

THE DOCTRINE OF REPENTANCE

THOMAS WATSON



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THE DOCTRINE OF REPENTANCE



Acts 26:20._ That they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

— SAINT Paul being falsly accused by Tertullus to be seditious, (chapter 24:5). We have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of Sedition: in this chapter he makes an apology for himself, before Festus and King Agrippa.

Paul proves himself to be an orator. He courts the King, 1. By his Gesture; He stretched forth his hands, verse 1. as the custom of orators was. 2. By his manner of speech, verse 2. I think my self happy King Agrippa, because I shall answer for my self before you, touching all the things of which I am accused.

Paul treats of three things, and that in so deep a strain of Rhetorick, as he had almost converted King Agrippa.

1. He discoursed of the manner of his life before his conversion, verse 5. after the most strait Sect of our Religion, I lived a Pharisee. During the time of his unregeneracy, he was zealous for Traditions; and his false fire of zeal was so hot, that it scorched all that stood in his way, verse 10. Many of the Saints I shut up in prison.

2. Paul discoursed of the manner of his conversion, verse 13. I saw in the way a light from Heaven, above the brightness of the Sun. This light was no other but what shined from Christs glorified body: And I heard a voice speaking to me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest you me? The body being hurt, the head in Heaven cried out. At this light and voice Paul was amazed, and fell to the earth, verse 14. And I said, whoart you Lord? and he said, I am Jesus whom you persecutest, verse 15. Paul was now taken off from himself; all opinion of self-righteousness vanished, and he did graft his hope of Heaven upon the stock of Christs Righteousness.

3. Paul discoursed of the manner of his life after his conversion: He who before was a persecutor, now became a Preacher, verse 16. Arise, for I have appeared to you, to make you a Minister, and a Witness, of those things which you have seen. When Paul (this vessel of election) was savingly wrought upon, he labored to do as much good as before he had done hurt. Before, he persecuted Saints to death, now he preaches sinners to life. God first sent him to the Jews at Damascus, and afterwards enlarged his-commission to preach to the Gentiles. And the subject he preacht upon was this in the text, That they should repent and turn to God. A weighty and excellent Subject. *deos, Judaei Verum Deum, sed non sicut oportebat.*

I shall not dispute the Priority, whether Faith or Repentance goes first; doubtless Repentance shews it self first in a Christians life; yet I am apt to think the seeds of Faith are first wrought in the heart . As when a burning Taper is brought into a room, the light shews it self first, but the Taper was before the light: So we see the fruits of Repentance first, but the initials of Faith were there before.

That which inclines me to think that Faith is seminally in the heart before Repentance, is this, because Repentance being a grace, must be acted by one that is living. Now, how does the soul live but by Faith? (Hebrews 10:38). The just shall live by his Faith. So that there must be first some seeds of Faith in the heart of a penitent, else it is a dead Repentance, and so of no value.

But whether Faith or Repentance go first, sure I am, Repentance is of such importance, as there is no being saved without it. After Pauls shipwrack, he did swim to shore on planks, and broken pieces of the ship, (Acts 27:44). So in Adam we all suffered shipwrack, and Repentance is the only plank left us after shipwrack to swim to Heaven .

It is a great duty incumbent upon Christians, solemnly to repent and turn to God, (Matthew 3:2). Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, (Acts 3:19). Repent therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, (Acts 8:22). Repent of this your wickedness. In the mouth of these three witnesses this truth is confirmed. Repentance is a foundation-grace, (Hebrews 6:1). Not laying again the foundation of Repentance. That Religion must needs fall to the ground which is not built upon this foundation.

Repentance is a grace required under the Gospel. Some think it legal; but the first Sermon that ever Christ preached; nay, the first word of his Sermon was [illegible], Repent, (Matthew 4:17). And his last farewell that he left when he was going to ascend, was, that Repentance should be preached in his Name, (Luke 24:37). And the Apostles did all beat upon this string, (Mark 6:3). They went out and preached that men should repent.

Repentance is a pure Gospel-grace. The covenant of works admitted no Repentance. There it was, sin and die: Repentance comes in by the Gospel. Christ has purchased in his blood that repenting sinners shall be saved. The Law required personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience; it cursed all that could not come up to this, (Galatians 3:10). Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them.

It does not say, he that obeys not all things, let him repent, but, let him be cursed. So that Repentance is a Doctrine brought to light only by the Gospel.

CHAPTER 2: SHOWING HOW REPENTANCE IS WROUGHT



THE manner how Repentance is wrought, is,

1. Partly by the Word, (Acts 2:37). When they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, &c. The Word preached is Gods Engine he uss to effect Repentance. 'Tis compared to an Hammer, and to a Fire, (Jeremiah 23:29). The one is to break, the other to melt the heart. How great a blessing is it to have the Word dispensed, which is of such noble virtue? And how hard will they find it to escape Hell, who put out the lights of Heaven?

2. Repentance is wrought by the Spirit. Ministers are but the Pipes and Organs; it is the Holy Ghost breathing in them, makes their words effectual . (Acts 10:44). While Peter spoke these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word. The Spirit in the Word illuminates and converts . When the Spirit touchs an heart, it dissolves into tears, (Zechariah 12:10). I will pour on the Inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of Grace, and they shall look on me whom they have pierced, and mourn. 'Tis wonderful to consider, what different effects the Word has upon men. Some at a Sermon are like Josiah, their heart is tender, and they let fall tears ; others are no more affected with it, than a deaf man

with mufick. Some grow better by the Word, others worse. The same earth which causessweetness in the Grape, causess bitterness in the Wormwood. What is the reason the Word works so differently? it is because the Spirit of God does carry the Word to the conscience of one, and not another. One has received the divine Unction, and not the other, 1 (John 2:20). Oh pray that the dew may fall with Manna. That the Spirit may go along with the Word. The Chariot of Ordinances will not carry us to Heaven, unless the Spirit of God joyn himself to this Chariot.

CHAPTER 3: DISCOVERING THE DECEITS OF REPENTANCE



IT will next be enquired, what Repentance is. I shall first shew you what it is not. There are several Deceits of Repentance, which might occasion that saying of Austin, That Repentance damns many. He means a false Repentance. A person may delude himself with a counterfeit Repentance.

1. The first Deceit of Repentance is legal Terror. A man has gone on long in sin, at last God arrests him, shews him what desperate hazard he has run, and he is filled with anguish; within a while the tempest of conscience is blown over, and he is quiet; then he concludes he is a true penitent, because he has felt some bitterness in sin: Be not deceived, this is not Repentance. Ahab and Judas had some trouble of mind. It is one thing to be a terrified sinner, and another thing to be a repenting sinner. Sense of guilt is enough to breed terror; infusion of grace breeds Repentance. If pain and trouble were sufficient to Repentance, then the damned in Hell should be most penitent, for they are most in anguish. Repentance depends upon a change of heart. There may be terror, yet no change of heart.

2. Another Deceit about Repentance, is, resolution against sin. A person may purpose and make vows, yet be no penitent, (Jeremiah 2:20). Thou saidst, I will not transgress. Here was a resolution; but see what follows; under every green tree, you playedst the Harlot. Notwithstanding her solemn engagements, she played fast and loose with God, and ran after her Idols. We see by experience when a person is on his sick-bed, what protestations will he make if God recover him again, yet he is as bad as ever: He shews his old heart in a new temptation. Resolution against sin may arise,

1. From present extremity; not because sin is sinful, but because it is painful. This Resolution will vanish.

2. Resolution against sin may arise from fear of future evil; an apprehension of death and Hell, (Revelation 6:8). I looked, and behold a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was death, and Hell followed after him? What will not a sinner do? what vows will he not make, when he knows he must die and stand before the Judgement seat? Self-love raises a sickbed vow, and love of sin will prevail against it. Trust not to a passionate resolution, it is raised in a storm, and will die in a calm.

3. The third Deceit about Repentance, is, the leaving many sinful courses. 'Tis a great matter I confess to leave sin: So dear is sin to a man, that he will rather part with a child than a lust, (Micah 6:7). Shall I give the fruit of my body, for the sin of my soul? But sin may be parted with, yet no Repentance.

1. A man may part with some sins, and keep other. As Herod reformed many things amiss, but could not leave his incest.

2. An old sin may be left to entertain a new . As you put off an old servant to take another. This is to exchange a sin. Sin may be exchanged, and the heart not changed. He who was a Prodigal in his youth, turns an Usurer in his old age. A slave is sold to a Jew, the Jew sells him to a Turk; here is the Master changed, but he is a slave still. So a man removes from one vice to another, but he is a sinner still.

3. A sin may be left not so much from strength of grace, as from moral grounds. A man sees that though such a sin be for his Tooth, yet it is not for his interest: It will eclipse his credit, prejudice his health, impair his estate; therefore upon prudential reasons he gives it a dismiss.

The true leaving of sin, is, when the acts of sin cease from the infusion of a principle of grace: As the air ceass to be dark from the infusion of light.

CHAPTER 4: OPENING THE NATURE OF TRUE REPENTANCE



I Shall next come to shew, what Gospel-Repentance is: Repentance is a grace of Gods Spirit, by which a sinner is inwardly humbled, and visibly reformed. For a further amplification of Repentance, know, that Repentance is a spiritual medicine, made up of six special Ingredients; if any one be left out, it loss its virtue.

- 1. Sight of Sin. - 2. Sorrow for Sin. - 3. Confession of Sin. - 4. Shame for Sin. - 5. Hatred for Sin. - 6. Turning from Sin.

SECTION 1

1. THE first Ingredient in Repentance, is, Sight of Sin. The first part of Christs physic is Eye-salve, (Acts 26:18). 'Tis the great thing noted in the Prodigals Repentance, (Luke 15:17). He came to himself: He saw himself a sinner, and nothing but a sinner. Before a man can come to Christ, he must come to himself. Solomon in his description of Repentance, puts this in as the first Ingredient, 1 King. 8. 47. If they shall bethink themselves. A man must first recognize and consider what his sin is, and know the plague of his heart, ere he can be duly humbled for it. The first creature God

made was Light: So the first thing in a penitent is illumination, Ephes. 5. 8. Now ye are light in the Lord. The eye is made both for seeing and weeping. Sin must first be seen, before it can be wept for.

Hence I infer, where there is no sight of sin, there can be no Repentance. Many who can spy faults in others, see none in themselves: They cry, they have good hearts. Were it not strange that two should live together, and eat and drink together, yet not know one another? Such is the case of a sinner, his body and soul live together, walk together, yet he is unacquainted with himself: He knows not his own heart, nor what an Hell he carries about him. Under a veil a deformed face is hid. Persons are veiled over with ignorance, and self-love, therefore see not what deformed souls they have. The Devil does with them as the Faulkner with the Hawk, blinds them, and carries them hooded to Hell, (Zechariah 11:17). The sword shall be upon his right eye. Men have insight enough into worldly matters, but the eye of their mind is smitten; they see not any evil in sin. The sword is upon their right eye.

SECTION 2

2. THE second Ingredient into Repentance, is, Sorrow for Sin. (Psalm 38:18). I will be sorry for my sin. Ambrose calls sorrow the imbittering of the soul. The Hebrew word to be sorrowful, signifies to have the soul as it were crucified*. This must be in true Repentance,(Zechariah 12:10). They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and [illegible]ourn. As if they did feel the nails of the Cross sticking in their sides. A woman may as well expect to

have a child without pangs, as one can have Repentance without sorrow. He that can believe without doubting, suspect his faith; and he that can repent without sorrowing, suspect his Repentance.

Martyrs shed blood for Christ, and penitents shed tears for sin, (Luke 7:38). She stood at Jesus feet weeping. See how this limbeck dropped; the sorrow of her heart ran out at her eye. The brazen laver for the Priests to wash in, (Exodus 30:18). did typify a double laver: The laver of Christs blood we must wash in by Faith; and the laver of tears we must wash in by Repentance. A true Penitentiary labors to work his heart into a sorrowing frame; he blesss God when he can weep; he is glad of a rainy-day: He knows 'tis a Repentance he shall have no cause to repent of. Though the bread of sorrow be bitter to the taste, yet, it strengthens the heart.

This sorrow for sin is not facil: It is an holy Agony: 'Tis called in Scripture a breaking of the heart, (Psalm 51:17). The Sacrifices of God, are a broken heart: And a rending of the heart, (Joel 2:13). Rend your hearts*. The expressions of smiting of the thigh, (Jeremiah 31:19). knocking on the breast, L[illegible]k. 18. 13. putting on of sackcloth, (Isaiah 22:12). plucking off the hair, (Ezra 9:3). What are all these, but outward signs of inward sorrow. This sorrow must be,

1. To make Christ precious. O how desirable is a Saviour to a troubled soul! Now Christ is Christ indeed, and mercy is mercy indeed. Till the heart be full of compunction, it is not fit for Christ . How welcome is a surgeon to a man that is bleeding of his wounds.

2. This sorrow is to drive out sin: Sin breeds sorrow, and sorrow kills sin: Holy sorrow is the Ruberb to purge out the ill humours of the soul. It is said, that the tears of Vine-branches are

good to cure the Leprosie. Sure it is, tears that drop from the penitent, are good to cure the leprosie of sin. Salt water of tears kills the worm of conscience.

3. This sorrow is to make way for solid comfort, (Psalm 126:5). They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy. The penitent has a wet seed-time, but a delicious harvest. Repentance breaks the abscess of sin, and then the soul is at ease. Hannah after weeping went away, and was no more sad, 1 (Samuel 1:18). Gods troubling the soul for sin, is like the Angels troubling the Pool, (John 5:4). which made way for healing.

But it is not all sorrow evidences true Repentance: There is as much difference between true and false sorrow, as between water in the spring which is sweet, and water in the Sea which is briny. The Apostle speaks of sorrowing after a godly manner, 2 (Corinthians 7:9). But what is this [illegible], this godly sorrowing? Answer, There are six Qualifications of it.

1. True godly sorrow is intrinsecal, and that two waies: 1. It is a sorrow of the heart. Hypocrites sorrow lies in their faces, (Matthew 6:16). They dis-figure their faces: They make a sowre face, but their sorrow goes no further: Like the dew that wets the leaf, but does not soak to the root. Ahabs Repentance was in outward shew: His garments were rent, but not his spirit, 1 King. 21. 27. Godly sorrow goes deep, like a Vein which bleeds inwardly . The heart bleeds for sin, (Acts 2:37). [illegible], They were pricked at their hearts. As the heart bears a chief part in sinning, so it must in sorrowing.

2. It is a sorrow for heart-sins. The first ebullitions and risings of sin . Paul grieved for the Law in his members,(Romans 7:23). The true mourner weeps for the stirrings of pride and concupis-
cence; he grieves for the root of bitterness, though it never blossoms into act. A wicked man may be troubled for scandalous sins; a real convert laments heart-sins.

2. Godly sorrow is ingenuous; it is more for the offence than the punishment. Gods Law is infringed, his love abused; this melts the soul in tears. A man may be sorry, yet not repent: As a thief is sorry when he is taken, not because he stole, but because he comes under the penalty. Hypocrites grieve only for the bitter consequence of sin. I have read of a fountain that never sends forth streams but the evening before a famine: So their eyes never pour out tears, but when Gods Judgements are approaching. Pharaoh was more troubled for the frogs and River of blood, than for his sin. But godly sorrow is chiefly for the trespass against God; so that if there were no conscience to smite, no Devil to accuse, no Hell to punish, yet the soul would be grieved because of the prejudice done to God, (Psalm 51:4). My sin is ever before me. David does not say, the sword threatned is ever before me, but, my sin. Oh that I should offend so good a God, that I should grieve my Comforter; this breaks my heart!

Godly sorrow shews it self to be ingenuous, because when a Christian knows he is out of the Gun-shot of hell, and shall never be damned; yet still he grieves for sinning against that free-grace which has pardoned him.

3. Godly sorrow is fiducial; it is intermixed with faith, Mar. 9. 24. The Father of the child cryed out, and said with tears; Lord I believe. Here was sorrow for sin checkered with faith; as we have

seen a bright Rainbow appear in a watry cloud.

Spiritual sorrow will sink the heart, if the pully of faith does not raise it. As our sin is ever before us; so Gods Promise must be ever before us. As we must feel our sting; so we must look up to Christ our brazen Serpent . Some have had their faces so swell'd with worldly grief, that they could hardly look out of their eyes. That weeping is not good which blinds the eye of faith. If there be not some dawns of faith in the soul, it is not humiliation, but despair.

4. Godly sorrow is a great sorrow, (Zechariah 12:11). In that day there shall be a great mourning, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon. Two Suns did set that day when Josiah died, and there was a great Funeral mourning. To such an height must sorrow for sin be boiled up.

—Pectore ab imo suspiria—

Quest. Whether have all the same degrees of sorrow?

Answ. No; sorrow does recipere magis & minus. In the new birth all have pangs, but some have sharper pangs than others. 1. Some are naturally of a more rugged morose disposition, of higher spirits, and are not easily brought to stoop; these must have greater humiliation: As a knotty piece of timber must have greater wedges driven into it. 2. Some have been more hainous offenders, and suitable to their sin must their sorrow be. Some Patients have their sores let out with a needle, others with a launce. Flagitious sinners must be more bruised with the hammer of the Law. 3. Some are designed and cut out for higher service, to be eminently instrumental for God; and these must have a mightier work of humiliation pass upon them. Such as God intends to be Pillars in his

Church, must be more hewn. Paul the Prince of the Apostles, who was to be Gods Ensign-bearer, to carry his Name before the Gentiles and Kings, was to have his heart more deeply launced by Repentance.

2. But how great must sorrow for sin be in all?

It must be as great as for any worldly loss.

—Turgescunt lumina fletu—

(Zechariah 12:10). They shall look on me whom they have peirced, and mourn as for an only Son. 2. Sorrow for sin must surpass worldly sorrow. We must grieve more for offending God, than for the loss of dear relations, (Isaiah 22:12). In that day did the Lord call to weeping, and baldness, and girding with sackcloth. This was for sin. But in case of the burial of the dead, we find God prohibiting tears and baldness : To intimate that sorrow for sin must exceed sorrow at the grave; and good reason, for in the burial of the dead, it is only a friend departs, but in sin God departs.

3. Sorrow for sin should be so great as to swallow up all other sorrow. As when the pain of the Stone and Gout meet, the pain of the Stone swallows up the pain of the Gout.

4. We are to find as much bitterness in weeping for sin, as ever we found sweetness in committing it. Sure David found more bitterness in Repentance, than ever he found comfort in Bathsheba.

5. Our sorrow for sin must be such as makes us willing to let go those sins which brought in the greatest income of profit or delight. Then the physic has been strong enough, when it has purged out the disease: And then a Christian has arrived at a sufficient measure of sorrow, when the love of sin is purged out.

Godly sorrow in some cases is joyned with restitution. Whosoever has wronged others in their estate, by unjust fraudulent dealing, ought in conscience to make them recompence. There is an express Law for this, (Numbers 5:7). He shall recompence his trespass, with the principal of it, and give it to him against whom he has trespassed. Thus Zacheus, (Luke 19:8). If I have wronged any man by false accusation, I restore him [illegible]our-sold. When Selymus the great Turk lay upon his deathbed, being moved by Pyrrhus to bestow that wealth he had wronged the Persian Merchants of, upon charitable uses, he commanded, it should rather be sent back to the right owners. Shall not a Christians Creed be better than a Turks Alcoran. 'Tis a bad sign when a man on his deathbed bequeaths his soul to God, and his ill-gotten goods to his friends. I can hardly think God will receive his soul. Austin says, without restitution, no remission. And it was a speech of old Latimer, if ye restore not goods unjustly gotten, ye shall cough in Hell.

1. But suppose a person has wronged another in his estate, and the party wronged be dead, what shall he do in this case?

Let him restore his ill-gotten goods to that mans heirs and successors. Qu. But what if none of them be living? Answ. Let him restore to God; that is, let him put his unjust gain into Gods treasury by relieving the poor.

2. But what if the party who did the wrong be dead?

Then they who are his heirs ought to make restitution. Mark what I say, if there be any who have estates left them, and they knew that the parties who left their estates did defraud others, and

died with that guilt upon them, then the Heirs or Executors who possess those estates, are bound in conscience to make restitution, else they entail the curse of God upon their family.

3. But if a man has wronged another, and he be not able to restore, what shall he do in this case?

Let him deeply humble himself before God, promising to the party wronged (if the Lord make him able) full satisfaction, and God will accept of the will for the deed.

6. Godly sorrow is abiding. It is not a few tears shed in a passion will serve the turn: Some at a Sermon will fall a weeping, but it is like an Aprill showre soon over: Or like a vein opened and immediately stopp'd again: But true sorrow must be habitual. Oh Christian, the disease of your soul is Chronical, and is frequently returning upon you, therefore you must be continually physicking your self by Repentance: And this is that sorrow which is [illegible], after a godly manner.

How far are they from Repentance who never had any of this godly sorrow! Such are 1. The Papists, who leave out the very soul of Repentance; making all penitential work consist in fasting, penance, pilgrimages; but there is nothing of spiritual sorrow in this; they torture their bodies, but their hearts are not rent. What is this but the carkass of Repentance?

2. Carnal Protestants, who are strangers to godly sorrow; they cannot endure a serious thought, nor do they love to trouble their heads about sin. Paracelsus speaks of a Phrensie some have, which will make them die dancing. So sinners spend their lives in mirth; they sing away sorrow, and go dancing to damnation. Some have lived many years, yet never put a drop in Gods bottle, nor do they

know what a broken heart means: they weep and wring their hands, as if they were undone, when their estates are gone, but have no agony of soul for sin.

There is a twofold sorrow; 1. A rational sorrow, which is an act of the soul, by which it has a displacency against sin, and chuses any torture rather than to admit of sin. 2. There is a sensitive sorrow, which is expressed by plenty of tears. The first of these is to be found in every child of God; but the other, which is a sorrow running out at the eye, all have not: yet it is very commendable to see a weeping penitent. Christ counts those the great beauties which are tender-eyed; and well may sin make us weep. We usually weep for the loss of some great good: By sin we have lost the favor of God. If Micah did so weep for the loss of a false God, Judges. 18. 24. Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more? Then well may we weep for our sins, which have taken away the true God from us.

SECTION 3

3. THE third Ingredient in Repentance, is confession of sin. Sorrow is such a vehement passion as will have vent: it vents it self at the eyes by weeping, and at the tongue by confession, (Nehemiah 9:2). The children of Israel stood and confessed their sins, (Hosea 5:15). I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their sins. 'Tis a metaphor alludes to a Mother, who when she is angry, goes away from the child, and hides her face, till the child acknowledges its fault, and begs pardon. Gregory Nazianzene calls confession, a salve for a wounded soul.

Confession is a self accusing, 2 (Samuel 24:17). Lo, I have sinned. Indeed among men it is otherwise: no man is bound to accuse himself, but desires to see his accuser; but when we come before God we must accuse our selves:

—me me adsum qui feci in me convertite Ferrum—

And the truth is, by this self-accusing we prevent Satans accusing. In our confessions we tax our selves of pride, infidelity, passion; now when Satan (who is called The Accuser of the Brethren) shall [illegible]ay these things to our charge, God will say, They have accused themselves already, therefore Satan, you are non-suited, your accusations come too late. Nay, the humble sinner does more than accuse himself; he does as it were [illegible], sit in Judgement, and pass a sentence upon himself; he confesss that he has deserved to be bound over to the wrath of God. And hear what the Apostle says, 1 (Corinthians 11:31). If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged.

But have not wicked men confessed sin, as Judas and Saul? yes, but theirs was not a true confession. That confession of sin may be right and genuine, these eight qualifications are requisite.

1. It must be voluntary; it must come as water out of a spring, freely. The confession of the wicked is extorted, like the confession of a man upon a rack. When a spark of Gods wrath flies into their conscience, or they are in fear of death, then they will fall to their confessions. Balaam, when he saw the Angels naked sword, could say, I have sinned, (Numbers 22:34). But true confession drops from the lips, as myrrhe from the tree, or honey from the comb, freely, (Luke 15:18). I have sinned against Heaven and before you. He charged himself with sin, before his Father charged him with it.

2. Confession must be with compunction; the heart must deeply resent it. A natural mans confessions run thorow him, as water thorow a pipe; they do not at all affect him: but true confession leaves heart-wounding impressions on a man. Davids soul was burdened in the confession of his sins, (Psalm 38:4). As an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me. It is one thing to confess sin, and another thing to feel sin.

3. Confession must be sincere: our hearts must go along with our confessions. The hypocrite confesss sin, but loves it; like a thief that confesss stoln goods, yet loves stealing. How many confess pride and covetousness with their lips, but [illegible]oul them as honey under their tongue. Austin says before his conversion he confessed sin, and begg'd power against it, but his heart whispered within him, not yet Lord; he was afraid to leave his sin too soon. A good Christian is more honest; his heart keeps pace with his tongue; he is convinced of the sins he confesss, and abhors the sins he is convinced of.

4. In true confession a man does particularize sin. A wicked man acknowledges he is a sinner in general; he confesss sin by whole-sale; his confession of sin is much like Nebuchadnezzars dream, (Daniel 2:3). I have dream'd a dream; but he could not tell what it was, verse 5. The thing is gone from me. So says a wicked man, Lord, I have sinned, but he does not know what the sin is, at least not remember: whereas a true convert acknowledges his particular sins. As it is with a wounded man, he comes to the surgeon, and shews him all his wounds; here I was cut in the head, there I was shot in the arm: So a mournful sinner confesss the several distempers of his soul. Israel drew up a particular charge against themselves, Judges. 10. 10. Wee have served Baalim. The Prophet

Daniel recites the very sin which drew a curse along with it, Daniel 9, 6. Neither have we hearkned to your servants the Prophets which spoke in your Name. By a diligent inspection into our hearts we may find some particular sin indulged, point that sin with a tear.

5. A true penitent confesss sin in the fountain: he acknowledges the pollution of his nature. The sin of our nature is not only a privation of good, but an infusion of evil: It is like Canker to Iron, or a Stain to Scarlet . David acknowledges his birth-sin, Psa. 51:5. I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my Mother conceive me—etiam embrioni haeserit peccatum—We are ready to charge many of our sins upon Satans temptations; but this sin of our nature is wholly from our selves, we cannot shift it off to Satan: we have a root within that bears gall and wormwood, (Deuteronomy 29:18). Our nature is [illegible], an abyse and seminary of all evil; from hence come those scandals that infest the world. 'Tis this pravity of nature which poisons our holy things; 'tis this which wings Gods judgements, and makes our mercies stick in the birth. O confess sin in the fountain!

6. Sin is to be confessed with all its circumstances and aggravations: those sins doubtless are dyed in grain which are committed under the Gospel horison. Confess sins against knowledge, against grace, against vows, against experiences, against judgements, (Psalm 78:31). The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them; for all this they sinned yet still. These are killing aggravations which do accent and inhance our sins.

7. In confession we must so charge our selves as to clear God; should the Lord be severe in his providences, and unsheath his bloody sword, yet we must acquit him, and acknowledge he has

done us no wrong. Nehemiah in his confessing of sin, vindicates Gods righteousness, Nehem. 9. 33. Howbeit you are just in all that is brought upon us. Mauritius the Emperour, when he saw his wife slain before his eyes by Phocas, cryed out, Righteous art you O Lord in all your wayes.

8. We must confess our sins with a resolution not to act them over again. Some run from the confessing of sin, to the committing of sin. Like the Persians, who have one day in the year in which they use to kill Serpents, and after that day suffer them to swarm again . So many seem to kill their sins in their confessions, and afterwards let them grow as fast as ever, (Isaiah 1:16). Cease to do evil. 'Tis vain to confess, we have done those things which we ought not to have done, and continue still in doing so. Pharaoh confessed he had sinned, (Exodus 9:27). But when the thunder ceased, he fell to his sin again, verse 33. He sinned yet more, and hardned his heart. Origen calls confession, the vomit of the soul, by which the conscience is eased of that burden did lye upon it: Now when we have vomited up sin by confession, we must not return to this vomit. What King will pardon that man, who after he has confessed his treason, practiss new treason? Thus we see how confession must be qualified.

Is confession a necessary Ingredient in Repentance? then here is a Bill of Indictment against four sorts of persons.

1. It reproves those that hide their sins: as Rachel hid her Fathers Images under her, (Genesis 31:34). Many had rather have their sins covered, than cured: They do with their sins, as with their pictures, draw a curtain over them; or as some do with their Bastards, smother them. But though men will have no tongue to confess; God has an eye to see, he will unmask their treason ,

(Psalm 50:21). I will reprove you, and set them in order before you. Those iniquities which men hide in their heart, shall be written one day on their forehead as with the point of a Diamond. They who would not confess sin as David, that they might be pardoned, shall confess sin as Achan, that they may be stoned. 'Tis dangerous to keep the Devils counsel, (Proverbs 28:13). He that covers his sin shall not prosper.

2. It reproves them, who do indeed confess sin, but it is by halves; they do not confess all; they confess the pence, but not the pounds; they confess vain thoughts, or badness of memory, but not the sins they are most guilty of; as rash anger, extortion, uncleanness. Like him in Plutarch, who complained his stomach was not very good, when his lungs were bad, and his liver rotten. But if we do not confess all, how do we think God will pardon all? 'Tis true, we cannot know the exact catalogue of our sins, but the sins which come within our view and cognizance, and which our hearts accuse us of, must be confessed as ever we hope for mercy.

It reproves them who do in their confessions mince and extenuate their sins. A gracious soul labors to make the worst of his sins, hypocrites make the best of them; they do not deny they are sinners, but yet do what they can to lessen their sins; they indeed offend sometimes, but it is their nature, and it is long of such occasions. These are rather excuses than confessions, 1 (Samuel 15:24). I have sinned, I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, because I feared the people. Saul layes his sin upon the people. They would have him spare the Sheep and Oxen. 'Twas an Apology, not a self-indictment. This runs in a blood. Adam acknowledges he did taste the forbidden fruit, but instead of aggravating his sin, he translates it from himself to God, (Genesis 3:12).

The woman whom you gavest me, she gave me of the Tree, and I did eat: If I had not had this woman to be a tempter, I had not transgressed.

—inscripsere deos sceleri—.

That is a bad sin indeed that has no excuse: as it must needs be a very coarse Wooll which will take no dye. How apt are we to pare and curtail sin, and look upon it through the small end of the perspective, that it appears but as a little cloud, like the bigness of a mans hand, 1 King. 18. 44.

It reproves them who are so far from confessing sin, that they boldly plead for it: Instead of having tears to lament it, they use Arguments to defend it. If their sin be passion, they will justifie it, Jonah 9. 4. I do well to be angry. If it be covetousness, they will vindicate it. When men commit sin, they are the Devils Servants; when they plead for it, they are the Devils Attorneys, and he will give them a fee.

2. Let us shew our selves penitents by sincere confession of sin. The Thief on the Cross made a confession of his sin, (Luke 23:41). We indeed suffer justly. And Christ says to him, This day shalt you be with me in Paradise: Which possibly might occasion that speech of Austin, that confession of sin shuts the mouth of Hell, and opens the gate of Paradise. That we may make a free and ingenuous confession of sin, let us consider,

Holy confession gives glory to God, (Joshua 7:19). My Son, give I pray you glory to God, the God of Israel, and make confession to him. An humble confession exalts God: What a glory is it to him,

that out of our own mouths he does not condemn us? While we confess sin, Gods patience is magnified in sparing, and his free-grace in saving such sinners.

Confession is a means to humble the soul He that subscribes himself an Hell-deserving sinner, will have little heart to be proud: with the Violet he will hang down his head in humility. A true penitent confesss he mingles sin with all he does, therefore has nothing to boast of. Uzziah, though a King, yet having a Leprosie in his forehead, he had enough to abase him, 2 (Chronicles 26:19). So a child of a God, though he does any good, yet acknowledgs much evil to be in that good; this layes all his feathers of pride in the dust.

Confession gives vent to a troubled heart. When guilt lyes boiling in the conscience, confession gives ease. It is like the lancing of an abscess, which gives ease to the Patient.

Confession purgs out sin. Austin calls it, the Expeller of vice. Sin is a bad blood; confession is like the opening of a vein to let it out. Confession is like the dung-gate, by which all the filth of the City was carryed forth, Nehem. 3. 13. Confession is like pumping at the leak, it lets out that sin which would else drown. Confession is the sponge that wipes off the spots of the soul.

Confession of sin endears Christ to the soul. If I say. I am a sinner, how precious will Christs blood be to me! When Paul had confessed a body of sin, he immediately breaks forth into a gratulatory triumph for Christ, (Romans 7:25). Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ. If a debtor confess a Iudgement, yet the creditor will not exact the debt, but appoint his own Son to pay it, will not the debtor be very thankful? So when we confess the de[illegible] and

that though we should for ever [illegible] in Hell we cannot pay it; that God should appoint his own Son to lay down his blood for the payment of our debt, how is free-grace magnified, and Jesus Christ eternally loved and admired!

Confession of sin makes way for pardon . No sooner did the Prodigal come with a confession in his mouth, I have sinned against Heaven, but his Fathers heart did melt towards him, and he kissed him, (Luke 15:20). When David said, I have sinned, the Prophet brings him a box with a pardon, The Lord has put away your sin, 2 (Samuel 12:13). He who does sincerely confess sin, has Gods bond for a pardon, 1 (John 1:9). If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. Why does not the Apostle say, if we confess, he is merciful to forgive our sins? no, but he is just; because he has bound himself by promise to forgive such. He who confesss sin, and comes with a penitent heart by faith in Christ, Gods truth and justice is ingaged for the pardoning of that man.

How reasonable and easie is this command, that we should confess sin!

1. It is a reasonable command. For if one has wronged another, what more rational than to confess he has wronged him? We having wronged God by sin, how equal and consonant to reason is it that we should confess the offence.

2. It is an easie command. What a vast difference is there between the first Covenant and the second. In the first Covenant it was, If you committest sin you diest; In the second Govenant it is, If you confessest sin you shalt have mercy. In the first Covenant no surety was allowed, under the Covenant of Grace, if we do but con-

fess the debt, Christ will be our Surety. What way could be thought of more ready and facile for the salvation of man, than an humble confession? (Jeremiah 3:13). Only acknowledge your iniquity. I do not ask for sacrifices of Rams to expiate your guilt; I do not bid you part with the fruit of your body, for the sin of your soul, Only acknowledge your iniquity. Do but draw up an Indictment against your self, and plead guilty, and you shalt be sure of mercy.

Methinks all this should render this duty amiable. Throw out the poison of sin by confession, and this day is salvation come to your house. Let this suffice to have spoken of our confession of sin to God. Only there remains one case of conscience.

Whether we are bound to confess our sins to men? The Papists insist much upon auricular confession. That one must confess his sins in the ear of the Priest, or he cannot be absolved. They urge that, (James 5:16). Confess your sins one to another. But this Scripture makes little for their purpose . It may as well be meant that the Priest should confess to the people, as the people to the Priest. Auricular confession is one of the Popes Golden Doctrines: Like the Fish in the Gospel, it has money in its mouth, (Matthew 17:27). When you have opened his mouth, you shalt find a piece of money. But though I am not for confession to men in a Popish sense, yet I think in three cases there ought to be confession to men.

1. In case a person has fallen into a scandalous sin, and by it has been an occasion of offence to some, and of falling to others, he ought to make a solemn and open acknowledgement of his sin, that his repentance may be as visible as his scandal, 2 (Corinthians 2:6), 7.

2. In case a man has confessed his sin to God, yet still his conscience is burdened, and he can have no ease in his mind, it is very requisite that he should confess his sins to some prudent pious friend that may advise him, and speak a word in due season, (James 5:17). It is a sinful modesty in Christians, that they are no more free with their Ministers, and other spiritual friends, in disburdening themselves, and opening the sores and troubles of their souls to them. If there be a thorn sticking in the conscience, it is good to make use of those who may help to pluck it out.

3. In case any man has slandered another, and by clipping his good name, has made it weigh lighter, he is bound to make confession. The Scorpion carries his poison in his tail; the slanderer in his tongue; his words pierce deep like the quills of the Porcupine. That person who has murdered another in his good name, or by bearing false witness, has damaged him in his estate, ought to confess his sin, and ask forgiveness, (Matthew 5:24). If you bring your gift to the Altar, and there remembreth that your Brother has ought against you, go your way, first be reconciled to your Brother, and then come and offer your gift. How can this reconciliation be but by confessing the injury? Till this be done, God will accept of none of your services: Do not think the holiness of the Altar will priviledge you; your praying and hearing is in vain, till you have by confessing your fault to your Brother appeased his anger.

SECTION 4

4. THE fourth Ingredient into Repentance, is, shame, (Ezekiel 43:10). That they may be ashamed of their iniquities. Blushing is the color of virtue. When the heart has been made black with sin, grace makes the face red with blushing, (Ezra 9:6). I am ashamed

and blush to lift up my face. The repenting Prodigal was so ashamed of his excess, that he thought himself not worthy to be called a Son any more, (Luke 15:21). Repentance causes an holy bashfulness. If Christs blood were not at the heart, there would not so much blood come in the face. There are nine Considerations about sin may cause shame.

1. Every sin makes us guilty, and guilt usually breeds shame. Adam never blushed in the time of Innocency; while he kept the whiteness of the Lilly, he had not the blushing of the Rose; but when he had deflowered his soul by sin, then he was ashamed: Sin has tainted our blood, we are guilty of High-treason against the Crown of Heaven. This may cause an holy modesty and blushing.

2 In every sin there is much unthankfulness, and that is matter of shame. He who is upbraided with ingratitude will blush; we have sinned against God when he has given us no cause, (Jeremiah 2:5). What iniquity have your Fathers found in me? Wherein has God wearied us, unless his mercies have wearied us? O the silver drops that have fallen on us! we have had the finest of the Wheat, we have been fed with Angels food: The golden Oyl of Divine Blessing has run down on us from the head of our heavenly Aaron. And to abuse the kindness of so good a God, how may this make us ashamed! Cesar took it unkindly at the hands of Brutus, on whom he had bestowed so many favors; when he came to stab him; What you my Son Brutus? O ungrateful to be worse for mercy! Aelian reports of the Vulture, that it draws sickness from perfumes So to contract the disease of pride and luxury from the perfume of Gods mercy, how unworthy is it? What to requite evil for good? to kick against our feeder? (Deuteronomy 32:15). To make an Arrow of Gods mercies, and shoot at him, to wound him with his own bless-

ing, O horrid ingratitude! Will not this dye our faces of a deep Scarlet? Unthankfulness is a sin so great, that God himself stands amazed at it, (Isaiah 1:2). Hear O Heavens, and give ear O Earth, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. And surely that sin which makes God wonder, may make us blush.

3. Sin has made us naked, and that may breed shame. Sin has stripped us of our white Linnen of Holiness; it has made us naked and deformed in Gods eye, which may cause blushing. When Hanun had abused Davids servants, and cut off their garments, so that their nakedness did appear, the text says, Themen were greatly ashamed. 2 (Samuel 10:5).

4. Our sins have put Christ to shame , and shall not we be ashamed? The Jews arrayed him in Purple, they put a Reed in his hand, spat in his face, and in his greatest Agonies reviled him: Here was the shame of the Cross, and that which aggravated the shame, was to consider the eminency of his person, as he was the Son of God, and the innocency of his life, as he was the Lamb of God. Did our sins put Christ to shame, and shall they not put us to shame? Did he wear the Purple, and shall not our cheeks wear Crimson? Who can behold the Sun as it were blushing at Christs passion, and hiding it self in an ecclipse, and his face not blush?

5. Many sins which we commit, are by the special instigation of the Devil, and will not this cause shame? The Devil put it into Judas his heart to betray Christ, (John 13:2). He filled Ananias heart to lye, (Acts 5:3). He often stirs up our passions, (James 3:6). Now, as it is a shame to bring forth a child illegitimate; so to bring forth such sins as may call the Devil Father. 'Tis said, the Virgin Mary conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, (Luke 2:35). But

we often conceive by the power of Satan. When the heart conceives pride, lust, malice, it is very often by the power of the Devil. May not this make us ashamed to think that many of our sins are committed [illegible][illegible] with the old Serpent.

6. Sin like Cyrcies enchanting cup, turns men into beasts, and is not that matter of shame? (Psalms 49:12). Sinners are compared to Foxes, (Luke 13:32). Wolves, (Matthew 7:15). Asses, Job 11. 12. Swine, 2 (Peter 2:22). A sinner is a Swine with a mans head. He who was once in dignity little less than the Angels, is now become like the beasts. Grace in this life does not wholly obliterate this brutish temper. Agur that good man cryes out, Sure I am more brutish than any, (Proverbs 30:2). But common sinners are in a manner wholly brutified; they do not act rationally, but are transported by the violence of their lusts and passions. How may this make us ashamed, who are thus degenerated below our own species? Our sins have taken away that noble, masculine spirit which once we had. The Crown is fallen from our head. Gods Image is defaced, reason is eclipsed, conscience stupified. We have more in us of the brute, than the Angel.

7. In every sin there is folly, (Jeremiah 4:22). A man will be ashamed of his folly. Is not he a fool that labours more for the bread that perishes, than for the bread of life? Is not he a fool, that for a lust or trifle will lose Heaven? Like Tiberius, who for a draught of drink, forfeited his Kingdom? Is not he a fool, that will to safeguard his body, injure his soul? As if one should let his arm or head be cut to save his Vest.

—naviget antyciras—

Is not he a fool that will believe a temptation before a promise? Is not he a fool that minds his recreation more than his salvation? How may this make men ashamed to think, that they inherit not so much Land as folly, (Proverbs 14:18).

8. That which may make us blush, is, that the sins we commit are far worse than the sins of the Heathen: we act against more light: To us have been committed the Oracles of God. The same sin committed by a Christian, is worse than by an Indian, because he sins against clearer conviction; which is like the Dye to the Wooll, or the weight put into the scale, which makes it weigh heavier.

9. Our sins are worse than the sins of the Devils. 1. The lapsed Angels never sinned against Christs blood; Christ died not for them; the medicine of his merit was never intended to heal them; but we have affronted and disparaged his blood by unbelief.

2. The Devils never sinned against Gods patience; as soon as they apostatized they were damned: God never waited for the Angels : but we have spent upon the stock of Gods patience; he has pitied our weakness, born with our frowardness; his Spirit has been repulsed, yet has still importuned us, and would take no denial: Our carriage has been so provoking, as would have tyred not only the patience of a Moses, but of all the Angels. We have put God to it, and made him weary of repenting, (Jeremiah 15:6).

3. The Devils never sinned against example; they were the first that sinned, and were made the first example. We have seen the Angels, those morning Stars, fall from their glorious Orb; we have seen the old world drowned, Sodom burnt, yet have ventured upon

sin. How desperate is that thief, who robs in the [illegible]ery place where his fellow hangs in chains; and surely if we have out-sinn'd the Devils, it may well put us to the blush.

1. Is shame an Ingredient into Repentance, then how far are they from being penitents, who have no shame? many have sinned away shame, (Zephaniah 3:5). The unjust knows no shame. It is a great shame not to be ashamed; the Lord sets it as a brand upon the Jews, (Jeremiah 6:15). Were they ashamed when they committed abomination; nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush *. The Devil has stoln shame from men. When one of the Persecutors in Queen Maries time was upbraided with his bloodiness to the Martyrs; I see nothing (says he) to be ashamed of. Many are no more ashamed of their sin, than King Nebuchadnezzar was of his being turned to grass. When men have hearts of Stone, and foreheads of Brass, 'tis a sign the Devil has taken full possession of them . There is no creature capable of shame but man: the bruit beasts are capable of fear and pain, but not capable of shame: you cannot make a beast blush: such do too much resemble the beasts who cannot blush for sin.

1. There are some so far from this holy blushing, that they are proud of their sins; they are proud of their long hair: These are the Devils Nazarites, 1 (Corinthians 11:14). Doth not nature it self teach you, that if a man have long hair, it is a shame to him? It confounds the distinction of sexes. Others are proud of their black spots; and what if God should turn them into blew spots?

2. Others are so far from being ashamed of sin, that they glory in their sins, (Philippians 3:19). Who glory in their shame. Some are ashamed of that which is their glory; they are ashamed to be seen with a good Book in their hand; others glory in that which

[illegible]s their shame: They look on sin as a piece of gallantry: the swearer[illegible] thinks his speech most graceful, when it is interlarded with oaths: The drunkard[illegible] counts it a glory, that he is mighty to [illegible] drink, (Isaiah 5:22). But when men shall be [illegible] cast into a fiery furnace, heat seven times hotter by the breath of the Almighty, the [illegible] let them boast of sin as they see cause.

2. Let us shew our penitency by modest blushing, (Ezra 9:6). O my God, blush to lift up my face. My God, there was faith; I blush, there was repentance. Hypocrites will confidently avouch God to be their God, but they know not how to blush. O let us take holy shame to our selves for sin. Be assured, the more we are ashamed of sin now, the less we shall be ashamed at Christs coming. If the sins of the godly be mentioned at the day of Judgement, it will not be to shame them, but to magnifie the riches of Gods grace in pardoning them. Indeed the wicked shall be ashamed at the last day, they shall sneak and hang down their heads, but the Saints shall then be as without spot, Ephes. 5. 27. so without shame; therefore they are bid to lift up their heads, (Luke 21:28).

SECTION 5

5. THE fifth Ingredient to Repentance, is hatred of sin. The Schoolmen distinguish of a twofold hatred.

Odium Abominationis, & Odium Inimicitiae.

1. There is an hatred of Abomination, or loathing, (Ezekiel 36:31). Ye shall loath your selves for your iniquities. A true penitent is a sin-loather. If a man loath that which makes his stomach sick, much more that which makes his conscience sick: 'Tis more

to loath sin, than to leave it. One may leave sin for fear, as in a storm the Plate and Jewels are cast overboard: but the nauseating and loathing of sin, argues a detestation of it. Christ is never loved, till sin be loathed. Heaven is never longed for, till sin be loathed. When the soul sees an issue of blood runing, he cries out, Lord, when shall I be freed from this body of death? When shall I put off these filthy garments of sin, and have the fair mitre of glory set upon my head ? Let all our self-love be turned into self-loathing. We are never more precious in Gods eyes, than when we are lepers in our own.

2. There is an hatred of Enmity. There is no better way to discover life than by motion: The eye moves, the pulse beats. So to discover Repentance, there is no better sign, than by an holy antipathy against sin. Hatred (says Cicero) is anger boiled up to an inveteracy . Sound Repentance begins in the love of God, and ends in the hatred of sin.

But how may true hatred of sin be known?

1. When a mans spirit is set against sin. The tongue does not only inveigh against sin, but the heart abhors it . So that let sin be never so curiously painted, it is odious. As we abhor the picture of one whom we mortally hate, though it be exactly drawn.

—Non amo te Sabidi—

Suppose a dish be finely cooked, and the sauce good, yet if a man has an antipathy against the meat, he will not taste it. So let the Devil cook and dress sin with pleasure and profit, yet a true penitent having a secret abhorrency of it, does disgust it, and will not meddle with it.

2. True hatred of sin is universal; and that two waies. In respect

- 1. Of the Faculties. - 2. Of the Object.

1. Hatred is universal in respect of the Faculties: That is, there is a dislike of sin, not only in the judgement, but in the will and affections: For many an one is convinced that sin is a vile thing, and in his judgement has an aversation from it, but yet he tastes sweetness, and has a secret complacency in it. Here is a disliking sin in the judgement, and an embracing it in the affections : Whereas in true Repentance, the hatred of sin is in all the faculties; not only in the intellectual part, but chiefly in the will, (Romans 7:15). What I hate, that do I. Paul was not free from sin, yet his will was against it.

2. Hatred is universal in respect of the Object. He that hates one sin, hates all. Aristotle says, hatred is against the whole kind. He that hates a Serpent, hates all Serpents, (Psalm 119:104). I hate every false way. Hypocrites will hate some sins which do eclipse their credit, but a true convert hates all sins; gainful sins, complexion-sins, the very stirrings of corruption. Paul hated the motions of sin, (Romans 7:23).

3. True hatred is against sin quatenus sin. An holy heart detests sin for its int[illegible]nsick pollution. Sin leaves a[illegible]ain upon the soul. A regenerate person abhors sin, not only for the curse, but the contagion: He hates this Serpent not only for its s[illegible]ing, but its poison: He hates sin not only for Hell, but as Hell.

4. True hatred is implacable, it will never be reconciled to sin any more. Anger may be reconciled, hatred cannot. Sin is that Amalek, which is never to be taken into favor again. The war between a child of God and sin, is like the war between those two Princes, 1 King. 14. 30. There was war between Rehoboam and Ieroboam all their daies.

5. Where there is a real hatred, we do not only oppose sin in our selves, but in others. The Church of Ephesus could not bear with them that were evil, (Revelation 2:2). Paul sharply censured Peter for his dissimulation, though he were an Apostle. Christ in an holy displacency whipt the money-changers out of the Temple, (John 2:15). He would not suffer the Temple to be made an Exchange. Nehemiah rebuked the Nobles for their Usury, (Nehemiah 5:7). And their Sabbath-prophanation, (Nehemiah 13:7). A sin-hater will not endure wickedness in his family, (Psalm 101:7). He that works deceit shall not dwell in myhouse. What a shame is it when Magistrates can shew height of spirit in their passions, but no heroick spirit in suppressing vice. Such as have no antipathy against sin, are strangers to Repentance: Sin is in them, as poison in a Serpent, which being natural, is delightful.

1. How far are they from Repentance, who instead of hating sin, love sin. To the godly sin is as a thorn in the eye; to the wicked it is as a crown on the head, (Jeremiah 11:15). When you do evil, then you rejoycest. Loving of sin is worse than committing it. A good man may run into a sinful action unawares, but to love sin is desperate. What is it makes a Swine, but loving to tumble in the mire? What is it makes a Devil, but loving that which opposs God?

To love sin shews that the will is in sin; and the more of the will in a sin, the greater the sin . Wilfulness makes it a sin not to be purged by sacrifice, (Hebrews 10:26).

O how many are there that love the forbidden fruit! They love their oaths and adulteries; they love the sin, and hate the reproof. Solomon speaks of a generation of men, Eccles. 9. 3. Madness is in their heart while they live. So for men to love sin, to hug that which will be their death, to sport with damnation; Madness is in their heart.

It persuades us to shew our Repentance by a bitter hatred of sin. There is [illegible] deadly antipathy between the Scorpion and the Crocodile, such should there [illegible]e between the heart and sin.

What is there in sin that may make a pe[illegible]itent hate it?

Sin is the cursed thing*, the most misshapen Monster. The Apostle uss a very emphatical word to express it, (Romans 7:13). That sin might become exceeding sinful; or as it is in the Greek, hyperbolically sinful. Now that sin is an hyperbolical mischief, and deserves hatred, will appear, if we look upon sin in a fourfold notion.

1. Look upon sin in the original of it, whence it comes; it fetchs its pedigree from Hell, 1 (John 3:8). He that commits sin is of the Devil, for the Devil sins from the beginning. Sin is the Devils proper work. 'Tis true, God has a hand in ordering sin, but Satan has an hand in acting it. Now how hateful is it to be doing that which is the peculiar work of the Devil? nay which makes men Devils . (John 6:7).

2. Look upon sin in its nature, and it will appear very hateful. See how the Scripture has pensiled it out. 1. Sin is a dishonouring of God, (Romans 2:23).—2. Sin is a despising of God, 1 (Samuel 2:30).—3. It is a fretting of God, (Ezekiel 16:43).—4. It is a wearying of God, (Isaiah 7:13).—5. It is a breaking the heart of God, (Ezekiel 6:9). I am broken with your whorish heart; as a loving husband is with the unchast carriage of his wife.—6. Sin, when acted to the height, is a crucifying Christ afresh, and putting him to open shame, (Hebrews 6:6). That is, impudent sinners pierce Christ in his Saints, and were he now upon earth, they would crucifie him again in his person. Behold the odious nature of sin.

3. Look upon sin in its comparison, and it appears ghastly. Compare sin either with affliction, or Hell, and it is worse than both.

1. Compare sin with Affliction; sickness, poverty, death, and it is worse than these. There's more malignity in a drop of sin, than in a Sea of affliction. For

Sin is the cause of affliction; and the cause is more than the effect. The sword of Gods justice lies quiet in the scabbard [illegible]ill sin draws it out.

Affliction is good for us, (Psalm 119:71).It is good for me that I was afflicted. Affliction causss Repentance, 2 (Chronicles 33:12). The Viper being stricken, casts up its poison. So Gods Rod striking us, we spit away the poison of sin. Affliction betters our grace. Gold is purest, and Juniper sweetest in the fire. Affliction prevents damnation, 1 (Corinthians 11:32). Therefore Maurice the Emperour prayed to God to punish him in this life, that he might

not be punished hereafter. So that affliction is many waies for our good ; but sin has no good in it. Manasseh's affliction brought him to humiliation, but Judas his sin brought him to desperation

Affliction does only reach the body, but sin goes further, it poisons the fancy, disorders the affections. Affliction is but corrective, sin is destructive. Affliction can but take away the life , sin takes away the soul, (Luke 12:20).

A man that is afflicted may have his conscience quiet . When the Ark was tossed on the waves, Noah could sing in the Ark. When the body is afflicted and tossed, a Christian can make melody in his heart to the Lord, Ephes. 5. 19. But when a man commits sin, conscience is terrified; witness Spira, who upon his abjuring the Faith, said, he thought the damned spirits did not feel those torments which he inwardly endured.

In affliction one may have the love of God, (Revelation 3:19). If a man should throw a bag of money at another, and in throwing it should hurt him a little, and raise the skin, he would not take it unkindly, but look upon it as a fruit of love: So when the Lord bruiss us with affliction, it is to enrich us with the golden graces and comforts of his Spirit; all is in love. But when we commit sin, God withdraws his love. When David had sinned, he felt nothing but displeasure from God, (Psalm 97:2). Clouds and darkness are round about him. David found it so; he could see no Rainbow, no Sun-beam, nothing but clouds and darkness about Gods face.

That sin is worse than affliction, is evident, because the greatest judgement God laies upon a man in this life, is to let him sin without controll. When the Lords displeasure is most severely kindled against a person, he does not say, I will bring the Sword and

Plague on this man, but I will let him sin on, (Psalm 81:11). So I gave them up to their own hearts lusts. Now if the giving a man up to his sins (in the account of God himself) is the most dreadful evil, then sin is far worse than affliction; and if it be so, then how should it be hated by us!

2. Compare sin with Hell, and you shall see that sin is worse. Torment has its emphasis in Hell, yet nothing there, is of so bad an aspect as sin. 1. Hell is of Gods making; but sin is none of his making. Sin is the Devils creature. 2. The torments of Hell are a burden only to the sinner, but sin is a burden to God. (Amos 2:13). I am pressed under you, as a Cart is pressed with sheaves. 3. In the torments of Hell there is something that is good, namely, the execution of divine justice. There is justice to be found in Hell: but sin is a piece of the highest injustice; it would rob God of his glory, Christ of his purchase, the soul of its happiness: Judge then if sin be not a most hateful thing, that is worse than affliction or Hell.

4. Look upon sin in the issue and consequence, and it will appear hateful.

Sin reaches the body; it has exposed it to variety of miseries. We come into the world with a [illegible]ry, and go out with a groan; which made the Thracians weep on their childrens birth-day, to consider the calamities they were to undergo in the world. Sin is the Trojan Horse, out of which come a whole Army of troubles. I need not name them, because almost every one feels them. While we suck the hony, we are pricked with the briar. Sin gives a dash in the wine of our comforts; it digs our grave, (Romans 5:12).

Sin reaches the soul: By sin we have lost the Image of God, in which did consist both our sanctity and majesty. Adam in his pristine glory, was like an Herald that has his Coat of Arms upon him; all reverence him because he carries the Kings Coat of Arms; but pull this Coat off, and no man regards him. Sin has done this disgrace to us, it has plucked off our Coat of Innocency; but that is not all; this bearded arrow of sin would strike yet deeper; it would for ever separate us from the beatifical vision of God, in whose presence is fulness of joy. If sin then be so hyperbolically sinful, it may swell our spleen, and stir up our implacable indignation against it. As Ammons hatred of Tamar was greater than the love with which he had loved her, 2 (Samuel 13:15). So we should hate sin infinitely more than ever we loved it.

SECTION 6

6. THE sixth Ingredient in Repentance, is turning from sin. Reformation is left last to bring up the rear of Repentance. What though one could with Niobe, weep himself into a stone, if he did not weep out sin? True Repentance, like aqua fortis, eats asunder the Iron chain of sin; therefore weeping and turning are put together, (Joel 2:12). After the cloud of sorrow has dropped in tears, the firmament of the soul is clearer, (Ezekiel 14:6). Repent and turn your selves from your Idols, and turn away your faces from all your abominations. This turning from sin is called a forsaking of sin, (Isaiah 55:7). As a man forsakes the company of a thief or forcerer. 'Tis called a putting sin far away, Job 11. 14. As Paul put away the Viper, and shook it into the fire, (Acts 28:5). Dying to sin is the life of Repentance. That very day a Christian turns from sin, he must enjoy himself a Perpetual Fast. The eye must fast from

impure glances; the ear must fast from hearing slanders; the tongue must fast from oaths; the hands must fast from bribes; the feet must fast from the path of the harlot; and the soul must fast from the love of wickedness. This turning from sin implies a notable change.

There is a change wrought in the heart. The flinty heart is become fleshly. Satan would have Christ prove his Deity, by making stones become bread. Christ has wrought a far greater miracle, in making stones become flesh. In Repentance Christ turns an heart of stone into flesh.

There is a change wrought in the life. Turning from sin is so visible, that others may discern it; therefore it is called a change from darkness to light, Ephes. 5. 8. Paul after he had seen the heavenly vision, was so turned, that all men wondered at the change (Acts 9:21). Repentance turned the Jaylor into a Nurse and Physician, (Acts 16:33). He took the Apostles and washed their wounds, and set meat before them. A ship that is going Eastward, there comes a wind and turns it Westward: So that a man before was sailing Hell-ward, the contrary wind of the Spirit blows, and turns his course, and causes him to sail Heaven-ward. Chrysostom speaking of the Ninivites Repentance, says, that had a stranger who had seen Ninevehs excess, gone after they repented into the City, it was so metamorphosed and reformed, that he would scarce have believed it was the same City. Such a visible change does Repentance make in a person, as if another so [illegible] did lodge in the same body. Now, that the turning from sin be rightly qualified, these few things are requisite.

1. It must be a turning from sin with the heart: the heart is the *primum vivens*, the first thing that lives, and it must be the *primum vertens*, the first thing that turns. The heart is that the Devil does most strive for. Never did he so strive for the body of Moses, as he does for the heart of man: in Religion the heart is all: if the heart be not turned from sin, it is no better than a lye, (Jeremiah 3:10). Her treacherous Sister Judah, has not turned to me with the whole heart, but feignedly: or as the Hebrew, in a lye *. Judah did make a shew of Reformation, she was not so grosly idolatrous as the ten Tribes; yet, Judah was worse than Israel; she is called treacherous Judah; she pretended to a reformation; but it was not in truth; her heart was not for God; she turned not with the whole heart. 'Tis odious to make a shew of turning from sin, yet the heart is in league with it . I have read of one of our Saxon Kings who was baptized, that in the same Church he had one Altar for the Christian Religion, another for the Heathen . God will have the whole heart turned f[illegible]om sin. True Repentance must have no reserves or inmates.

2. It must be a turning from all sin,(Isaiah 55:7). Let the wicked forsake his way. A real penitent turns out of the road of sin; every sin is abandoned: As Iehu would have all the Priests of Baal slain, not one must escape, 2 King. 10. 24. So a true convert seeks the destruction of every lust; he knows how dangerous it is to entertain any one sin . He that hides one rebel in his house, is a traitor to the Crown; and he that indulgs one sin, is a traitorous Hypocrite.

3. It must be a turning from sin upon a spiritual ground. A man may restrain the acts of sin, yet not turn from sin in a right manner. Acts of sin may be restrained out of fear, or design; but a

right penitentiary turns from sin out of a religious principle, and that is, love to God. If sin did not bear such bitter fruit, if death did not grow on this tree, yet a gracious soul would forsake it out of love to God: This is the most kindly turning from sin. When things are frozen and congealed, the best way to separate them is by fire: When men and their sins are congealed together, the best way to separate them, is the fire of love. Three asking one another what made them leave sin; says one, I think of the joys of Heaven; says another, I think of the torments of Hell; but says the third, I think of the love of God, and that makes me forsake it? How shall I offend the God of love?

4. It must be such a turning from sin, as turns to God. This is in the text, That they should repent and turn to God. Turning from sin, is like the pulling the Arrow out of the wound; turning to God, is like the pouring in of the Balsom. We read in Scripture of a Repentance from dead works, (Hebrews 6:1). and a Repentance towards God, (Acts 20:21). Unsound hearts pretend to leave old sins, but they do not turn to God, or embrace his service. 'Tis not enough to forsake the Devils quarters, but we must get under Christs banner, and wear his colors. The repenting Prodigal did not only leave his Harlots, but did arise and go to his Father. It was Gods complaint, (Hosea 7:16). They return, but not to the most High. In true Repentance the heart points directly to God, as the Needle to the Northpole.

5. The true turning from sin is such a turn, as has no return, (Hosea 14:8). Ephraim shall say, what have I to do any more with Idols? The forsaking sin must be like the forsaking ones native

soil, never to return more to it. Some have seemed to be converts, and to have turned from sin, but they have returned to their sins again. This is a returning [illegible]o folly. It is,

A fearful sin. For 1. It is against clear light: He who did once leave his sin, it is to be supposed he felt it bitter in the pangs of conscience, yet he returned to it again; he must needs sin against the illuminations of the Spirit.

2. It reproachs God, (Jeremiah 2:5). What iniquity have your Fathers found in me, that they are gone from me? He that returns to sin, does interpretatively charge God with some evil. If a man put away his wife, it implies he knows some fault by her. To leave God, and return to sin is tacitly to asperse the Deity. God who hates putting away, (Malachi 2:16). hates that he himself should be put away.

To return to sin, gives the Devil more power over a man than ever, (Matthew 12:43). When a man turns from sin, the Devil seems to be cast out of him; but when he returns to sin, here is the Devil entring into his house again, and taking possession, and the last state of that man is worse than the first. When a prisoner has broken prison, and the Jaylour gets him again, he will lay stronger Irons upon him He who leaves off a course of sinning, does as it were break the Devils prison; but if Satan takes him returning to sin, he will hold him faster, and take fuller possession of him than ever. O take heed of this ! A true turning from sin, is a divorcing it, so as never to come near it any more: and whoever is thus turned from sin is a blessed person, (Acts 3:26). God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning every one of you from his iniquities.

Is turning from sin a necessary Ingredient in Repentance, then there is but little Repentance to be found. People are not turned from their sins, they are still the same they were. Proud they were, and so they are still. Like the beasts in Noahs Ark, they went into the Ark unclean, and came out unclean. Men come to Ordinances impure, and go away impure. Though men have seen so many changes without, yet there is no change wrought within, (Isaiah 9:13). The people turns not to him that smits. How can they say they repent who do not turn? Are they washed in Iordan, who have still their Leprosie upon their forehead? May not God say to the unreformed, as once to Ephraim, (Hosea 4:17). Ephraim is joynd to Idols, let him alone. So, here is a man joynd to his drunkenness, and uncleanness, let him alone, let him go on in sin ; but if there be either justice in Heaven, or vengeance in Hell, he shall not go unpunished.

Use 2. It reproves them 1. Who are but half-turned; and who are these?

Such as turn in their judgement, but not in their practice; they cannot but acknowledge that sin, like Saturn, has a bad aspect and influence, and will weep for sin, yet are so bewitched with it, that they have no power to leave it; their corruptions are stronger than their convictions: These are half-turned, [illegible], almost Christians, (Acts 26:28). They are like Ephraim, who was a Cake baked on one side, and dough on the other, (Hosea 7:8).—

They are but half-turned, who turn only from gross sin, but have no intrinsick work of grace. They do not prize Christ or love holiness. 'Tis with civil persons, as with Jonah, he got a gourd to defend him from the heat of the Sun, and he thought now he was safe, but a worm immediately ariss and devours the gourd. So

men, when they are turned from gross sin, think their civility will be a gourd to defend them from the wrath of God, but at death there ariss the worm of conscience and smites this gourd, and then their hearts fail, and they begin to despair.

They are but half-turned, who turn from many sins, but are unturned from some special sin. There is an harlot in the bosom they will not let go. As if a man should be cured of several diseases, but has a canker in his breast, and that kills him.

It reproves such whose turning is as good as no turning; who have one Devil goes out of them, and another enter[illegible] they turn from swearing to slandering, from profuseness to covetousness: Like a sick man that turns from a tertian Ague to a quartan. Such turning will turn men to Hell.

Let us in this shew our selves penitents, in turning from sin to God . There are some persons I have little hope to prevail with: Let the trumpet of the word sound never so shrill, let threatnings be thundered out against them, let some flashes of Hell fire be thrown in their faces, yet they will have the other game at sin. These persons seem to be like the Swine in the Gospel, carried down by the Devil violently into the Sea; they will rather damn than turn, (Jeremiah 8:5). They hold fast deceit, they refuse to return: But if there be any candour or sobriety in us, if conscience be not cast into a dead sleep, let us listen to the voice of the charmer, and turn to God our supream good.

How often does God call upon us to turn to him? He swears, (Ezekiel 33:11). As I live, I desire not the death of the sinner, turn ye, turn ye, &c. God had rather have our repenting tears, than our blood.

Turning to God makes for our profit: Our Repentance is no benefit to God, but to us. If a man drinks of a fountain, he benefits himself, not the fountain: if he beholds the light of the Sun, he himself is refreshed by it, not the Sun. If we turn from our sins to God, God is not advantaged by it; it is only we our selves reap the benefit; therefore selflove should prevail with us, (Proverbs 9:12). If you be wise, you shalt be wise for your self.

If we turn to God, he will turn to us; he will turn his anger from us, and his face to us. It was Davids prayer, (Psalm 86:16). O turn to me, and have mercy upon me. Our turning will make God turn, (Zechariah 1:3). Turn ye to me, says the Lord, and I will turn to you. He who was an enemy will turn to be our friend: If God turn to us, the Angels are turned to us; we shall have their tutelage and guardianship, (Psalm 91:11). If God turn to us, all things shall turn to our good; mercies and afflictions; we shall taste honey at the end of the Rod. Thus we have seen the several Ingredients of Repentance.

CHAPTER 5: SHOWING THE REASONS ENFORCING REPENTANCE



I Proceed next to the reasons which do enforce Repentance.

1. From Gods sovereign command,(Acts 17:30). He commands men every where to repent. Repentance is not arbitrary; 'tis not left to our choice whether we will repent or no, but it is an indispensable command . God has enacted a Law in the High Court of Heaven, that no sinner shall be saved but the repenting sinner; and he will not break his own Law. Though all the Angels should stand before God, and beg the life of an irrepening person, God would not grant it, (Exodus 34:6). The Lord God, merciful and gracious, keeping mercy for thousands, and that will by no means clear the guilty. Though God is more full of mercy, than the Sun is of light, yet he will not forgive a sinner while he goes on in his guilt: He will by no means clear the guilty.

2. The pure nature of God denies communion with an impenitent creature. Till the sinner repent, God and he cannot be friends, (Isaiah 1:16). Wash ye, make ye clean. Go steep your selves in the brinish waters of Repentance, verse 18. Come now and let us reason together. Now, says God, I will parley with you, but else come not near me. What communion has light with darkness? How can

the righteous God indulge him that goes on still in his trespasses? (Exodus 23:7). I will not justifie the wicked. If God should be at peace with a sinner before he repent, he should seem to like and approve all that he has done; he should go against his own holiness. 'Tis inconsistent with the sanctity of Gods nature to pard on a sinner while he is in the act of rebellion.

3. Sinners continuing in impenitency, are out of Christs commission: See his commission, (Isaiah 61:1). The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, he has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted. Christ is a Prince and Saviour, but not to save men in an absolute way, whether they repent or no. If ever Christ bring men to Heaven, it shall be thorow Hell gates, (Acts 5:31). Him has God exalted to be a Prince and Saviour to give Repentance. As a King pardons Rebels, not if they persist in open defiance, but if they relent, and yield themselves to the mercy of their Prince.

4. There is a great deal of equity in it, that we should repent. We have by sin wronged God; we have eclipsed his honor; we have infringed his Law, and good reason we should make him some reparation. By Repentance we humble and judge our selves for sin; we set to our seal that God is righteous if he should destroy us: and thus we give glory to God, and do what in us lyes to repair his honor.

5. If God should save men without Repentance, making no discrimination, then by this Rule he must save all; not only men, but Devils, as Origen once held; and so consequently the decrees of Election and Reprobation must fall to the ground; which how diametrically opposite it is to sacred writ, let all judge.

CHAPTER 6: SHOWING THAT IT WILL BE HARDER FOR SOME TO REPENT, THAN OTHERS



T Here are two sorts of persons who will find it harder to repent than others.

1. Such as have sate a great while under the droppings of Gods Ordinances, but grow no better. The earth which drinks in the Rain, yet bears thorns and briars, is nigh to cursing, (Hebrews 6:8). The metal which has lain long in the fire, but is not melted and refined, there is little hope of it. When God has sent his Ministers one after another, exhorting and persuading men to leave their sins, but they settle upon the lees of formality, and can sit and sleep under a Sermon; it will be hard for these ever to be brought to Repentance; they may fear lest Christ should say to them as once to the Fig-tree, Never fruit grow on you more.

2. They will find it harder to repent, who have sinned frequently against the convictions of the Word, the checks of conscience, and the motions of the Spirit. Conscience has stood as the Angel, with a flaming sword in its hand; it has said, Do not this great evil; but sinners regard not the voice of conscience, but march on resolvedly under the Devils colors: these will not find it

easie to repent, Job 24. 13. They are of those that rebel against the Light. It is one thing to sin for want of light, and another thing to sin against light. Here the unpardonable sin takes its rise; first men sin against the light of conscience, and so proceed gradually to the despighting the Spirit of grace.

CHAPTER 7: CONTAINING A REPREHENSION TO THE IMPENITENT



FIRST, then it serves sharply to reprove all unrepenting sinners, whose hearts seem to be hewn out of a Rock, and are like the stony ground in the Parable which wanted moisture.

This disease

I fear is epidemical, (Jeremiah 8:6). No man repented him of his wickedness. Mens hearts are marbled into hardness, (Zechariah 7:12). They made their heart as an Adamant. They are not at all dissolved into a penitential frame. It has been a received opinion, that Witches never weep. Sure I am, such as have no grief for sin, are spiritually bewitched by Satan. We read, that when Christ came to Jerusalem, he upbraided them because they repented not, (Matthew 11:20). And may he not upbraid many now for their impenitency? Though Gods heart be broken with their sins, yet their hearts are not broken: They say as Israel, (Jeremiah 2:25). I have loved strangers, and after them will I go. The justice of God, like the Angel, stands with a drawn sword in his hand ready to strike, but sinners have not so good eyes as Balaams Ass, to see the sword. God smites on mens backs, but they smite not with Ephraim upon their thigh . It was a sad complaint the

Prophet took up, (Jeremiah 5:3). you have stricken them, but they have not grieved. That sure is reprobate silver which contracts hardness in the furnace, 2 (Chronicles 28:22). In the time of his distress, did he trespass yet more against the Lord; this is that King Ahaz. An hard heart is a receptacle for Satan. As God has two places he dwells in, Heaven and an humble heart: so the Devil has two places he dwells in, Hell and an hard heart. 'Tis not falling into the water drowns, but lying in it: 'Tis not falling into sin damns, but lying in it without Repentance. Hardness of heart brings at last to searedness of conscience, 1 (Timothy 4:2). Having their conscience seared with an hot Iron. Men have silenced their consciences, and God has seared them. And now he lets them sin, and does not punish, (Isaiah 1:5). Why should I smite you any more? As a Father gives over correcting a child whom he intends to disinherit.

CHAPTER 8: CONTAINING A SERIOUS EXHORTATION TO REPENTANCE



LET me in the next place persuade all to this great duty of Repentance. Sorrow is good for nothing but sin. If you shed tears for outward losses, it will not advantage you. Water for the Garden, if poured in the sink, does no good. Powder for the eye, if applied to the arm, is of no benefit. Sorrow is medicinal for the soul, but if you apply it to wordly things, it does no good. O that our tears may run in the right chanel, and our hearts even burst with sorrow for sin. That I may the more successfully press this Exhortation, I shall shew you that Repentance

- 1. Is necessary. - 2. It is necessary for all persons. - 3. For all sins.

1. Repentance is necessary, (Luke 13:5). Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. There's no rowing to Paradise, but upon the stream of repenting tears. Repentance is required as a qualification. It is not so much to endear us to Christ, as to endear Christ to us. Till sin be bitter, Christ will not be sweet.

2. Repentance is necessary for all persons. God commands all men, Acts. 17:30.

1. It is necessary for great ones, (Jeremiah 13:18). Say to the King and the Queen, humble your selves. The King of Niniveh and his Nobles changed their robes for sackcloth, Jonah 3. 6. Great mens sins do more hurt than others: the sins of leaders are leading sins; therefore they of all others had need to repent. If such as hold the Scepter repent not, God has appointed a day to judge them, and a fire to burn them, (Isaiah 30:33).

2. Repentance is necessary for the flagitioussinners in the Nation. England had need put it self in mourning, and be humbled by solemn Repentance. —Anglica gens est optima flens—What horrible impieties are chargeable upon the Nation! We see persons daily listing themselves under Satan. Not only the banks of Religion, but Civility are broken down. Men seem to contend as the Jews of old, who should be most wicked . In their filthiness is leudness, (Ezekiel 24:13). If oaths and drunkenness, if perjury and luxury will make a people guilty, then it is to be feared England is in Gods black Book. Sure men have cancelled their vow in Baptism, and made a private contract with the Devil: Instead of crying to mercy to save them, they cry, God damn them! Never was there such riding post to Hell, as if men did despair of getting thither time enough. Hath it not been known that some have died with the guilt of fornication and blood upon them? Hath it not been told that others have boasted how many they have debauched and made drunk? Thus, they declare their sin as Sodom, (Isaiah 3:9). Nay, mens sins are grown daring; as if they would hang out their flag of defiance, and give Heaven a broad-side. Like the Thraci[illegible]ns, who when it thunders, gather together in a body, and shoot their Arrows against Heaven. The sinners in Brittain do even send God a challenge, Job 15. 25. They strengthen

themselves against the Almighty; they run upon him even on his neck, on the thick bosses of his bucklers. The bosses in the buckler are for offence in war. Gods precepts and threatnings are as it were the thick bosses of his buckler, by which he would deter men from wickedness; but they regard not, but are desperate in sin, and run furiously against the bosses of Gods buckler. O to what an height is sin boiled up! Men count it a shame not to be impudent.. May it not be said of us as Josephus speaks of the Iews; such was the excessive wickedness of those times, that if the Romans had not come and sacked their City, Jerusalem had been swallowed up with some Earthquake, or drowned with a flood or fired from Heaven: And is it not high time then for this Nation to enter into a course of physic, and take this pill of Repentance, who has so many bad humours spreading in her body politick? England is an Island encompassed with two Oceans, an Ocean of water, and an Ocean of wickedness; O that it might be encompassed with a third Ocean, namely, repenting tears. If the Book of the Law chance to fall upon the ground, the Jews have a custom immediately to proclaim a Fast. England has let both Law and Gospel fall to the ground, therefore had need fast and mourn before the Lord: The Ephah of wickedness seems to be full, Good reason tears should empty apace, when sin fills so fast: Why then do not all faces gather paleness? Why are the Wells of Repentance stopped? Do not the sinners of the Land know they should repent? Have they had no warning? Have not Gods faithful Messengers lifted up their voice as a trumpet, and cryed to them to repent? but many of these Tools in the Ministry have been spent and worn out upon rocky hearts. Hath not God lighted strange Comets in the Heavens, as so many Preachers to call men to Repentance, but still they are set-

bled on their lees, (Zephaniah 1:12). Do we think God will alwaies put up our affronts? Will he endure thus to have his name and glory trampled upon? The Lord has usually been more swift in the process of his justice against the sins of a professing people God may a while reprieve this Land by Frerogative, but if ever he save it without Repentance, he must go out of his ordinary Road: I say therefore with Mr. Bradford, REPENT O ENGLAND. you have beleaper'd your self with sin, and hadst need go and wash in the spiritual Iordan. you have kindled Gods anger against you, throw away your weapons, and bring your holy Engines and Waterworks, that God may be appeased in the blood of Christ. Let your tears run, lest Gods roll of curses fly . Either men must turn, or God will overturn: Either the fallow ground of their hearts must be broken up, or the Land broken down. If no words will prevail with sinners, it is because God has a purpose to slay them . Among the Romans, he who was for his capital offence forbidden the use of water, was thereby concluded to be a condemned person. So they who by their prodigious sins have so far incensed the God of Heaven, that he denies them the water of Repentance, may look upon themselves as condemned persons.

3. Repentance is necessary for thecheating crew, (Psalm 11:9). 18. Their deceitis falshood; who are wise to do evil; making use of their invention, only for circumvention: instead of living by their faith, they live by their shifts. These are they who make themselves poor, that by this artifice they may grow rich. I would not be misunderstood, I mean not such as the providence of God has brought low, whose estates have failed, not their honesty; but such as feign a break, that they may cheat their Creditors. There are some who get more by breaking, than others can by trading: these are like

beggars that discolour and blister their arms, that they may move charity; they live by their sores: So these live by their breaking. When the Frost breaks, the streets are more full of water: So many trades-men, when they break, are fuller of money: These make as if they had nothing, but out of this nothing, great estates are created. Remember, the Kingdom of Heaven is taken by force, not by fraud. Let men know, after this golden sop the Devil enters: they squeeze a curse into their estates: they had need repent quickly: Though the bread of falshood be sweet, (Proverbs 20:17). yet many vomit up their sweet morsels in Hell.

4. Repentance is necessary for civilpersons: these have no visible spots on them; they are free from gross sin, and one would think they were unconcerned in the business of Repentance . They are so good, that they scorn a Psalm of mercy. Indeed these are often in the worst condition: these are they who need no Repentance, (Luke 15:7). Their civility undoes them; they make a Christ of it, and so on this shelf suffer shipwrack. Morality shoots short of Heaven; it is only nature refined. A moral man is but old Adam dressed in fine cloths. The Kings Image counterfeited and stamped upon Brass, will not go currant. The civil person seems to have the Image of God, but he is but brass metal, which will never pass for currant: Civility is insufficient to salvation: though the life be moralized, the lust may be unmortified. The heart may be full of pride and Atheism. Under the fair leaves of a tree there may be a worm. I say not, repent that you are civil, but that you are no more than civil. The house that was only swept and garnished, Satan entered into, (Luke 11:26). This was the emblem of a moral man, who is swept by civility, and garnished with common gifts, but is not washed by true Repentance; the unclean spirit enters into such an

one. If civility were sufficient to salvation, Christ needed not to have died. The Civilian has a fair Lamp, but it wants the oyl of grace.

5. Repentance is needful for Hypocrites: I mean, such as allow themselves in the sin. Hypocrisie is the counterfeiting of sanctity. The Hypocrite or (stageplayer) is gotten a step beyond the moralist, and does dress himself in the g[illegible]rb of Religion: he pretends to a form of godliness, but denies the power, 2 (Timothy 3:5). The Hypocrite is a Saint in jest; he makes a majestick shew, like an Ape clothed in Ermyn, or Purple. The Hypocrite is like an house with a beautiful frontispiece, but every room within is dark: he is a rotten post fairly gilded : under his mask of profession he hides his plague-sores . The Hypocrite is against painting of faces, but he paints holiness: he is seemingly good, that he may be really bad . In Samuels mantle he plaies the Devil; therefore the same word in the original signifies to use Hypocrisie, and to be prophane *. The Hypocrite seems to have his eyes nailed to Heaven, but his heart is full of impure lustings; he lives in secret sin against his conscience ; he can be as his company is, and act both the Dove and the Vulture; he hears the word, but is all ear; he is for Templedevotion, where others may look upon him, and admire him, but he neglects family and closet prayer. Indeed, if prayer does not make a man leave sin, sin will make him leave prayer. The Hypocrite feigns humility, but it is that he may rise in the world; he is a pretender to faith, but he makes use of it rather for a cloak, than a shield; he carries his Bible under his arm, but not in his heart; his whole Religion is a demure lye, (Hosea 11:12).

But is there such a generation of men to be found? the Lord forgive them their holiness. Hypocrites are in the gall of bitterness, (Acts 8:23). O how had they need humble themselves in the dust! they are far gone with the rot, and if any thing cure them, it must be feeding upon the salt Marshes of Repentance.

Let me speak my mind freely, none will find it more difficult to repent than Hypocrites; they have so juggled in Religion, that their treacherous hearts know not how to repent. Hypocrisie is harder to cure than Phrensie . The Hypocrites abscess in his heart seldom breaks. If it be not too late, seek yet to God for mercy.

Such as are guilty of prevailing Hypocrisie, let them fear and tremble, their condition is sinful and sad. 1. Sinful, because they do not embrace Religion out of choice, but design; they do not love it, only paint it. 2. Sad, and that upon a double account. 1. Because this art of deceit cannot hold long . He who hangs out a sign, but has not the commodity of grace in his heart, must needs break at last. 2. Because Gods anger will fall heavier upon Hypocrites, they dishonour God more, and take away the Gospels good name; therefore the Lord reserves the most deadly Arrows in his quiver to shoot at them. If Heathens be damned, Hypocrites shall be double-damned. Hell is called the place of Hypocrites, (Matthew 14:5). 1. As if it were chiefly prepared for them, and were to be settled upon them in fe[illegible]simple.

6. Repentance is necessary for Gods own people, who have a real work of grace, and are Israelites indeed; they must offer up a daily sacrifice of tears. The Antinomians hold, that when any come to be Believers, they have a Writ of Ease, and there remains nothing for them now to do, but to rejoyce. Yes, they have something else to do, and that is, to repent. Repentance is a continued act.

The issue of godly sorrow must not be quite stopp'd till death. Hierom writing in an Epistle to Laeta, tells her, that her life must be a life of Repentance. Repentance is called a crucifying the old man, which is not done on a sudden, but leisurely, it will be doing all our life.

And is there not a great deal of cause why Gods own people should go into the weeping bath? 2 (Chronicles 28:10). Are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord? Have not you sins of daily incursion? Though you are Diamonds, have you no flaws? Do we not read of the spots of Gods children? Search with the Candle of the Word into your hearts, and see if you can find no matter of Repentance there.

1. Repent of your rash censuring: instead of praying for others, you are ready to passe a Verdict upon them . 'Tis true, the Saints shall judge the world, 1 (Corinthians 6:2). But stay your time; remember the Apostles caution, 1 (Corinthians 4:5). judge nothing before the time, till the Lord come.

2. Repent of your vain thoughts: These swarm in your minds as the Flies did in King Pharaohs Court . What beweildrings are there in the imagination! If Satan does not possess your bodies, he does your fancies, (Jeremiah 4:4). How long shall vain thoughts lodge within you? A man may think himself into Hell. O ye Saints, be humbled for this lightness in your head.

3. Repent of your vain fashions. 'Tis strange that the garments which God has given to cover shame, should discover pride. The godly are bid not to be conformed to this world, (Romans 12:2). People of the world are garish and light in their dresses: It is in fashion now adaies to go to Hell; but whatever others do, yet let

not Judah offend, (Hosea 4:15). The Apostle has set down what upper garment Christians must wear, 1 (Timothy 2:9). Modest apparel; and what under-garment, 1 (Peter 5:5). Be ye clothed with humility.

4. Repent of your decaies in grace,(Revelation 2:4). you have left your first love. Christians, how often is it Low-water in your souls! how often does your cold fit come upon you! where are those flames of affection; those sweet meltings of spirit as once you had? I fear they are melted away. O repent for leaving your first love.

5. Repent of your non-improvement ofTalents. Health is a talent, estate is a talent, wit and parts are talents; and these God has intrusted you with to improve for his glory. He has sent you into the world, as a Merchant sends his Factor beyond the Seas to trade for his Masters advantage: But you have not done the good you might. Can you say, Lord, your pound has gained five pounds, (Luke 19:18). Oh mourn at the burial of your talents! Let it grieve you that so much of your age has not been time lived, but time lost; that you have fill'd up your golden hours, more with froth than spirits .

6. Repent of your forgetfulness of sacredvows. A vow is a binding ones soul to God, (Numbers 30:1). Christians, have not you since you have been bound to God, forfeited your Indentures? Have not you served for common uses after you have been the Lords by solemn dedication? Thus by breach of vows, you have made a breach in your peace. Surely this calls for a fresh laver of tears.

7. Repent of your unanswerableness to blessings received. You have lived all your life upon free quarter; you have spent upon free-graces stock; you have been bemiracled with mercy; but where are your returns of love to God? The Athenians would have ungrateful persons to be sued at Law. Christians, may not God sue you at Law for your unthankfulness, (Hosea 2:9). I will recover my Wooll and my Flax. I will recover them by Law.

8. Repent of your worldliness. By your profession, you seem to resemble the Birds of Paradise, that soar aloft, and live upon the dew of Heaven, yet as Serpents, you lick the dust. Baruc a good man, was taxed with this, (Jeremiah 45:5). Seekest you great things for your self?

9. Repent of your divisions; these are a blot in your Coat-armour, and make others stand aloof off from Religion. Indeed, to separate from the wicked resembles Christ, who was separate from sinners, (Hebrews 7:26). But for the godly to divide among themselves, and look askew one upon another, had we as many eyes as there are stars, they were few enough to weep for this. Divisions eclipse the Churches beauty, and weaken her strength. Gods Spirit brought in cloven tongues among the Saints, (Acts 2:3). But the Devil has brought in cloven hearts: Surely this deserves a shower of tears.

—*Quis talia fando Temperet à lachrymis?*—

10. Repent for the iniquity of your holythings. How often have the services of Gods worship been frozen with formality, and sowred with pride? There have been more of the Peacocks plumes, than the groans of the Dove. 'Tis sad that ever duties of Religion

should be made a stage for vain glory to act upon. O Christians, there is such a thick rhyne upon your duties, that 'tis to be feared there is but little meat left in them for God to feed upon.

Behold here repenting work cut out for the best; and that which may make the tyde of grief swell higher, is, to think that the sins of Gods people do more provoke God than others, (Deuteronomy 32:19). The sins of the wicked pierce Christs side; the sins of the godly go to his heart. Peters sin being against so much love, was more unkind, which made his cheeks to be furrowed with tears, (Mark 14:72). When he thought thereon he wept.

3. Repentance is necessary for all sins.

Let us be deeply humbled and mourn before the Lord for original sin. We have lost that pure quintessential frame of soul as once we had; our nature is vitiated with corruption. Original sin has diffused it self as a poison into the whole man. Like the Jerusalem-Hartichoke, which, wherever it is planted, immediately over-runs the ground. There are not worse natures in Hell than we have. The hearts of the best are like Peters sheet, where were a number of unclean creeping things, (Acts 10:12). This primitive corruption is bitterly to be bewailed, because we are never free from it. It is like a spring under ground, which though it be not seen, yet it still runs. We may as well stop the beating of the pulse, as stop the motions to sin. This inbred pravity retards and hinders us in that which is spiritual, (Romans 7:19). The good that I would, I do not. Original sin may be compared to that fish Pliny speaks of, a Sea-Lamprey, which cleaves to the keel of the ship, and hinders it when it is under sail. Sin hangs weights upon us, that we move but slow to Heaven. O this adherency of sin! Paul shook the Viper which was on his hand into the fire, (Acts 28:5). But we cannot

shake off original corruption in this life. Sin does not come as a lodger for a night, but an indweller, (Romans 7:17). Sin that dwells in me. 'Tis with us as with one who has an Hectick feaver upon him, though he changes the air, yet still he carries his disease with him. Original sin is inexhaustible. This Ocean cannot be emptied; though the stock of sin spends, yet it is not at all diminished; the more we sin, the fuller we are of sin. Original corruption is like the Widows Oyl, which encreased by pouring out, and that which may be another wedge to break our hearts, is, that original sin does mix with the very habits of grace. Hence it is, our actings towards Heaven are so dull and languid. Why does faith act no stronger, but because it is clogg'd with sense? Why does love to God burn no purer, but because it is hindred with lust? Original sin incorporates with our graces. As bad lungs cause an Asthma or shortness of breath: so original sin having infected the heart, our graces breathe now very faintly. Thus we see what in original sin may draw forth our tears. In particular let us lament the corruption

Of

- 1. Our Will. - 2. Our Affections.

1. Let us mourn for the corruption of our Will: The will not following the dictamen of right reason, is byassed to evil: The will distasts God, not as he is good, but as he is holy: It contumaciously affronts him, (Jeremiah 44:17). We willdo whatsoever thing goes forth out of our mouth, to burn incense to the Queen of Heaven. The greatest wound is fallen upon our will.

2. Let us grieve for the corruption of our Affections, which consists in two things.

Their

- 1. Diversion. - 2. Propension.

Let us grieve for the diversion of our affections; they are taken off from their proper object: The affections like arrows shoot beside the mark. At first our Affections were wings to fly to God, now they are weights to pull us from him.

Let us grieve for the propension of our Affections; our love is set on sin, our joy on the creature, our Affections like the Lapwing feed on dung. How justly may the distemper of our Affections bear a part in the scene of our grief? We of our selves are falling into Hell, and our Affections would thrust us thither.

2. Let us lay to heart actual sins. Of these I may say, Who can understand his errors? (Psalm 19:12). They are like Atoms in the Sun, like sparks of a Furnace. We have sinned in our eyes, they have been casements to let in vanity . We have sinned in our tongues, they have been fired with passion; what action proceeds from us in which we do not betray some sin? To reckon up these, were to go to number the drops in the Ocean. Let actual [illegible]ins be solemnly repented of before the Lord.

CHAPTER 9: CONTAINING POWERFUL MOTIVES TO REPENTANCE



THAT the exhortation to Repentance may be more quickned, I shall lay down some powerful Motives to excite Repentance.

1. Sorrow and melting of heart, fits us for every holy duty. A piece of Lead while it is in the lump, can be put to no use, but melt it, and then you may cast it into any mould, and it is made useful: So an heart that is hardened into a lump of sin, is good for nothing, but when it is dissolved by Repentance, now it is useful. A melting heart is fit to pray. When Pauls heart was humbled and melted; then, Behold he prayes, (Acts 9:11). It is fit to hear the word: Now the word works kindly. When Iosiahs heart was tender, he humbled himself, and rent his cloths at the hearing the words of the Law, 2 (Chronicles 34:19). His heart, like melting wax, was ready to take any seal of the word. A melting heart is fit to obey. When the heart is like metal in the Furnace, it is facil and malleable to any thing. Lord, what wilt you have me do? A repenting soul subscribes to Gods will, and answers to his call, as the eccho to the voice.

2. Repentance is highly acceptable. Then our hearts are a garden of Eden, delightful to God, when a spiritual River runs to water this garden. I have read that Doves delight to be about the waters; and surely Gods Spirit who descended in the likeness of a Dove, takes great delight in the waters of Repentance. The Lord esteems no heart sound but the broken heart, (Psalm 51:17). The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. Mary stood at Jesus feet weeping, (Luke 7:38). She brought two things to Christ (says Austin) unguentum & lachrymas, tears and oyntment; her tears were better than her oyntment. Tears are powerful Orators for mercy; they are silent, yet they have a voice, (Psalm 6:8). Hear the voice of my [illegible]eeping.

3. Repentance commends all our services to God. That is Gods savory meat, which is seasoned with the bitter hearbs of godly sorrow. Hearing of the word [illegible]s then good, when we are pricked at the heart, (Acts 2:37). Prayer is delightful to God, when it ascends from the Altar of a broken heart. The Publican smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner; this prayer pierced Heaven: He went away justified rather than the other, (Luke 18:14). No prayer touchs Gods ear, but what comes from an heart touched with the sense of sin.

4. Without Repentance, nothing will avail us. Some bless themselves that they have a stock of knowledge, but what is knowledge good for without Repentance? It is better to mortifie one [illegible]in, than to understand all mysteries. Impure speculatists do but resemble Satan, [illegible]ransformed into an Angel of light. Learning and a bad heart, is like a fair face with a cancer in the breast. Knowledge without Repentance, will be but a torch [illegible]o light men to Hell.

5. Repenting tears are delitious; they may be compared to myrrhe, which though it be bitter in taste, it has a sweet smell, and refreshes the spirits: So Repentance, though it be bitter in it self, yet it is sweet in the effects; it brings inward peace. The soul is never more enlarged, and inwardly delighted, than when it can kindly melt. Alexander upon the safe return of his Admiral Nearchus from a long voyage wept for joy . How oft do the Saints fall a weeping for joy! The Hebrew word to repent, signifiesto take comfort *. None so joyful as the penitent. Tears (as the Philosopher notes) have four qualities; they are moist, salt, hot, bitter. 'Tis true of repenting tears; they are hot, to warm a frozen conscience; moist, to soften an hard heart; salt, to season a soul putrifying in sin; bitter, to wean us from the love of the world. And I will add a fifth they are sweet, in that they make the heart inwardly rejoyce, (John 16:22). Your sorrow shall be turned into joy. Let a man (says Austin) grieve for his sin, and rejoyce for his grief. Tears are the bes[illegible] sweet-meatsDavid who was the grea[illegible] weeper in Israel, was the sweet singer o[illegible]Israel. The sorrows of the penitent are like the sorrows of a travelling woman, (John 16:21). A woman in travel has sorrow, but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembrs no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. So the sorrows of humbled sinners bring forth grace, and what joy is there when this manchild is born!

6. Great sins repented of, shall find mercy. Mary Magdalen, a great sinner, when she washed Christs feet with her tears, obtained pardon. Some of the Jews, who had an hand in crucifying Christ, upon their Repentance, the very blood they shed was a sovereign balm to heal them, (Isaiah 1:18). Though your sins be as

scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Scarlet in the Greek is called [illegible], because it is twice dipt, and the art of man cannot wash out the dye again. But though our sins are of a scarlet color, Gods mercy can wash them away. This may comfort such whom the hainousness of sin discourags, as if there were no hope for them; yes, upon their serious turning to God, their sins shall be expunged and done away.

Oh but my sins are out of measure sinful! do not make them greater by not repenting. Repentance unravels sin, and makes it as if it had never been.

O but I have relapsed into sin after pardon, and sure there is no mercy for me! I know the Novatians held, that after a relapse there was no renewing by Repentance: But doubtless that was an error. The children of God have relapsed into the same sin. Abraham did twice equivocate. Lot committed incest twice. Asa, a good King, yet sinned twice by creature-confidence. Peter twice by carnal fear, (Matthew 26:70). (Galatians 2:12). But for the comfort of such as have relapsed into sin more than once, if they solemnly repent, a white flag of mercy shall be held forth to them. Christ commands us to forgive our trespassing brother seventy times seven in one day, in case he repent, (Matthew 18:22). If the Lord bids us do it, will not he much more be ready to forgive upon our Repentance? What is our forgiving mercy to his? this I speak not to encourage any impenitent sinner, but to comfort a despondent sinner, that thinks, tis in vain for him to repent, and that he is excluded from mercy.

7. Repentance is the in-let to spiritual[illegible]lessings; it helps to enrich us with [illegible]ace; it causs the desart to blossom as [illegible]he Rose; it makes the soul as the Egyp[illegible]an

fields after the overflowing of Nilus, [illegible]ourishing and fruitful. Never do the [illegible]owers of grace grow more, than after a [illegible]ower of repentant tears. Repentance [illegible]auss knowledge, 2 (Corinthians 3:16). When [illegible]eir heart shall be turned to the Lord, the [illegible]ail shall be taken away. The veil of igno[illegible]nce which was drawn over the Jews [illegible]yes, by Repentance should be taken [illegible]way. Repentance inflames love. Weep[illegible]g Mary Magdalen loved much, (Luke 7:47). [illegible]od preserves these springs of sorrow in [illegible]e soul, to water the fruits of the [illegible]pirit.

8. Repentance ushers in temporal[illegible]lessings. The Prophet Joel persuading [illegible]e people to Repentance, brings in the [illegible]romise of secular good things, Joel 2. [illegible]2, 19. Rent your heart, and not your gar[illegible]ent, and turn to the Lord, and the Lord [illegible]ill answer and say to his people, Behold I [illegible]nd you Corn, and Wine, and Oyl. When [illegible]e put water into the Pump, it fetchs [illegible]p only water; but when we put the wa[illegible]er of tears into Gods bottle, this fetchs up wine. I will send you wine and oyl. Sin blasts the fruits of the earth, (Haggai 1:6). Ye have sown much, and bring in little. But Repentance makes the Pomgranate bud, and the Vine flourish with full clusters. Fill Gods bottle, and he will fill your basket, Job 22. 23. If you return to the Almighty, you shalt lay up gold as dust. Repenting is a returning to God, and this brings a golden harvest.

9. Repentance staves off judgements from a Land. When God is going to destroy a Nation, the penitent sinner staies his hand, as the Angel did Abraham's, (Genesis 22:12). 'The Ninivites Repentance, caused God to repent, Jonah 3. 10. God saw that they

turned from their evil waies, and God repented, &c. An outward Repentance has adjourned, and kept off wrath. Ahab, who sold himself to work wickedness, yet upon his fasting and rending his garments, says God to Eliah, I will not bring the evil in his daies, 1 King. 21. 29. If the rending of the clothes did keep off judgement from the Nation what will the rending of the heart do?

10. Repentance makes joy in Heaven. The Angels do as it were keep holy-day, (Luke 15:10). There is joy in the [illegible]resence of the Angels of God, over [illegible]ne sinner that repents. As [illegible]raise is the musick of Heaven, so Repentance is the joy of Heaven. When men neglect the offer of salvation, and freeze in sin, this delights the Devils; but when a soul is brought home to Christ by Repentance, this makes joy among the Angels.

11. That which may cause tears to distill from our eyes, is to consider how dear our sins cost Christ. Christ is called the Rock, 1 (Corinthians 10:3). When his hands were pierced with nails, and the spear was thrust in his side, then was this Rock smitten, and there came out water and blood: And all this Christ endured for us, (Daniel 9:26). The Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself. We tasted the Apple, and he the Vineger and Gall. We sinned in every faculty, and he bled in every vein.

—Cernis ut in toto corpore sculptus amor—

And can we look upon a suffering Saviour with dry eyes? Shall we not be sorry for those sins which made Christ a man of sorrow? Shall not our enormities draw tears f[illegible]om us, which drew blood fro[illegible] Christ? Shall we sport any more with sin and so rake in Christs wounds? Oh tha[illegible] by Repentance we could

crucifie our sins afresh! The Jews said to Pilate, (John 19:12). If you let this man go, you are not Cæsars friend. If we let our sins go, and do not crucifie them, we are not Christs friends.

12. This is the end of all the afflictions God sends, whether it be sickness in our bodies, or losses in our estates, that he may awaken us out of our sins, and make the waters of Repentance flow. Why did God lead Israel that march in the wilderness among fiery Serpents, but that he might humble them? (Deuteronomy 8:2). Why did he bring Manasseh so low, changing his Crown of Gold into fetters of Iron, but that he might learn Repentance? 2 (Chronicles 33:12), 13. He humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers; then Manasseh knew that the Lord was good. One of the best waies to cure a man of a Lethargy, is to cast him into a Feaver. So when a person is stupified, and his conscience grown lethargical, God to cure him of this distemper, puts him to extremity, and brings one burning calamity or other, that he may startle him out of his security, and make him return to him by Repentance.

13. The daies of our mourning will soon be ended . After a few showers that fall from our eyes, we shall have a perpetual sunshine. Christ will provide an handkerchief to wipe off his peoples tears, (Revelation 7:17). God will wipe away all tears. Christians, shortly you shall put on your garments of praise: you shall exchange your Sackcloth, for white Robes: instead of sighs, you shall have triumphs; instead of groans, Anthems; instead of the water of tears, the water of life. The mourning of the Dove will be past, and the time of singing of birds will come.

—Volitant super aethera cantus—

This brings me to the next,

14. The happy and glorious reward that follows upon Repentance, (Romans 6:22). Being made free from sin, ye have your fruit to holiness, and the end everlasting life. The leaves and root of the Fig-tree are bitter, but the fruit is sweet. Repentance to the fleshy part seems bitter, but behold sweet fruit, EVERLASTING LIFE. The Turks phancy after this life an Elizi[illegible]m, or Paradise of Pleasure, where they have all dainty dishes served in; they have gold in abundance, silken and purple apparel, and Angels bringing them red wine in silver cups, and golden plates: Here is an Epicures Heaven. But in the true Paradise of God, are those astonishing delights, and rare viands served in, which eye has not seen, neither has it entred into the heart of man to conceive. God will lead his penitents from the house of mourning, to the banquettinghouse; no sight there but of glory; no noise but of musick; no sickness unless of love: There shall be holiness unspotted, and joy unspeakable; then the Saints shall forget their solitary hours, and be sweetly solacing themselves in God, and bathing in the Rivers of divine pleasure.

—Flumina jam lactis, jam flumina nectaris ibant, Planaque de viridi stillabant ilice mella—

O Christian, what are your duties compared with the recompence of reward? what an infinite disproportion is there between Repentance enjoyned, and glory prepared? There was a feast-day at Rome, in which they used to crown their fountains . God will crown those heads which have been fountains of tears. Who would not be willing to be a while in the house of mourning, that shall be possessed of such glory, as put Peter and John into an extasie to see it but darkly, shadowed and pourtrayed out in the transfigura-

tion, Matth. 17. This reward which free-grace gives, is so transcendantly great, that could we have but a glimpse of glory revealed to us here, we should need patience to be content to live any longer. O blessed Repentance, that hast such a light side with your dark, and hast so much sugar at the bottom of your bitter cup.

15. The next Motive to Repentance, is to consider the evil of impenitency: An hard heart is the worst heart; it is called an heart of stone, (Ezekiel 36:26). If it were Iron it might be mollified in the furnace; but a Stone put in the fire will not melt, it will sooner fly in your face. Impenitency is a sin grieves Christ, (Mark 3:5). Being grieved for the hardness of their hearts. It is not so much the disease offends the Physician, as the contempt of his physic. Not the sins we have committed do so much provoke and grieve Christ, as that we refuse the physic of Repentance which he prescribes. This aggravated Iezabels sin, (Revelation 2:21). I gave her space to repent, yet she repented not. An hard heart receives no impression ; it is untuned for every duty. It was a sad speech Stephen Gardner uttered on his deathbed, I have denied my Master with Peter, but I cannot repent with Peter. O the plague of an obdurate heart! Pharaohs heart turned into stone, was worse than his waters turned into blood. David had his choice of three judgements, plague, sword and famine; but sure he would have chosen them all rather than an hard heart. An impenitent sinner is neither allured by entreaties , nor affrighted by menaces. Such as will not weep with Peter, shall weep with Judas. An hard heart is the Anvi[illegible] on which the hammer of Gods justice will be striking to all eternity.

16. The last Motive to Repentance is, the day of judgement is coming. This is the Apostles own Argument, (Acts 17:31). God commands men every where to repent, because he has appointed a day in which he will judge the world. There is that in the day of judgement, which may make a stony heart bleed. Will a man go on thieving when the Assizes are nigh? Will the sinner go on sinning when the day of judgement is so nigh? you can no more conceal your sin, than you can defend it; and what wilt you do when all your sins shall be written in Gods Book, and engraven on your forehead? O direful day, when Jesus Christ clothed in his Judges Robe, shall say to the sinner, stand forth, answer to the Indictment brought against you. What canst you say for all your oaths, adulteries, and your desperate impenitency? O how amazed and stricken with consternation will the sinner be! and after his conviction, he must hear the sad sentence, Depart from me. Then, he who would not repent of his sins, shall repent of his [illegible]olly: If then there be such a time a coming, in which God will judge men for their impieties, what a spur should this be to Repentance! The penitent soul shall at the last day lift up his head with comfort, and have a discharge to shew under the Judges own hand.

CHAPTER 10: EXHORTING TO SPEEDY REPENTANCE



THE second branch of the Exhortation is, to press persons to speedy Repentance, (Acts 17:30). Now God commands men every where to repent. The Lord would not have any of the late Autumn fruits offered to him. God loves early penitents that consecrate the spring and flower of their age to him. Early tears, like Pearls b[illegible]ed of the morning dew, are more orient and beautiful. Oh do not reserve the dregs of your age for God, lest he reserve the dregs of his cup for you! Be as speedy in your Repentance, as you would have God speedy in his mercies, 1 (Samuel 21:8). The Kings business required haste: So Repentance requires haste.

'Tis natural to us to procrastinate and put off Repentance. We say as (Haggai 1:2). The time is not yet come. No man almost is so bad, but purposs he will amend, but he adjourns and prorogues so long, till at last all his purposes prove abortive . Many are now in Hell that purposed to repent. Satan does what he can to keep men from Repentance: when he sees they begin to take up serious thoughts of reformation, he bids them stay a while longer. If this

traitor sin must die (says Satan) let it not die yet: So the Devil gets a reprieve for sin, it shall not die this Sessions: at last men put off so long, that death seizs on them, and their work is not done.

Let me therefore lay down some cogent Arguments to persuade to speedy Repentance.

1. Now is the season of Repentance; and every thing is best done in its season, 2 (Corinthians 6:2). Now is the accepted time. Now God has a mind to shew mercy to the penitent, he is on the giving hand. Kings set apart daies for healing. Now is the healing day for our souls; now God hangs forth the white flag, and is willing to parley with sinners. A Prince at his coronation as an Acts of Royalty, gives money, proclaims pardons, fills the conduits with wine: Now God proclaims pardons to penitent sinners; now the conduit of the Gospel runs wine; now is the accepted time; therefore now come in and make your peace with God; now break off your iniquities by Repentance: 'tis wisdom to take the season The Husbandman takes the season for sowing his seed: now is the seed-time for our souls.

2. The sooner you repent, the fewer sins you will have to answer for. Were you at the death-bed of an old sinner, when conscience begins to be awakened, and should hear him crying out, here are all my old sins come about me, haunting my death-bed as so many evil spirits, and I have no discharge; here is Satan who was once my tempter, is now become my accuser, and I have no Advocate; I am now going to be dragg'd before Gods judgement-seat, where I must receive my final doom. Oh how dismal is the case of this man, he is in Hell before his time! but you who repent betimes of your sinful courses, this is your priviledge, you will have the less to answer for; nay, let me tell you, you will have nothing to

answer for, Christ will answer for you; your Judge will be your Advocate, 1 (John 2:1). Father, will Christ say, here is one that has been a great sinner, yet a broken-hearted sinner, if he owes any thing to your justice, set it on my score.

3. The sooner we repent, the more glory we may bring to God. 'Tis the end of our living, to be useful in our generation: better lose our lives, than the end of our living. Late converts who have for many years taken pay on the Devils side, are not in a capacity of doing so much work in the Vineyard. The thief on the Cross could not do that service for God as St. Paul did. But when we do sometimes turn from sin, then we give God the first-fruits of our lives; we spend and are spent for Christ. The more work we do for God, the more willing we shall be to die, and the sweeter death will be. He that has wrought hard at his day-labor, is willing to go to rest at night. Such as have been honouring God all their lives, how sweetly will they sleep in the grave! The more work we do for God, the greater will our reward be. He whose pound had gained ten pounds, Christ did not only commend him, but advance him, (Luke 19:17). Have you authority over ten Cities By late Repentance, though we do not lose our Crown, yet we make it lighter.

4. It is of dangerous consequence to put off Repentance longer.

—Mora trahit periculum—It is dangerous,

If we consider what sin is. Sin is a poison; it is dangerous to let poison lye long in the body. Sin is a bruise; if a bruise be not soon cured, it gangrenes and kills: If sin be not soon cured by Repentance, it festers the conscience, and damns. Why should any

love to dwell in the tents of wickedness? They are under the power of Satan, (Acts 26:18). And it is dangerous to stay long in the enemies quarters.

It is dangerous to procrastinate Repentance; because, the longer any go on in sin, the harder they will find the work of Repentance. Delay strengthens sin, and hardens the heart, and gives the Devil fuller possession. A plant at first may be easily plucked up, but when it has spread its roots deep in the earth, a whole team cannot remove it: 'Tis hard to remove sin when once it comes to be rooted. The longer the Ice freezes, the harder it is to be broken: the longer a man freezes in security, the harder it will be to have his heart broken: the longer any travel with iniquity, the sharper pangs they must expect in the new birth. When sin has got an haunt, it is not easily shaken off. Sin comes to a sinner, as the elder Brother came to his Father, (Luke 15:29). Lo these many years have I served you, neither at any time transgressed I your Commandment, and wilt you cast me off now? what in mine old age, after you have had so much pleasure by me? See how sin pleads custom, and that is a Leopards spot, (Jeremiah 13:23).

It is dangerous to prorogue and delay Repentance, because there are three daies may soon expire.

1. The day of the Gospel may expire; this is a sun-shiny-day; it is sweet, but swift. Jerusalem had a day, but lost it, (Luke 19:42). But now they are hid from yours eyes. The Asian Churches had a day, but at last the Golden Candlestick was removed: It would be a sad time in England see to the glory departed. With what hearts could we follow the Gospel to the grave? To lose the Gospel, were far worse than to have our City Charter taken from us. Gray hairs are here and there, (Hosea 7:9). I will not say the Sun of the

Gospel is set in England, but I am sure it is under a cloud. That was a sad speech, (Matthew 21:43). The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you: therefore it is dangerous to delay Repentance, lest the market of the Gospel should remove, and the vision cease .

A mans personal day of grace may expire. What if that time should come, in which God should say, the Means of Grace shall do no good; Ordinances shall have a miscarrying womb, and dry breasts. Were it not sad to adjourn Repentance till such a decree came forth ? 'Tis true, no man can justly tell that his day of grace is past; but there are two shrewd signs by which he may fear it.

1. When conscience has done preaching. Conscience is a bosom-Preacher; sometimes it convicts, sometimes it reproves: It says as Nathan to David, you are the man. But men imprison this Preacher, and God says to conscience, preach no more: He that is filthy, let him be filthy still. This is a fatal sign a mans day of grace is past.

2. When a person is in such a spiritual [illegible]ethargy, that nothing will work upon him, or make him sensible. There is [illegible], the spirit of a deep sleep poured on him, (Isaiah 29:10). This is a sad presage his day of grace is past. How dangerous then is it to delay Repentance when the day of grace may so soon expire!

3. The day of life may expire; what security have we that we shall live another day? We are marching apace out of the world; we are going off the stage; our life is a taper soon blown out. Mans life is compared to the flower of the field, (Psalm 103:15). which withers sooner than the grass . Our age is [illegible]as nothing, (Psalm 39:5). Life is but a flying shadow. The body is like a ves[illegible]el tunned with a little breath; sickness broachs this vessel, death

draws it out. O how soon may the scene alter ! Many a Virgin has been dressed the same day in her bride-apparel and her winding-sheet! How dangerous then is it to adjourn repenting, when death may so suddenly make a thrust at us. Say not, you will repent to morrow : Remember that speech of Aquinas; God who pardons him that repents, has not promised to give him to morrow to repent in. I have read of Archias, a Lacedemonian, who being among his cups, one delivered him a Letter, and desired him to read the Letter immediately, being of serious business; he replied, *seria cras*, I will mind serious things to morrow; and that day he was slain. Thus, while men think to spin out their silver thred, death cu[illegible]s it. Olaus Magnus observes of the Birds of Norway, that they fly faster than the Birds of any other Country; not that their wings are swifter than others, but by an instinct of nature, they knowing the daies in that climate to be very short, not above three hours long, do therefore make the more haste to their nests: So we knowing the shortness of our lives, and how quickly we may be called away by death, should fly so much the faster on the wing of Repentance to Heaven.

But me-thinks I hear some say, they do not fear a sudden surprisal, they will repent upon their sick-bed.

I do not so well like a sick-bed Repentance: He runs a desperate hazard, who will venture his salvation within the circle of a few short minutes. Thou that putttest off Repentance till sickness, answer me to these four queries.

1. How dost you know you shalt have a time of sickness? Death does not alwaies shoot its warning-piece by a lingring consumption; some it arrests suddenly. What if God should immediately send you a summons to surrender your life!

2. Suppose you shouldst have a time of sickness, how dost you know you shalt have the use of your senses? Many are distracted on their sick-bed.

3. Suppose you shouldst have your senses, yet how dost you know your mind will be in frame for such a work as Repentance? Sickness does so discompose body and mind, that one is but in an ill posture at such a time to take care for his soul. In sickness a man is scarce fit to make his will, much less to make his peace. The Apostle says, Is any sick among you, let him call for the Elders of the Church, (James 5:14). He does not say, is he sick, let him pray; but let him call for the Elders that they may pray over him. A sick man is very unfit to pray, or repent; he is like to make but sick work of it. When the body is out of tune, the soul must needs jar in its devotion. Upon a sick bed a person is more fit to exercise impatience, than Repentance. We read, that at the pouring out of the fourth Vial, when God did smite the Inhabitants, and scorched them with fire; They blasphemed the Name of God, and repented not, (Revelation 16:9). So when the Lord pours out his Vial, and scorches the body with a Feaver, the sinner is fitter to blaspheme than repent.

4. How dost you who putteth off all to a sick bed, know, that God will give you in that very juncture of time grace to repent? The Lord usually punishes neglect of Repentance in time of health, with hardness of heart in time of sickness . you have in your life time repulsed the Spirit of God, and art you sure it will come at your call? you have not taken the first season, and perhaps you shalt never see another spring-tyde of the Spirit more: All this considered, may hasten our Repentance. Do not lay too much weight upon a sickbed, 2 (Timothy 4:21). Do your diligence to come be-

fore winter. There is a winter of sickness, and death a coming, therefore make haste to repent; let your work be ready before winter. To day hear Gods voice, (Hebrews 3:7).

CHAPTER 11: THE TRIAL OF OUR REPENTANCE



IF any shall say, they have repented, let me desire them to try themselves seriously by those seven Adjuncts or Effects of Repentance which the Apostle laies down, 2 (Corinthians 7:11).

1. Carefulness. The Greek word signifies a solicitous diligence, or careful shunning all temptations to sin. The true penitentiary flies from sin, as Moses did from the Serpent .

2. Clearing of our selves. The Greek word is Apology. The sense is this, though we have never so much care, yet through strength of temptation, we may slip into sin: now in this case the repenting soul will not let sin lye festring in his conscience, but does judge himself for his sin; he pours out tears before the Lord; he begs mercy in the Name of Christ, and never leaves till he has gotten his pardon: Here he is cleared of guilt in his conscience, and is able to make an Apology for himself against Satan.

3. Indignation. He that repents of sin, his spirit riss against it; as ones blood riss at the sight of him whom he mortally hates. Indignation is a being fretted at the heart with sin. The penitent is

vexed with himself. David calls himself a fool and a beast, (Psalm 73:22). God is never better pleased with us, than when we fall out with our selves for sin .

4. Fear. A tender heart is ever a trembling heart. The penitent has felt sins bitterness; this Hornet has stung him, and now having hopes that God is reconciled, he is afraid to come near sin any more. The repenting soul is full of fear; he is afraid to lose Gods favor, which is better than life; he is afraid he should for want of diligence come short of salvation; he is afraid lest after his heart has been soft, the waters of Repentance should freeze, and he should harden in sin again, (Proverbs 28:14). Happy is he that fears alwaies. A sinner is like the Leviathan, who is made without fear, Job 41. 29. A repenting person fears and sins not, a graceless person sins and fears not.

5. Vehement desire. Sowre sauce sharpens the appetite: So the bitter herbs of Repentance sharpen desire: But what does the penitent desire? he desires more power against sin, and to be released from it. 'Tis true, he has got loose from Satan, but he goes as a prisoner that has broke Prison, with a fetter on his leg; he cannot walk with that freedom and swiftness in the waies of God; he desires therefore to have the fetters of sin taken off; he would be freed from corruption; he cries out with Paul, Who shall deliver me from this body of death? (Romans 7:24). In short, he desires to be with Christ, as every thing desires to be in its centre.

6. Zeal. Desire and zeal are fitly put together; to shew, that true desire puts forth it self in zealous endeavour. How does the penitent bestir himself in the business of salvation! How does he take the Kingdom of Heaven by force! (Matthew 11:12). Zeal quickens the pursuit after glory. Zeal encounters with difficulty, is imbold-

ened by opposition, tramples upon danger. Zeal makes a repenting soul persist in godly sorrow against all discouragements and oppositions whatsoever. Zeal carries a man above himself for Gods glory. Paul before conversion was mad against the Saints, (Acts 26:11). And after conversion he was judged mad for Christs sake, (Acts 26:4). Paul, you are besides your self. But it was Zeal, not Phrenzy. Zeal does spirit and animate duty; it causss fervency in Religion, which is as fire to the sacrifice, (Romans 12:11). As fear is a bridle to sin, so Zeal is a spur to duty.

7. Revenge. A true Penetentiary pursues his sins with an holy malice; he seeks the death of them: As Sampson was avenged on the Philistines for his two eyes: He uss his sins, as the Jews used Christ; he gives them gall and vinegar to drink; he crucifies his lusts, (Galatians 5:24). A true child of God seeks to be revenged most of those sins which have dishonoured God most. Cranmer, who had with his right hand subscribed the Popish Articles, was revenged on himself, he put his right hand first in the fire. David did by sin defile his bed, after by Repentance he watered his bed with tears. Israel had sinned by Idolatry, and afterwards they did offer disgrace to their Idols, 1 (Samuel 30:22). Ye shall defile the covering of your graven Images of silver. Mary Magdalen had before sinned in her eye, by adulterous glances, and now she will be revenged on her eyes; she washs Christs feet with her tears; she had sinned in her hair, it had intangled her Lovers; now she will be revenged on her hair; she wipes Christs feet with it . The Israelitish women, who had been dressing themselves by the hour, and had abused their Looking-glasses to pride, afterwards by way of revenge as well as zeal, offered their Looking-glasses to the use and service of Gods Tabernacle, (Exodus 38:8). So those Conjurers

who used curious Arts, o[illegible] Magick (as it is in the Syriack) when once they repented, brought their Books, and by way of revenge burned them, (Acts 19:19). These are the blessed fruits and products of Repentance; and if we can find these in our souls, we have arrived at that Repentance which is never to be repented of.

CHAPTER 12: A NECESSARY CAUTION INSERTED



Such as have solemnly repented of their sins, let me speak to them,

1. By way of Caution. Though Repentance be so necessary and excellent as you have heard, yet take heed that you do not ascribe too much to Repentance. The Papists are guilty of a double error; 1. They make Repentance a Sacrament. Christ never made it so; and who may institute Sacraments, but he who can give virtue to them? Repentance can be no Sacrament, because it wants an outward sign. A Sacrament cannot properly be without a sign.

2. The Papists make Repentance meritorious: they say it does *ex congruo merit* pardon ; this is a gross error. Indeed Repentance fits us for mercy. As the Plough when it breaks up the ground, fits it for the seed: So when the heart is broken up by Repentance, it is fitted for remission, but it does not merit it . God will not save us without Repentance, nor yet for it. Repentance is a qualification, not a cause. I grant repenting tears are precious; they are, as Gregory says, the fat of the sacrifice. And as Basil says, the medicine of the soul. And as Bernard, the wine of Angels; but yet tears are not satisfactory for sin. We drop sin with our tears,

therefore they cannot satisfy. Austin says well, I have read of Peters tears, but no man ever read of Peters satisfaction. Christs blood only can merit pardon . We please God by Repentance, but we do not satisfy him by it. To trust to our Repentance, is to make it a Saviour. Though Repentance helps to purge out the filth of sin, yet it is Christs blood washes away the guilt of sin ; therefore do not idolize Repentance: Do not rest upon this, that your heart has been wounded for sin, but rather, that your Saviour has been wounded for sin. When you have wept, say as he, Lord Jesus, wash my tears in your blood.

CHAPTER 13: COMFORT TO THE REPENTING SINNER



2. LET me in the next place speak by way of comfort. Christian, has God given you a repenting heart, know these three things for your everlasting comfort.

1. Thy sins are pardoned. Pardon of sin circumscribes blessedness within it, (Psalm 32:1). Whom God pardons, he crowns, Psalm 1[illegible]3. 4. Who forgivs your iniquities, who crowns you with loving kindness. A repenting condition is a pardoned condition. Christ said to that weeping woman, Thy sins which are many are forgiven, (Luke 7:47). Pardons are sealed upon soft hearts: O you whose head has been a fountain to weep for sin, Christs side will be a fountain to wash away sin, (Zechariah 13:1). Hast you repented? God looks upon you as if you hadst not offended; he becomes a friend, a father; he will now bring forth the best Robe, and put it on you: God is pacified towards you, and will with the Father of the Prodigal, fall upon your neck and kiss you. Sin in Scripture is compared to a cloud, (Isaiah 44:22). No sooner is this cloud scattered by Repentance, but pardoning love shines forth. Paul, af-

ter his Repentance, obtained mercy, 1 (Timothy 1:16). [illegible], I was all bestowed with mercy. When a spring of Repentance is open in the heart, a spring of mercy is open in Heaven.

2. God will pass an Acts of Oblivion; he so forgives sin, as he forgets, (Jeremiah 31:34). I will remember their sin no more. Hast you been penitentially humbled? the Lord will never upbraid you with your former sins. After Peter wept, we never read that Christ upbraid[illegible]d him with his denial of him. God has cast your sins into the depth of the Sea, (Micah 7:19). How? not as Cork, but as Lead. The Lord will never in a judicial way account for them. God when he pardons, does as a Creditor that blots the debt out of his Book, (Isaiah 43:25). *. Some move the question, whether the sins of the godly shall be mentioned at the last day? The Lord says, he will not remember them; and he is blotting them out: So that if their sins be mentioned, it shall not be to their prejudice, for the debt-book is crossed.

3. Conscience will now speak peace. O the musick of conscience! Conscience is turned into a paradise, and there a Christian does sweetly solace himself, and pluck the flowers of joy, 2 (Corinthians 1:12). The repenting sinner can go to God with boldness in prayer, and look upon him not as a Judge, but a Father. He is born of God, and is heir to a Kingdom, (Luke 6:20). He is incircled with Promises; he no sooner shakes the tree of the Promise, but some fruit falls.

To conclude, the true penitentiary may look on death with comfort; his life has been a life of tears, and now at death all tears shall be wiped away Death shall not be a destruction, but a Gaol-delivery. Thus you see what great comfort remains for repenting

sinners. Luther said, before his conversion he could not endure that bitter word Repentance, but afterwards he found much sweetness in it.

CHAPTER 14: THE RESOLVING OF A QUESTION



Some may propound a question, Whether must our Repentance and sorrow be alwaies alike?

A. Though Repentance must be alwaies kept alive in the soul, yet there are two special times in which we must renew our Repentance in an extraordinary manner.

1. Before the receiving of the Lords Supper. This spiritual Passeover is to be eaten with bitter herbs. Now our eyes should be fresh broached with tears, and the stream of sorrow overflow. A repenting frame is a sacramental frame. A broken heart, and a broken Christ, do well agree. The more bitterness we taste in sin, the more sweetness we shall taste in Christ. When Jacob wept, he found God; And he called the name of the place Peniel, for I have seen God face to face, Genesis 32, 30. The way to find Christ comfortably in the Sacrament, is to go weeping thither. Christ will say to an humble penitent, as to Thomas, Reachhither your hand, and thrust it into my side, and let those bleeding wounds of mine heal you.

Another time of extraordinary Repentance is, at the hour of death. This should be [illegible], a weeping season. Now is our last work to be done for Heaven, and our best wine of tears should be kept against such a time. We should repent now, that we have sinned so much, and wept so little that Gods bag has been so full, and his bottle so empty. We should repent now, that we repented no sooner: that the garrisons of our hearts, held out so long against God, ere they were levelled by Repentance. We should repent now, that we have loved Christ no more; that we have fetched no more virtue from him, and brought no more glory to him. It should be our grief on our death-bed, that our lives have had so many blanks and blots in them; that our duties have been so fly-blown with sin; that our obedience has been so imperfect, and we have gone so lame in the waies of God. When the soul is going out of the body, it should swim to Heaven in a Sea of tears.

CHAPTER 15: REMOVING THE IMPEDIMENTS OF REPENTANCE



Before I lay down the Expedients and Means conducing to Repentance, I shall first remove the Impediments. In this great City, when you want water, you search the cause, whether the Pipes are broken or stopped, that the current of water is hindered: So when no water of Repentance comes (though we have the Conduit-pipes of Ordinances) see what the cause is; where is the stop that these penitential waters do not run. There are ten Impediments of Repentance.

1. Men do not apprehend that they need Repentance; they thank God all is well with them, and they know nothing they should repent of, (Revelation 3:17). Thou sayest, I am rich, and have need of nothing. He who apprehends not any distemper in his body, will not take the physic prescribed. This is the mischief sin has done; it has not only made us sick, but senseless. When the Lord bade the people return to him, they answered stubbornly, Wherein should we return? (Malachi 3:7). So when God bids men repent, they say, wherefore should they repent? they know nothing they have done amiss. Surely no disease worse than that which is Apoplectical.

2. People conceit it an easie thing to repent: It is but saying a few prayers; a sigh, or a Lord have mercy, and the work is done. This conceit of the easiness of Repentance, is a great hinderance to it. That which makes a person bold, and adventrous in sin, must needs obstruct Repentance; but this opinion does make a person bold in sin. The Angler can let out his line as far as he will, and then pull it in again: So when a man thinks he can lash out in sin as far as he will, and then pull in by Repentance when he list, this must needs imbolden him in wickedness. But to take away this false conceit of the easiness of Repentance, consider, 1. A wicked man has a mountain of guilt upon him, and is it easie to rise up under such a weight? Is salvation per saltum? Can a man jump out of sin into Heaven? Can he leap out of the Devils arms into Abrahams bosom? 2. If all the power in a sinner be employed against Repentance, then it is not easie. All the faculties of a natural man joyn issue with sin, (Jeremiah 2:25). I have loved strangers, and after them will I go. A sinner will rather lose Christ and Heaven, than his lusts: death, which parts man and wife, will not part a wicked man and his sins; and is it so easie to repent? The Angel rolled away the stone from the Sepulchre; but no Angel, only God himself can roll away the stone from the the heart.

3. Presuming thoughts of Gods mercy. Many suck poison from this sweet flower. Christ who came into the world to save sinners, 1 (Timothy 1:15). is accidentally the occasion of many a mans perishing. Though to the Elect he is the bread of life, yet to the wicked he is [illegible], a stone of stumbling, 1 (Peter 2:7). * To some his blood is sweet wine, to others the water of Marah. Some are softened by this Sun of Righteousness, others are hardned. Oh says one, Christ has died, he has done all for me, therefore I may sit

still and do nothing. Thus they suck death from the Tree of Life, and perish by a Saviour. So I may say of Gods mercy, it is accidentally the cause of many a ones ruine: Because of mercy men presume, and think they may go on in sin: But, should a Kings clemency make his subjects rebel? The Psalmist says, there is mercy with God, that he may be feared, (Psalm 130:4). but not that we may sin. Can men expect mercy by provoking justice? God will hardly shew them mercy, who sin because mercy abounds.

4. A supine sluggish temper. Repentance is looked upon as a tedious thing, and such as requires much industry, and men are settled upon their lees, and care not to stir: They had rather go sleeping to Hell, than weeping to Heaven, (Proverbs 19:24). A slothful man hids his hands in his bosom; he will not be at the labor of smiting on his breast. Many will rather lose Heaven, than ply the oar, and row thither upon the waters of Repentance. We cannot have the world *citra pulverem*, without labor and diligence, and would we have that which is more excellent ? Sloth is the canker of the soul, (Proverbs 19:15). Slothfulness casts into a deep sleep. It was a witty fiction of the Poets, when Mercury had cast Argus into a sleep, and with an enchanted Rod closed his eyes, then he killed him. When Satan has by his witcheries lull'd men asleep in sloth, then he destroyes them. Some report, while the Crockadil sleeps with his mouth open, the Indian Rat gets into his belly, and eats up his entrails: So while men sleep in security, they are devoured.

5. Another obstruction of Repentance is the tickling pleasure of sin, [illegible]Thes. 2. 12. Who take pleasure in unrighteousness. Sin is a sugred draught, but mixed with poison. The sinner thinks there is danger in sin, but there is delight, and the danger does not

so terrifie him, as the delight bewitchs him. Plato calls love of sin, a great Devil. Delighting in sin hardens the heart. In true Repentance there must be a grieving for sin; but how can one grieve for that which he loves. He who delights in sin can hardly pray against it; his heart is so inveagled with sin, that he is afraid of leaving it too soon. Sampson doted on Dalilahs beauty, and her lap proved his grave. When a man rolls iniquity as a Sugared lump under his tongue, it infatuates him, and is his death at last. Delight in sin is a silken [〈1 page duplicate〉] [〈1 page duplicate〉] halter, 2 (Samuel 2:26). Will it not be bitterness in the latter end?

6. An opinion that Repentance will take away our joy; but that is a mistake; it does not crucifie, but clarifie our joy, and take it off from the fulsom lees of sin. What is all earthly joy? it is but Hilaris insania, a pleasant phrensy.

—Falsa inter gaudia noctem [illegible]—

Worldly mirth is but like a feigned laugh; it has sorrow following at the heels. As the Magitians Rod, it is instantly turned into a Serpent: But divine Repentance like Sampsons Lion, has an honycomb in it. Gods Kingdom consists as well in joy, as in righteousness, (Romans 4:17). None are so truly cheerful as penitent ones.

—Est quaedam flere voluptas—

The oyl of joy is poured chiefly into a broken heart, (Isaiah 61:3). The oyl of joy for mourning. In the fields near Palermo, grow great plenty of Reeds, in which there is a sweet juice of which sugar is made: So in a penitent heart, which is the bruised Reed, grow the sugred joys of Gods Spirit. God turns the water of tears, into the juyce of the grape, which exhilerates and makes glad the heart. Who should rejoyce if not the repenting soul? he is heir to

all the Promises, and is not that matter of joy? God dwells in a contrite heart, and must there not needs be joy there? (Isaiah 55:17). I dwell with a contrite spirit, to revive the heart of the contrite ones. Repentance does not take away a Christians musick, but raises it a note higher, and makes it sweeter .

7. Another obstacle of Repentance is, despondency of mind. Oh says a sinner, it is a vain thing for me to set upon Repentance; my sins are of that magnitude, that there is no hope for me, (Jeremiah 18:11), 12. Return ye now every one from his evil way, and they said, there is no hope. Our sins are mountains, and how shall these ever be cast into the Sea? Where unbelief represents sin in its bloody colors, and God in his Judges Robes, the soul will sooner fly from him, than to him: This is dangerous: Other sins need mercy, but despair rejects mercy; it throws the cordial of Christs blood on the ground. Judas was not damned only for his treason and murder, but it was his distrust of Gods mercy destroyed him. Why should we entertain such hard thoughts of God? he has bowels of love to repenting sinners , (Joel 2:13). Mercy rejoyses over justice. Gods anger is not so hot, but mercy can cool it; nor so sharp, but mercy can sweeten it. God counts his mercy his glory, (Exodus 33:18), 19. We have some drops of mercy our selves, but God is the Father of mercies, who begets all the mercies that are in us. He is the God of bowels. No sooner do we mourn, but Gods heart melts: no sooner do our tears fall, but Gods repentings kinde, (Hosea 11:8). Say not then, there is no hope. Disband the army of your sins, and God will sound a retreat to his judgements. Remember, great sins have been swallowed up in the Sea of Gods

infinite compassions. Manasseh made the streets run with blood, yet when his [illegible] head was a fountain of tears, God grew propitious.

8. Hope of impunity. Men flatter themselves in sin and think God having spared them all this while, he never intends to punish; because the Assizes are put off therefore, surely there will be no Assizes, (Psalm 10:11). He has said in his heart, God has forgotten, he hides his face, he will never see it. The Lord indeed is long-suffering towards sinners, and would by his patience bribe them to Repentance, but here is their wretchedness, because he forbears to punish, they forbear to repent. Know, that the lease of Patience will soon be run out. There is a time when God says, My Spirit shall no longer strive. A creditor may forbear his debtor, but forbearance does not excuse the payment. God takes notice how long the glass of his patience has been running, (Revelation 2:21). I gave her space to repent, but she repented not. Iezabel added to her incontinency, impenitency, and what follows? verse 22. Behold I will cast her into a bed: Not a bed of pleasure, but a bed of languishing, where she shall consume away in her iniquity. The longer Gods Arrow is drawing, the deeper it wounds. Sins against patience, will make a mans Hell so much the hotter

The next Impediment of Repentance, is, fear of reproach: If I repent, I shall expose my self to mens scorns. The Heathen man could say, when you appliest your self to the study of wisdom, prepare for sarcasms and reproaches. But consider well who they are that reproach you: they are such as are ignorant of God, and spiritually phrantick; and art you troubled to have them reproach you, who are not well in their wits? who minds a mad mans laughing at him?

What do the wicked reproach you for? is it because you repent? you are doing your duty; bind their reproaches as a Crown about your head. 'Tis better that men should reproach you for repenting, than that God should damn you for not repenting.

3. If you can not bear a reproach for Religion, never call your self Christian; Christianus quasi crucianus. Suffering is a Saints livery; and alas what are reproaches? they are but the chips of the Cross; which are rather to be despised, than laid to heart .

10. The last Impediment of Repentance, is, immoderate love of the world. No wonder Ezekiels hearers were hardned into rebellion, when their heart went after covetousness, Ezok. 33. 31. The world does so engross mens time, and bewitch their affections, that they cannot repent; they had rather put gold in their bag, than tears in Gods bottle. I have read of the Turks, that they mind neither Churches, nor Altars, but are diligent in looking after their tillage. So many scarce ever mind Repentance; they are more for the Plough, and breaking of the clods, than breaking up the fallow ground of their hearts. The Thorns choke the word. We read of them who were invited to Christs Supper, who put him off with worldly excuses, (Luke 14:18). One said, I have bought a piece of ground, and must needs go see it, I pray you have me excused; and another, I have bought five yoke of Oxen, &c. The farm and the shop so take up peoples time, that they have no leisure for their souls : Their golden weights hinder their silver tears. There is an Herb in the Country of Sardinia, like Baulm, which if they eat much of, will make them die laughing: Such an herb (or rather weed) is the world, if men eat too immoderately of it, instead of

dying repenting, they will die laughing. These are the obstructions of Repentance which must be removed, that the current may be clearer.

CHAPTER 16: PRESCRIBING SOME MEANS FOR REPENTANCE



I Shall in the last place prescribe some Rules or Means conducive to Repentance.

1. The first is serious consideration,(Psalm 119:59). I thought on my waies, and turned my feet to your testimonies. The Prodigal, when he came to himself, and did seriously consider his riotous luxuriances, then he repented. Peter, when he thought of Christs words, wept. There are four things, which if they were well considered of, would be a means to make us break off a course of sinning.

1. Consider seriously what sin is; and sure there is enough evil in it to make us repent: There are in sin these twenty Evils.

1. Every sin is a recession from God , (Jeremiah 2:5). God is the supream good, and our blessedness lyes in union with him; but sin, like a strong byass, draws away the heart from God. The sinner takes his leave of God; he bids farewell to Christ and mercy. Every step forward in sin, is a step backward from God, (Isaiah 1:4). They have forsaken the Lord, they are gone away backward.

The further one goes from the Sun, the nearer he approaches to darkness: the further the soul goes from God, the nearer it approach to misery.

2. Sin is a walking contrary to God, Levit. 26. 27. The same word in the Hebrew * signifies both to commit sin, and to rebel. Sin is Gods opposite: If God be of one mind, sin will be of another: If God says sanctifie the Sabbath, sin says, prophane it. Sin strikes at Gods very being: If sin could help it, God should be no longer God, (Isaiah 30:11). Cause the holy One of Israel to cease from before us. What an horrible thing is this, for a piece of proud dust, to rise up in defiance against its maker!

3. Sin is an injury to God. For 1. It violates his Laws; here is *crimen laesae majestatis*. What greater injury can be offered to a Prince, than to trample upon his royal edicts? A sinner offers contempt to the Statute-Laws of Heaven, Nehem. 9. 26. They have cast your Law behind their back; as if they scorned to look upon it.

2. Sin robs God of his due. You injure a man when you do not give him his due. The soul belongs to God, he laies a double claim to it; it is his by creation and purchase: now sin steals the soul from God, and gives the Devil that which of right belongs to God.

4. Sin is profound ignorance. The School-men say, All sin is founded in ignorance; did men know God in his purity and justice, they durst not go on in a course of sinning, (Jeremiah 9:3). They proceed from evil to evil, and know not me, says the Lord. Therefore ignorance and lust are joyned together, 1 (Peter 1:14). Ignorance is the womb of lust. vapors arise most in the night: The black vapors of sin arise most in a dark ignorant soul. Satan casts a mist before a sinner, that he sees not the flaming sword of Gods

wrath. The Eagle first rolls himself in the sand, and then flies at the Stag, and by fluttering his wings, so bedusts the Stag's eyes, that he cannot see, and then he strikes him with his talons : So Satan that Eagle or Prince of the Air first blinds men with ignorance , and then wounds them with his darts of temptation. Is sin ignorance? there's great cause to repent of ignorance.

5. Sin is a piece of desperateness. In every transgression, a man runs an apparent hazard of his soul; he treads upon the brink of the bottomless pit. Foolish sinner, you never committest a sin, but you do that which may undo your soul for ever . He who drinks poison, it is a wonder if it does not cost him his life. One taste of the forbidden tree lost Adam Paradise: One sin of the Angels lost them Heaven: One sin of Saul lost him his Kingdom. The next sin you committest, God may clap you up prisoner among the damned. Thou that gallopest on in sin, it is a question whether God will spare your life a day longer, or give you an heart to repent, so that you are desperate even to phrensy.

6. Sin is a befilthy thing; it is called [illegible], filthiness, (James 1:21). The Greek word signifies the putrid matter of ulcers. Sin is called [illegible], an abomination,(Deuteronomy 7:25). Nay, in the plural, abominations*, (Deuteronomy 20:18). This filthiness in sin is inward: a spot in the face may easily be wiped off; but to have the liver and lungs tainted, is far worse: Such a pollution is sin, it has gotten into the mind and conscience, (Titus 1:15). 'Tis compared to a menstruous cloth, (Isaiah 30:22). The most unclean thing under the Law A sinners heart is like a field spread with dung. Some think sin an ornament, it is rather an excrement. So does sin befilthy a person, that God cannot abide the sight of him, (Zechariah 11:8). My soul loathed them.

7. In sin is odious ingratitude. God has [illegible]ed you (O sinner) with Angels food; he has crowned you with variety of mercies, yet dost you go on in sin? As David said of Nabal, in vain have I kept this mans sheep, 1 (Samuel 25:21) So in vain has God done so much for the sinner. All Gods mercies may upbraid, yea accuse the ungrateful person. May God say, I gave you wit, health, riches, and you have imployed all these against me, (Hosea 2:8). I gave them corn, and wine, and oyl, and multiplied their silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal. I sent in provisions, and they served their Idols with them. The Snake in the fable which was frozen, stung him that brought it to the fire, and gave it warmth: So a sinner goes about to sting God with his own mercies. Is this your kindness to your friend? Did God give you life to sin? Did he give you wages to serve the Devil?

8. Sin is a debasing thing; it degrades a person of his honor, (Nahum 1:14). I will make your grave, for you are vile. This was spoken of a King ; he was not vile by birth, but by sin: Sin blots our name, taints our blood: nothing does so change a mans glory into shame, as sin does. 'Tis said of Naaman, He was a great man and honorable, but he was a leper, 2 (Kings 5:1). Let a man be never so great with worldly Pomp, yet if he be wicked, he is a leper in Gods eye. To boast of sin, is to boast of that which is our infamy; as if a Prisoner should boast of his fetters, or be proud of his halter.

9. Sin is a damage. In every sin there is infinite loss. Never did any thrive by grazing on this Common. What does one lose? he loss God, he loss his peace, he loss his soul. The soul is a divine spark lighted from Heaven; it is the glory of the Creation; and

what can countervail this loss Matth. 16. 26. If the soul be gone, the treasure is gone; so that in sin there is infinite loss. Sin is such a trade, that whosoever follows it is sure to break.

10. Sin is a burthen, (Psalm 38:4). My iniquities are gone over my head, as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me. The sinner goes with his weights and fetters on him. The burden of sin is ever worst, when it is least felt. Sin is a burden where-ever it comes. Sin burdens God, (Amos 2:3). I am pressed with your sins, as a Cart is pressed under the sheaves. Sin burdens the soul; what a weight did Spira feel? how was Judas his conscience burdened? insomuch that he hanged himself to quiet his conscience. They that know what sin is, will repent that they carry such a burden.

11. Sin is a debt: 'Tis compared to a debt of ten thousand talents, (Matthew 18:24). Of all the debts we owe, our sins are the worst. In other debts a sinner may fly into forein parts, but here he cannot, (Psalm 139:7). Whither shall I fly from your presence? God knows where to find out all his debtors. Death frees a man from other debts, but it will not free him from this: not the death of the debtor, but of the creditor dischargs this debt.

10. There is deceitfulness in sin, (Hebrews 3:13). (Proverbs 11:18). The wicked works a deceitful work. Sin is a meer cheat: while it pretends to please us, it beguiles us. Sin does as Iaell, first she brought the milk and butter to Sisera, then she struck the nail thorow his temples that he died, Judges. 5. 26. Sin first courts, and then kills: 'Tis first a Fox, and then a Lion: Whomsoever sin kisses, it betraies. Those Locusts in the Revelations, are the perfect Hieroglyphicks and emblems of sin; On their heads were as it were Crowns like gold, and they had hair as women, and their tes were as the tes of Lions, and they had stings in their tails,

(Revelation 9:7). Sin does just as the Usurer, who feeds a man with money, and then makes him mortgage his Land: So sin feeds the sinner with delightful objects, and then makes him mortgage his soul. Judas pleased himself with the thirty pieces of silver, but they proved deceitful riches; ask him now how he likes his bargain.

13. Sin is a spiritual sickness: One man is sick of pride, another of lust, another of malice: 'Tis with a sinner, as it is with a sick Patient, his pallat is distempered; the sweetest things taste bitter to him: So the word of God which is sweeter than the honey-comb, tastes bitter to a sinner, (Isaiah 5:20). They put sweet for bitter; and if sin be a disease, it is not to be cherished, but rather cured by Repentance.

14. Sin is a bondage; it binds a man Apprentice to the Devil . Of all conditions, servitude is the worst. Every man is held with the cords of his own sin. I was held before conversion (says Austin) not with an Iron Chain, but with the obstinacy of my will. Sin is imperious and tyrannical; it is called [illegible], a Law, (Romans 8:2), because it has such a binding power over a man. The sinner must do as sin will have him: He does not so much enjoy his lusts as serve them; and he will have work enough to do to gratifie them all , Eccles. 10. 7. I have seen Princes going on foot. The soul that princely thing, which did once sit in a chair of State, and was crowned with knowledge and holiness, now is made a lacky to sin, and runs on the Devils errand.

15. Sin has a spreading malignity in it; it does not only hurt to a mans self, but to others: one mans sin may occasion many to sin. As one Beacon being lighted, may occasion all the Beacons in the Country to be lighted. One man may help to defile many . A person that has the plague, going into company, does not know how many

have gotten the plague of him. Thou that art guilty of open sins, knowest not how many have been infected by you . There may be divers for ought you knowest, now in Hell, crying out, that they had never come thither, if it had not been for your bad example.

16. Sin is a vexatious thing; it brings trouble with it. The curse which God laid upon the woman, is most truly laid upon every sinner, (Genesis 3:6). In sorrow you shalt bring forth. A man vexs his thoughts in plotting of sin; and when sin has conceived, in sorrow he brings forth: Like one who takes a great deal of pains in opening a flood-gate, and when he has opened it, the flood comes in upon him, and drowns him: So a man beats his brains to contrive sin, and then it vexs his conscience , brings crosses in his estate, rots the wall and timber of his house, (Zechariah 5:4).—

16. Sin is an absurd thing. What greater indiscretion than to gratifie an enemy? Sin gratifies Satan. When lust or anger burn in the soul, Satan warms himself at this fire. Mens sins feast the Devil . Sampson was called out to make the Lords of the Philistines sport, Judges. 16. 25. So the sinner makes the Devil sport. 'Tis meat and drink to him to see men sin How does he laugh to see them venturing their souls for the world! As if one should venture Diamonds for Straws; or should fish for Gudgeons with golden hooks. Every wicked man shall be indicted at the day of judgement for a fool.

18. There is cruelty in every sin. Every sin you committest, you givest a stab to your soul . While you are kind to sin, you are cruel to your self; like him in the Gospel, who did cut himself with stones till the blood came, (Mark 5:5). The sinner is like the Jaylor,

who drew a sword to kill himself. (Acts 16:27). The soul may cry out, I am murdering. Naturalists say, the Hawk chuss to drink blood, rather than water : So sin drinks the blood of souls.

19. Sin is a spiritual death, Ephes. 2. 1. Dead in trespasses. Austin says, that before his conversion, reading the death of Dido, he could not refrain weeping; but wretch that I was (says he) I bewailed the death of Dido forsaken of Aeneas, and did not bewail the death of my soul forsaken of God . The life of sin is the death of the soul. 1. A dead man has no sense: So a person unregenerate has no sense of God in him, Ephes. 4. 19. persuade him to mind his salvation, to what purpose do you make orations to a dead man? go to reprove him for vice, to what purpose do you strike a dead man? 2. He who is dead has no taste. Set a banquet before him, he does not relish it: So a sinner tastes no sweetness in Christ or a Promise: They are but as cordials in a dead mans mouth . 3. The dead putrifie; and if Martha said of Lazarus, (John 11:39). Lord, by this time he stinks, for he has been dead four daies. How much more may we say of a wicked man, who has been dead thirty or forty years in sin, by this time he stinks.

20. Sin without Repentance tends to final damnation. As the Rose perishes by the canker bred in it self: so do men by the corruptions which breed in their souls. What was once said to the Graecians of the Trojan horse, this Engine is made to be the destruction of your City. The same may be said to every impenitent person, this Engine of sin will be the destruction of your soul. Sins last scene is alwaies Tragical. Diagoras Florentinus would in a frolick drink poison, but it cost him his life . Men drink the poison of sin in a merriment, but it costs them their souls, (Romans 6:23). The wages of sin is death. What Solomon says of wine, the same I

may say of sin; at first it shews its color in the cup, at the last it bits like a Serpent, and stings like an Adder, (Proverbs 23:31). Christ tells us of the worm and the fire, (Mark 9:48). Sin is like oyl, and Gods wrath is like fire. So long as the damned continue sinning, so long the fire will continue scorching; and who can dwell with everlasting burnings? (Isaiah 33:14). But men question the truth of this, and are like that impious Devonax, who being threatned with Hell for his villanies made a mock at it, and said, I will believe there is an Hell when I come there, and not before. We cannot make Hell enter into men, till they enter into Hell.

Thus we have seen the deadly evil in sin, which seriously thought on, may make us repent, and turn to God. If for all this, men will persist in sin, and are resolved upon a voyage to Hell, who can help it. They have been told what a soul-damning Rock sin is; but if they will voluntarily run upon it, and split themselves, their blood be upon their own head.

2. The second consideration to work Repentance, is, consider the mercies of God. A stone is soonest broken upon a soft pillow; and an heart of stone is soonest broken upon the soft pillow of Gods mercies, (Romans 2:4). The goodness of God leads you to Repentance. The clemency of a Prince does soonest cause relenting in a malefactor. While God has been storming others by his judgements, he has been wooing us by his mercies.

What privative mercies have we had? what mischiefs have been prevented? what fears blown over? When our foot has been slipping, Gods mercy has held us up. Mercy has been alwaies a screen between us and danger. When enemies like Lions have risen up against us to devour us, free-grace has snatched us out of

the mouth of these Lions. In the deepest waves, the arm of mercy has been under, and kept our head above water; and will not this privative mercy lead us to Repentance?

What positive mercies have we had! 1. Supplying mercy. God has been a bountiful benefactor, (Genesis 48:15). The God which fed me all my life long to this day. What man will spread a table for his enemy? we have been enemies, yet God has fed us; he has given us the horn of Oyl; he has made the hony-comb of mercy drop upon us. God has been as kind to us, as if we had been his best servants; and will not this supplying mercy lead us to Repentance?

2. Delivering mercy. When we have been at the gates of the grave, God has miraculously spun out our lives; he has turned the shadow of death into the morning, and has put a song of deliverance into our mouth; and will not delivering mercy lead us to Repentance? The Lord has labored to break our hearts with his mercies. We read Judges. 2.—When the Angel (which was a Prophet) had preached a Sermon of mercy, the people lifted up their voices and wept, vers 4. If any thing will move tears, it should be the mercy of God. He is an obstinate sinner indeed, whom these great Cable-Ropes of Gods mercy will not draw to Repentance.

3. Consider Gods afflictive providences, and see if our limbeck will not drop when the fire is put under. God has sent us of late years to the school of the cross; he has twisted his judgements together; he has made good upon us those two threatnings, (Hosea 5:12). I will be to Ephraim as a moth. Hath not God been so to England in decay of trading? And verse 14. I will be to Ephraim as a Lion. Hath he not been to England in the devouring Plague? Well, all this while God waited for our Repentance; but we went on

in sin, (Jeremiah 8:6). I hearkned and heard, but no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, what have I done? And of late God has been whipping us with a fiery Rod, in those tremendous flames in this City, which did hieroglyphically resemble the great Conflagration at the last day, when the Elements shall melt with fervent heat. When Iob's corn was on fire, then he went running to Absalom, 2 (Samuel 14:31). God has set our houses on fire, that we may run to him by Repentance, (Micah 6:9). The Lords voice cries to the City, Hear ye the Rod, and who has appointed it. This is the language of the Rod, that we should humble our selves under Gods mighty hand, and break off our iniquities by righteousness, (Daniel 4:27). Manassehs affliction ushered in Repentance, 2 (Chronicles 33:12). This God uss as the proper medicine for security, (Hosea 2:5). Her Mother has played the Harlot; that is, by idolatry. What course now will God take with her? verse 6. Therefore I will hedge up your way with thorns. This is Gods method, to set a thorn-hedge of affliction in the way. Thus to a proud man contempt is a thorn; to a lustful man sickness is a thorn, both to stop him in his sin, and to prick him for ward in Repentance.

The Lord teaches his people as Gideon did the men of Succoth, Judges. 8. 16. He took the Elders of the City, and thorns of the wilderness and briars, and with them he taught the men of Succoth. Here was tearing Rhetorick. So God has of late been teaching us humiliation by thorny providences: he has torn our golden fleece from us; he has brought our houses low, that he might bring our hearts low. When shall we dissolve into tears if not now? Gods judgements are so proper a means to work Repentance, that the Lord wonders at it, and makes it his com-

plaint, that his severity did not break men off from their sins, (Amos 4:7). I have with-holden the Rain from you, verse 9. I have smitten you with blasting and mildew, verse 10. I have sent among you the Pestilence; but still this is the burden of the complaint, Yet ye have not returned to me. The Lord proceeds gradually in his judgements: First he sends a lesser cross, and if that will not do, then a greater. He sends upon one first a gentle fit of an Ague, and afterwards a burning Feaver. He sends upon another first a loss at Sea, then the loss of a child, then an husband. Thus by degrees he would try to bring men to Repentance. Sometimes God makes his judgements go in circuit, from family to family. The cup of affliction has gone round in the Nation, all have tasted it; and if we repent not now, we stand in a contempt of God, and do interpretatively bid God do his worst; and such a climax of wickedness will hardly be pardoned, (Isaiah 22:12), 13. In that day did the Lord of Hosts call to weeping and mourning, and behold joy and gladness; It was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of Hosts, surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till you dye: That is, this sin shall not be expiated by sacrifice. If the Romans did severely punish a young man who was seen sporting in a window with a Crown of Roses on his head in time of public Calamity: of how much sorer punishment shall they be thought worthy, who strengthen themselves in wickedness, and laugh in the very face of Gods judgements. The Heathen Mariners in a storm repented, Jonah 1. 14. Not to repent now and throw our sins over-board, is to be worse than Heathens.

4. Let us consider how much we shall have to answer for at last, if we repent not. How many prayers, counsels, admonitions, will be put upon the score. Every Sermon will come in as an

Indictment. As for such as have truly repented, Christ will answer for them; his blood will wash away their sins; the mantle of free-grace will cover them, (Jeremiah 50:20). In those daies says the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none, and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found. Those who have judged themselves in the lower Court of Conscience, shall be acquitted in the High Court of Heaven: but if we repent not, our sins must be accounted all for at the last day; and we must answer for them in our own persons, and have no counsel allowed to plead for us. Now O impenitent sinner, think with your self how you will be able to look your Judge in the face; you have a damned cause to plead, and wilt be sure to be cast at the bar, Job 31. 14. What then shall I do when God riss up? and when he visits, what shall I answer him? Either therefore now repent, or else provide your answers, and see what defense you can make for your selves when you come before Gods Tribunal; but when God riss up, how will you answer him?

2. The second help to Repentance, is, a prudent comparison: Compare the penitent and impenitent condition together, and see the difference: Spread them before your eyes, and by the light of the word see the impenitent condition most deplorable, and the penitent most comfortable. How sad was it with the Prodigal before he returned to his Father! he had spent all; he had sinned himself into beggary, and he had nothing left but a few husks; he was fellowcommoner with the Swine; but when he came home to his Father, then nothing was thought too good for him. Then the Robe was brought forth to cover him, and the Ring to adorn him, and the fatted Calf to feast him. If the sinner continues in his impenitency, then farewell Christ and mercy; but if he repent, then

immediately he has an Heaven within him; then Christ is his, then all is peace. He may sing a requiem to his soul, and say, Soul, take your ease, you have much goods laid up. Upon our turning to God, we have more restored to us in Christ, than ever we lost in Adam. God says to the repenting soul, I will clothe you with the Robe of Righteousness, I will enrich you with the jewels and graces of my [illegible]pirit, I will bestow my love upon you, will give you a Kingdom; Son, all I [illegible]ave is yours. O my friends, do but [illegible]ompare your estate before Repentance, [illegible]nd after Repentance together. Before [illegible]our repenting, there are nothing but [illegible]louds to be seen and storms; clouds in Gods face, and storms in conscience; but [illegible]fter repenting, how is the weather al[illegible]ered! what sun-shine above! what se[illegible]ene calmness within! a Christians soul [illegible]eing like the Hill Olympus, all light and [illegible]lear, and no winds blowing.

3. A third means conducive to Re[illegible]entance, is, a settled determination to [illegible]eave sin; not a faint velleity, but a resolved vow, (Psalm 119:106). I have sworn [illegible]hat I will keep your righteous judgements. All the delights and artifices of sin shall not make me forsworn. There must be no haesitation, no consulting with flesh and blood; had I best leave my sin or no? But as Ephraim, (Hosea 14:8). What have I to do any more with Idols? I will be [illegible]gulled no more by my sins, no longer fool'd by Satan; this day I will put a bill of divorce into the hands of my lusts. Till we come to this peremptory resolution, sin will get ground of us, and we shall never be able to shake off this Viper. No wonder if he be conquered by sin, who is not resolved to be an enemy to it.

But this resolution must be built upon the strength of Christ more than our own; it must be an humble resolution . As David when he went against Goliah, he put off his presumptuous confidence, as well as his armour, [illegible](Samuel 17:45). I come to you in the name of the Lord. So we must go out against our Goliahlusts in the strength of Christ. 'Tis usual for a person to joyn another in the bond with him: So being conscious of our own inability to leave sin, let us get Christ to be bound with us, and engage his strength for the mortifying of corruption.

4. The fourth means is earnest supplication. The Heathens laid one of their hands on the Plough; the other they lifted up to Ceres the goddess of Corn. So when we have used the means, let us look up to God for a blessing; pray to him for a repenting heart Thou Lord who bidst me repent, give me grace to repent . Pray that our hearts may be holy limbecks dropping tears; beg of Christ to give to us such a look of love as he did to Peter, which made him go out and weep bitterly: Implore the help of Gods Spirit; 'tis the Spirits smiting on the Rocks of our hearts, that makes the waters gush out, (Psalm 147:18). He causss his wind to blow, and the waters flow. When the wind of Gods Spirit blows, then the water of tears will flow.

Good reason we should go to God for Repentance, 1. Because it is his gift, (Acts 11:18). Then has God also to the Gentiles granted Repentance to life. The Arminians hold, that it is in our power to repent. We can harden our hearts, but we cannot soften them. This Crown of Free-will is fallen from our head: nay, there is in us not only impotency, but obstinacy, (Acts 7:51). Therefore beg of God a repentant spirit; he can make the stony heart bleed; his word is *verbum creativum*, with his command he gives power.

2. We must have recourse to God for this blessing, because he has promised to bestow it, (Ezekiel 36:26). I will give you an heart of flesh. I will soften your Adamant hearts in my Sons blood: shew God his hand and seal: and there is another gracious promise, (Jeremiah 24:7). They shall return to me with their whole heart. Turn this promise into a prayer; Lord give me grace to return to you with my whole heart.

5. Endeavour after clearer discoveries of God, Job 42. 5. Now mine eye sees you; wherefore I abhor my self and repent in dust and ashes. Job having surveyed Gods glory and purity, as an humble penitent he did abhor, or as it is in the Hebrew, he did even reprobate himself*. By looking into the transparent glass of Gods holiness, we see our own blemishes, and so learn to bewail them.

6. Lastly, labor for Faith; but what is that to Repentance? Yes, Faith breeds union with Christ, and there can be no separation from sin, till there be union with Christ. The eye of Faith looks on mercy, and that thaws the heart. Faith carries us to Christs blood, and that blood mollifies. Faith persuades of the love of God, and that love sets us a weeping.

Thus I have laid down the means or helps to Repentance: What remains now, but that we set upon the work; and let us be in earnest, not as Fencers, but Warriors. I will conclude all with that of the Psalmist, (Psalm 126:6). He that goes forth and weeps, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

THANKS FOR READING



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