sobriety from the hero-like resoluteness of man's spirit; whereas the will of God is the ground-work, and the power to be sober is from his might alone. They fail in the end of sobriety, making that the ultimate, which is but the subordinate, wholly neglecting the chief end, being ignorant thereof. Their chief end is, by moderation, to enjoy themselves, and the praise of men, whereas it should be the glory of God. In these two things the teaching of sobriety, by grace, differs from the natural teaching of it; for grace

makes God's will the ground-work of it, and his power, in man's weakness, the efficient cause of it, and the glorifying God the final inducing cause of sobriety.

Grace not only teaches it, by giving good rules, but also by such a winning rhetorical illustration of the excellency of sobriety, as to catch her learners with an enamored love thereto; in teaching, it makes her learners, though enemies at first to such doctrine, say, {as once the catchpoles that were sent to trap Christ,} "never a man spake as he speaks." The lips of grace, through a secret divine eloquence, drop honey; not only by enamoring, but by drawing also. The teaching of grace hath the virtue of a magnet that draws adjacent metal to fasten to itself; it is like the power reported to be in the Sirens Songs, which will make a man leave all to dance after their notes. In this, especially, it goes infinitely beyond the most acute teaching in the world besides; for her learners cannot, for their hearts, say nay.

Use 1: Seeing grace hath appeared, or is come into our quarters, teaching to live soberly, let us show our breeding by our proficiency under so excellent a tutor. The excellency of skill and parts in a tutor adds much to the shame of a dunce, or non-proficient, that hath been trained up under such an one; for that it is expected they should excel answerably according to the extraordinary helps they have had. Shall philosophers, and moral heathens, that have had their breeding, but in the twilight of nature, be more exact scholars in sobriety than Christians that have lain at the right fountain and been bred in the academy of grace? Shall persons living in darkness, without any light of the gospel shining unto them, live more soberly than they to whom the light of the gospel shines most gloriously? What a shame is this! If a clown, or ignoramus, should sham a university man in the arts he hath been long bred up in, would it not make him blush? Much more may they blush who have been long tutored by grace, to see untutored poor souls that never scarce heard that ever there were any such thing as grace, yet to excel them in sobriety. Christ's verdict is, "this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." {Jn.3:19} Paul tells us, "they that be drunken are drunken in the night," and adds, "ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness." {I Thes.5:5}

Use 2: Doth grace teach to live soberly? Then are they graceless wretches, or come short of the grace of God, that do not live soberly; nor can they rightly claim a part or portion in the great privilege of salvation which grace teacheth. It is a fearful sentence, and dismal doom, I confess, though too true; and too few, whom it most concerns, lay it to heart; if they would, it might be a happy bridle to restrain all immoderate excess. Oh; that such, who give themselves to excess, would but turn their eyes unto, and seriously ponder, in their hearts, the many fearful words pronounced against them by that word which shall judge them at the last day! As that of Solomon, "who hath woe; who hath sorrow; who hath contentions; who hath babbling; who hath wounds without cause; who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine." {Pv.23:29,30} He doth not say, they that are stark drunk, as men now count drunkenness, but they that tarry, long at it, though they have strong heads to carry it away; at least he saith, "it bites like a serpent." The prophet Isaiah seconds him, and takes off a foolish excess of men, that think themselves out of Solomon's gun-shot, because they drink not wine; "woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!" {Is.5:11} And, "woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink." {vs.22} He scatters his woes among all sorts, whether wine-bibbers, or strong drink-bibbers. The prophet Habakkuk makes up the peal, and meets with another sort of excess, "woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!" {Hab.2:15} What canst thou now say for thyself, O poor wretch, that leavest not only Christianity, but also manhood in thy cups, and transformest thyself into a beast, nay, worse? Wilt thou say, Christ is thy Saviour? Alas! This text takes thee quite off from this hold; for that grace of his, that brings salvation, teacheth to live soberly, and this thou learnest not; therefore canst thou not lay claim to the other. O, be wise betimes, and consider the desperateness of thy condition, as God himself judgeth of it, and be not deluded with the daubings of such as count thee a good fellow.

Use 3: It is then a most fearful presumption for any person, in confidence of his own strength, to adventure himself into the mouth of danger, where he may be induced, or tempted, to exceed the bounds of sobriety; for if sobriety be of grace, then is it not of man's own strength. There are too many so conceited of their own abilities, as that they fear no colors; they will warrant you they do well enough, and can keep themselves within compass, and therefore dare put themselves into any hazard. Some think themselves so wise, as they fear not to wade into God's secrets too deep; they can stint their reasonings and thoughts at pleasure. Some dare loosen the reins, and let them run career, fondly dreaming they can curb them at will, phaeton like; they can dote on the world, and think that it cannot enthrall them; they can let their rage loose like a fierce mastiff and chain it up again at a beck. Others are so confident of their power to contain, that though they let their eyes loose to look on a maid, their tongues loose to obscene filthy ribaldry, their ears to lascivious discourse and solicitations, to bewitching dalliances, and their thoughts to contemplative uncleanness; yet they have such a strength of continency, that no such pitch can defile them; they are not so weak or so silly as to be trapped in the snare; and therefore, they will not abridge themselves of such liberty. In a word others are confident of the strength of their brain, that none can fox them; but let such consider, that to live soberly is not in man's power, but only of grace; and therefore, it is just with God to give up such to be overtaken for neglecting his aid, as he served Noah, David, and others. Hence the apostle Paul advises to "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his {not our} might;" and when he speaks of his ability in moderation, namely, that he is "able to do all things," he concludes that it is not by his own strength, but Christ's that strengthened him. Blessed is the man "that feareth always," that is, himself; suspecting his own shallowness and weakness, considering the bewitching insinuations that are in temptations of this nature. Know therefore, that whoever is endued with a sober mind and behavior, it comes with all other good gifts from above, and he is kept herein by the power of God, and the sufficiency of his grace, without which he is as impotent as the weakest; therefore in this, and in all other matters, let every man commit himself to the custody of God, and the power of his grace, and not lean to his own strength. Though Paul was a man full of the Spirit, and had attained a great measure of moderation, yet dares not rely thereon, but entrusts God and his grace to keep him, "not I, {saith he,} but the grace of God which is in me." How frequently doth he close up his epistles, after all his endeavors, with this epilogue, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, Amen." "Grace, mercy, and peace, be with you from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus." Implore grace, therefore, in this behalf, which shall be sufficient, "for its strength shall be perfect in your weakness."

The next point is, that grace teacheth to live righteously. This is of a large extent, comprehending the whole duty of man to man, and in substance is the same with that of our Saviour, "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" which love he calls "fulfilling of the law." There are two main branches of it, justice and mercy; justice is a rendering to everyone his due, or an upright inoffensive walking towards every one, without partiality or fraud. Give me leave to anatomize this branch of righteousness, that you may the better see the lineaments thereof; for as he cannot be a good physician, or surgeon, fit to apply apt remedies to distempered parts, or set bones, that is not well instructed in anatomy; so neither can a man aptly apply cures to distempers of injustice, that is not somewhat indoctrinated into the parts of justice; he must know the proper joints of justice, that in case of dislocation, he may reduce them to their proper place again. Know therefore, that righteousness, so far as it branches itself into justice, is diverse, according to the diversity of men's relations of superiority, or inferiority, magistrates and subjects, ministers and people, parents and children. The righteousness of a magistrate stands in an impartial and equal rendering rewards, or punishments; all unevenness, either too much rigor, or too much lenity, is injustice. Subjects are to yield obedience, both internal and external, to their lawful commands, and quiet suffering their penalties, if for conscience sake you cannot obey their commands; "as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, and openeth not the mouth." So for ministers, their righteousness is in withholding none of the counsel of God, being instant in season and out of season; giving everyone his portion, with soundness of doctrine, cheerfulness of spirit, humbleness of mind; patient waiting, if God will at any

time bring men to repentance; and not for filthy lucre. The people's justice is to seek advice and help of the minister, to unbind their consciences when sin hath chained them up, in attending upon all the ordinances of God; giving them due respect, praying for them, that they may do their work powerfully and fruitfully.

The husband's justice is "to love his wife, as Christ loved the church;" to govern wisely as a head, not imperiously, much less tyrannically; to provide for his wife; as a covering to shelter her. The wife's justice stands in love also; in subjection to all lawful and expedient things he requires; in helpfulness in all things she can reach unto; in covering infirmities; and in reverencing him as the head.

The master's justice is in imposing no more labour on his servant, than his strength can bear; to inflict no more punishment than his offence deserves; to detain no maintenance requisite; as food, rest, refreshment, and wages; to encourage them in well doing; to instruct them in the knowledge of God, and endeavoring to bring them to his ordinances.

The justice of servants is in doing their utmost, without laziness, in their allotted business; in not wasting or purloining; obeying all lawful commands; being faithful in what is committed to their trust; patiently bearing punishment, though wrongfully inflicted; not so much as answering again; a contentment with their wages; not stealing away their master's time for their own occasions without license.

The justice of parents is to provide for their children, both soul and body, in a moderate way; not to provoke them to bitterness; to correct them in measure, and in due time; and the justice of children is to honour their parents; to become subject to them, as Christ did; and to be obedient and dutiful.

Finally, there is an occasional justice, and that is an upright behavior toward all men, with whom we have to do, as in buying or selling, lending or borrowing. Now all this is privative or positive; in innocency, in offensiveness, peaceableness; so in doing right, and giving to everyone their own. Innocency stands in a harmless conversation, or, in the apostle's phrase, "a walking without offence;" which consists in offering no violence, in purpose or act, either to a man's person, goods, name or whatever is his, though a man hath power, opportunity, or provocation thereunto; nay, though some occasion may be given, according to our Saviour's rule, "render to no man evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but rather bless them that curse." This innocent justice consists in not defrauding or overreaching, but in fair, honest, and true dealing, without undermining, or smothering evil under fair pretenses; in laying aside all malice, envy, and hatred, false surmises, hard conceits, backbitings and all evil-speaking. In a word, it consists in doing no manner of harm, but a blameless walking, such as was commended in Zachary and Elizabeth.

Peaceableness, which is another branch of justice, consists in making peace, and endeavoring to reconcile differences, not blowing coals that are kindled, which is the property of a make-bait; and to this our Saviour pronounces blessedness. "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God." {Mt.5:9} It lies in entertaining with readiness terms of peace, though with some disadvantage; being apt to reconciliation without turbulence, contention, needless suits, or inveterate implacableness; this our Saviour commends to his disciples, "my peace I leave with you." Of this kind of justice is putting up of injuries, and loving enemies; justice it is, for it is a debt in the apostle's judgment, as well as our Saviour's, who tells us to "owe nothing to any man, but to love one another." And it lies in living peaceably, without either giving or taking occasions of quarrel, as much as in a man lies, as the apostle says, "as much as in you lies, labour to have peace with all men." Finally, this justice lies in doing right to all men, giving to everyone his due, tribute to whom tribute is due; love to whom love is due; fear to whom fear is due; and honour to whom honour is due. {Rom.13:7} You see of how large an extent the first branch of righteousness is, to wit, justice.

The second branch is mercifulness to men; and this is internal or external. Internal consists in compassion, or pity, which is opposed to hardheartedness; this is a kind of fellow-feeling, or a being affected with another's distress; "for we are all members of one body;" therefore, as members naturally sympathize one with another, so should we; which mercy, the apostle much urges, and our

Saviour presses in the parable of the good Samaritan, that had compassion on the wounded man. This tenderheartedness is a commendable virtue, and such as human society can scarce be served without; and lies in devising liberal things, which the prophet Isaiah mentions, "the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand." {Is.32:8} Two things are worth our observation in this internal merciful righteousness. It consists of a free and large heart to do good and to show kindness. There are niggardly, as well as contracted hearts in the world; when men think every little too much, it is cutting to the heart to part with anything. It comes from them gradually, and the heart murmurs and repines, when an occasion happens that he cannot handsomely avoid some charitable expense, which was the foul and killing error of Ananias and Sapphira; but a liberal heart is glad of opportunities to do much good; and is as well pleased in scattering plentifully, {according to ability, without corrupt or parsimonious pretenses,} as to reap abundantly; for which temper of heart, David gives public praise to God; "but who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort; for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." {I Chron.19:14} This heart deviseth liberal things, it is projecting and contriving how to be liberal, when, where, and to whom to show kindness.

External mercy is the venting of kindness, and this is either passive or active. The passive consists in long-suffering, or patient putting up of injuries; when a man will be hardly provoked and easily entreated, he lets go advantages offered of requiting evil for evil, being ready to forgive offences. Active mercy is an actual distribution as a man's own ability, and another's necessity requires; this mercy, in the apostle's phrase, is "a doing good to all, especially to the household of faith." The bounds of it are large, extending to all in need; and even enemies must not be excluded, "if thine enemy hunger, give him bread; so shalt thou heap fire on his head." It is excellent mercy to requite good for evil; only there is some difference to be observed, with respect of the persons to whom good is to be showed; for the apostle adds, and "especially to the household of faith;" wherein he intimates that God's faithful ones are to be preferred before others in showing mercy; their failings are especially to be borne withal, to be favorably constrained, and their necessities and wants, are especially to be relieved; they must have the priority of mercy, and greatest share of relief; this mercifulness of man is so acceptable to God, that many times he will dispense with his own peculiar right to make way for it. "I will have mercy, {saith God,} and not sacrifice;" and he takes kindness showed to his, as done to himself; "in that you have done it to the least of these, {saith Christ} you have done it to me." Finally, note, that this merciful righteousness spreads itself wide; it fastens on the soul, to communicate light to it, and heat; endeavoring to snatch some, as fire brands out of the fire, by instruction, admonition, or warning; by reprehension, exhortation, and consolation; and all this with long-suffering and meekness; "if at any time, God will give them repentance." It descends also to the body to supply it with food and raiment convenient, with other helps that concern the health and strength of it; it proceeds to the credit, covering infirmities, vindicating from calumnies, publishing deserts, that the name of a good man may be "as ointment poured forth." It runs on to a man's substance, mercy will be helpful to his very beasts; yea, the beast of his enemy, which the Lord enjoins, by Moses, to bring it home, and to lift it up if sunk under a burden. Thus have you the righteousness branched forth which grace teacheth. To live righteously is the same as to live soberly; grace teaches this. To wit, magisterially, as a master teacheth his scholars, by rules and arguments; imperiously, as a prince his subjects, with a binding authority; persuasively, as a most skillful winning orator; and irresistibly, infusing the thing taught.

Use: Doth grace teach to live righteously; then learn to disclaim that selfishness that too many adhere unto. There is an unsociable inhuman proverb in the world, too prevalent everywhere, "every man for himself and God for us all;" whereas the very heathens, by the light of nature, confess, that we are not born for ourselves; *non nobis solum nati sumus*, {that is, not unto ourselves alone are we born,} saith Tully; our country, prince, parents, children, challenge a just right to what lies in our power; the members of the body are not more engaged one to another, than men are to men. Learn therefore, to render to every man his due, and "keep a conscience void of offence, as well towards men, as towards God," which the apostle joyed in.

The next point, that grace teacheth, is to live godly. As all arts are subservient handmaids to divinity, and therefore are first learned; so all the former lessons of grace serve ultimately to make grace scholars complete in this last lesson of godliness; therefore grace teaches this last. This lesson comprehends the whole duty of man to God, whatever is contained in the first table of the Decalogue, which is exceeding large. That we may be the better versed in this lesson, let us consider, what it is to live godly; why; how; and when.

1. To live godly, requires that the main end and scope of all our actions must be fixed principally on God, for the advancing his glory and honour; thus the apostle expounds living godly, when he tells us that "none of us liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." {Rom.14:7,8} Now, as a servant is said to live unto his master, when his eating, sleeping, recreating, and the rest, are intended for the fitting him for his master's business, or the furthering his credit, or benefit; so a man lives to the Lord, or lives godly, when all he doth is for the Lord; such a godly life is intimated to us in the talents the master gave to his servants, expecting a return with increase. {Mt.25:14-29} "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God." {I Cor.6:19,20}

For the better illustration of this branch of godliness, I will show you what it is to aim at God in our ways, how far it is requisite, and those who err herein. It is nothing else but to do, or suffer, for God's sake; making his good pleasure and glory the main loadstone to draw us forth to employment, and the great weight to set all the wheels of our several faculties and members a going. The philosophers say truly, *omne agens agit propter finem*, {that is, everything that acts, acts for the sake of an end,} especially man, who hath his particular end in his choice and eye; whereas other creatures incline to their end by a natural instinct; you shall have no man go about anything, but he can tell you some purpose or end he aims at. Doth he sleep? His end is rest and ease. Doth he eat? His end is to satisfy hunger. Doth he toil in the world? His end is gain. Now when a man in sleeping and eating propounds to himself the repairing of weakness, and the making him fresh to serve God; when God is so in the eye, as his glory is the wind that fills the sails; then doth he live godly, or unto the Lord; which is the godly life the apostle requires, "whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, we do all to the glory of God." But, some may say, doth a man live ungodly when he propounds, or aims at any other end, than God and his honour in his ways; as namely, if he doth aim at gain in his labour? Let it be considered, that there are ultimate and subordinate ends of men's actions, the one subservient to the other; and so of intentions, in which case the subordinate are a step to the ultimate. For instance, a man hath a dull knife, and sharpens it, there are two ends; the next and subordinate end is to make it keen, the ultimate and special end is to make it serviceable; here one end destroys not the other, if so be a man aim at each in its order. So for a man's eating meat, or taking physic, the chiefest end of them is the fitting of persons in God's work; now, because health and nourishment are requisite thereto, therefore the first subordinate end is health; seeing then there are these two ends, it is not ungodliness to aim at the subordinate end, as well as the ultimate; but godliness, as it hath both in its eye, so it makes that which is chiefest in its own nature, the chiefest in a man's aim and intention. There is a double error against this branch of a godly life; as when men put the cart before the horse, as I may say, preferring natural subordinate ends before supernatural and ultimate; namely, when men sport for pleasure sake, more than to quicken dull spirits for God's work; when men exclude the principle end, and make the natural end of things their sole loadstone; namely, to work only for gain, to give alms truly for praise, to perform outward duties only to satisfy man's law, or to be seen without any regard to God himself; and when men aim at sinister, base, and corrupt ends, as unlawful gains, accomplishing their lust, and the like.

Use: He then that would live godly must ever fix his eye on the right mark, and take his aim to "the glorifying of God in every action." A man only so far lives to the Lord as he thus aims; and therefore should both fix his thoughts hereon, and contrive the fittest means hereto.

A godly life is to prefer God before all things, making them give place to him; which was David's godliness, when he said, "whom have I in heaven but thee, &c.," and the churches, when

speaking of Christ her beloved, she saith, "my beloved is the chiefest of ten thousand." For illustration, consider we what this preferring of God is; for it may be considered simply or comparatively, preferring God simply before other things is no more but this, that he hath the utmost extent of reverence, respect, esteem, love, and submission that the soul can possibly extend unto; for if any of these be so scanty to him, as that anything else can possibly have more, he is not actually preferred before them; but the point will be more clear, by considering it comparatively, when we set any thing by God, and we can perceive, that God hath more of us than it hath; as when we rather turn from it, and leave it, for his sake, than leave him and his will. For example, suppose a man hath done thee some notable good turns, his person is very amiable, his society very sweet; now compare the temper of thine heart towards God and such an one, whether such an one finds more sensible respect? More ready compliance? Most care to please? Strongest desires of friendship and familiarity? Most jealousies of giving distaste and causing some breach? Most cutting of heart in case of displeasure manifested? Most gladness when favour and respect is renewed? And any thing is done that produces a manifesting of good liking? Compare this, I say, the temper of thy spirit, and it will manifestly appear whether God be preferred before such a one, or no? For, in such like, consists this preferring of one thing before another. Do the like with any other thing, as husband, wife, child, goods, sports, liberty, health, life, or what else is dear; if God outstrip them, and more be spent on him than them, then he is preferred before them. For preferring is no more but the setting of one foremost, or before another, so that the other comes behind.

The other branch of preferring God is in the case of competition, when God and his will stand in such opposition against anything, that either his will or it must be rejected. Now, in this preferring God before such a thing, is a foregoing such a thing rather than him; as in a tempest at sea, when a man must either cast his goods over board, or inevitably hazard his life; life is preferred before goods, when for life's sake he chooses to cast his goods away. So when God will not admit such or such a thing to stand with him, but his will, or that must sink, he is then preferred when we are contented to part with that for the preservation of his will. Example; Abraham's case, either God must be denied and put by, and Isaac live; or God's will stand, and Isaac die. Now Abraham's choosing to part with Isaac, rather than cross God's will, manifestly prefers God before Isaac. On the other side, consider the rich man in the gospel; either he must sell all and give it away, and so follow Christ; or keep all, and leave him. Here Christ and his wealth, stand in competition, one or the other must be parted with; so "this man went away sorrowful, because he had much riches;" that is, he chose rather to lose Christ than his wealth, and so preferred the world before him. These are extraordinary cases, in force only, when God reveals himself, that he stands in competition with such things. Doth God call for thy wealth to be given to such and such uses? Wilt thou not part with it, or do it by half, as Ananias did, or do it grudgingly? Wilt thou make shipwreck of God's revealed will to save thy purse? Then thou preferrest it before him. If you will prefer God, all these things must give way and stoop to him. Hear our Saviour's own doom of the case, "if any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." {Lk.14:26} You see what a preferring of himself he requires.

Living godly is to serve and worship God in his own way, or according to his own will, which our Saviour briefly comprehends in two words, "in spirit and in truth." The former points to the subject, how we must be dispensed in serving him; and the latter at the matter of his service. To serve and worship the Lord in spirit, imports, that the whole spirit of a man be rightly disposed in his service; that we serve him with understanding, knowing whom we worship, what we do, and how we do it; and by this our Saviour distinguishes between the false worship of the Samaritans and the true of the faithful Jews. "Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews." {Jn.4:22} A blind devotion cannot be a godly service. So Paul tells us, "that he will pray with the understanding." {I Cor.14:15}

We worship with attention of spirit, with our spirits fixed upon it, seriously minding the present business, without roving, gadding or wanderings of heart about impertinent matters; as David, "my

heart is fixed, O God, I will sing and give praise;" and the apostle calls this a "giving of earnest heed, least we let slip the thing."

We serve him wisely, projecting fittest times and best means for the better dilating our spirits, and more exact and complete perfecting of the service, and the removal of impediments. "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding." {Pv.4:7} It both facilitates and graces the work. The apostle exhorts, that "the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." {Col.3:16}

That we serve and worship him willingly and freely, and with an inclination of spirit to his service. John tells us, "this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." {I Jn.5:3} When David had offered abundantly to God's house, he is thankful in a special manner, that God gave him a free and willing heart. The Lord doth not brook sullen, wearisome services that are tedious, even to men; God must be served of choice.

All service must spring from love. "The love of Christ constraineth," {II Cor.5:14,} saith the apostle; no service is acceptable but what is set on fire by this coal; the apostle requires that "all things be done in love," much especially God's worship; this makes the main difference between filial and servile service; hence it is that the Lord reduces all service to love, and calls love "the fulfilling the law," because it is the *primum mobile*, {that is, first moved,} to set the whole frame of service in their several motions. We must pray out of love to prayer, so also hear, receive, and meditate upon God's word out of love thereto.

God must be served for conscience sake, not with a reserved liberty whether we will serve him or no; as if it were an arbitrary matter, as walking abroad to take the air, which we may or may not do at pleasure. Men must not think God beholden to them for vouchsafing him their attendance; a necessary tie of conscience lies on them. This service for conscience-sake the apostle requires to men in authority, much more is it due to God himself.

God is to be served with a concurrence of all the powers and faculties of the soul together, each must be doing, as in a well ordered family, every servant is stirring to dispatch business. As many hands make quick work, so every faculty must put a helping hand to dispatch God's service. As David speaks, when he set upon praising God, "my soul doth praise the Lord, and all that is within me praise his holy name." Thus must the Lord be worshipped or served, in spirit, of those that will live godly.

Again, to serve God, according to his will, we must serve him in truth, and this in two ways. In sincerity, with a real upright heart, which is opposed to hypocrisy; and when we serve him according to the pattern which he hath given, both for the matter, manner, and time, &c. The matter of God's worship consists of such divine exercises as he alone commands. Some are public, some private, and some secret; the public are such as are required in the congregations, or public assemblies; the private in families; the secret by one's self alone; in all which true godliness hath regard to all that God enjoins, and only that; so that will-worship is no true godliness, "but in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments {or traditions,} of men." {Mt.5:19} This is not holiness to the Lord, though it may be never so zealously performed, and with never so good a meaning; for it is only God's warrant and commission that can make worship authentic. As for human rites of time and place, what tends to decency, they are not any parts of the worship itself, but only conveniences; if men should make them essential, then would they defile worship.

The public exercises of God's worship are. 1. Reading the scriptures; so Paul testifies in a sermon of his at Antioch, where he tells us that the prophets were read every sabbath day. {Acts 13:27} The like you may see in our Saviour's practice, "and he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read." {Lk.4:16} This must be done audibly and distinctly. 2. Preaching the word, which is an opening the word; that this is an exercise of public worship is plain by the fore-mentioned practice of Christ, who, after he had read, preached on that text of Isaiah, "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me;" from which many gracious words proceeded out of his mouth, as the Holy Ghost affirms; the like you may see in Ezra, the priest, who stood in a pulpit of wood above the people assembled, and read in

the book of the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand. {Neh.8:8}

3. Attention to the word read and preached, for which see the two former examples; "and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law;" {Neh.8:3;} "and he {that is, Christ} closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him." {Lk.4:20} This attention implies not only a giving ear, but also a pondering of the sayings, as the virgin Mary; {Lk.2:19;} and a hearing with good affection, as did Peter's converts, "who heard him gladly," {Acts 2:41,} and with application, as the same hearers and the jailer. 4. Baptizing must go with teaching, as Christ commanded, and John Baptist practiced. 5. The administration and receiving the Lord's supper. "The disciples met together to break bread." 6. Prayer, in respect of the public-ness of it, the house of God is called, "a house of prayer;" and Paul, after he had preached at Troas, &c., "kneeled down, and prayed with them all;" in which exercise it is not sufficient to be present, but to join with them in spirit. 7. Praising God, with singing psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, with melody in the heart, and that frequently as David did; or other ways publishing the Lord's praises, by declaring his marvelous works, and exalting him in the great congregation. "Come and hear, {saith David,} all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul;" {Ps.66:16;} and for this cause did he pen so many psalms of praise that God might be publicly praised. 8. Add to this fasting.

The matter of divine private worship in families apart, or believers among themselves. 1. In searching the scripture, which is commended of the men of Berea, after they had heard the apostle preach, who receiving the word with all readiness of mind, searched the scriptures daily; {Acts 17:11;} which implies these things. Reading the word; so as to find out the true meaning of it; and a comparing of scripture with scripture. 2. Another branch is, private conference about divine things; such was the practice of the two disciples that went to Emmaus, when Christ joined himself with them; "and they said one to another, did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" {Lk.24:32} 3. Wholesome holy advice, exhorting one another; rebuking, encouraging, and comforting; to this purpose serve those passages of the apostle, "exhort one another daily," {Heb.3:13;} "have no fellowship with unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them," {Eph.5:11;} "comfort one another with these words." {I Thes.4:18} 4. Private prayer with the family; herein was Cornelius's godliness, for which the Holy Ghost commends him, he was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always;" {Acts 10:2;} which although it have no special stint for the time, yet the apostle's general rule, "pray continually," and Cornelius's practice, always, is rule enough.

The matter of sacred godliness consists. 1. In a daily constant meditation in God's word; thus David describes the blessed man as one that "meditates in the law of the Lord day and night;" which exercise is sweet to a godly man. 2. In self-examination, or an inward diligent trial of a man's own ways, by calling himself to an account, and ransacking his heart and life; so the apostle enjoins, "examine yourselves, prove yourselves;" and the prophet Jeremiah, in his Lamentation, "let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD." {Lam.3:40} 3. In secret prayer, which our Saviour enjoins, "thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." {Mt.6:6} This is either by ejaculation, which is a lifting up of the soul to God in some short earnest request, and hath no stinted time or place; or a prepared setting of a man's self to seek the Lord more at large; such was Daniel's prayer three times a day.

As for the time of living godly the apostle expresses it in the close of this text, namely, "this present world;" so that there is no minute of time wherein we are exempted from any of these lessons which grace teacheth, when any occasion of practicing them is afforded. What Job speaks of his change, must be every believer's practice about godliness; "all the days of their appointed time" must they wait, and be in readiness to exercise godliness, righteousness, and sobriety, with the denial of "ungodliness and worldly lusts." In brief, this time imports perseverance in well doing unto the end. To begin in the spirit, and end in the flesh, makes the latter end worse than the beginning. If any faint, and give over the race, they lose the prize; therefore the apostle admonishes, "so run that ye may obtain." We must be flourishing trees in the courts of God's house, as well in old age, as in our prime.

Besides, this present world points also at the impediments, which yet must not hinder in the race set before us; as if he should say, although you live in this present world, which wholly lies in wickedness, and is at enmity with Christ and you, and lays many snares to trap you, many baits to allure you; and casts floods of persecutions, cares and fears, to swallow you up; yet, in spite of all, you must stand fast, and keep on your course of godliness. "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore." {Eph.6:13,14}