

S E R M O N.

(For Substance)

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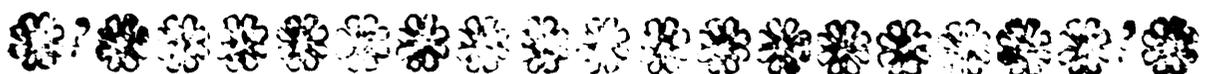
L E B A N O N,

J U N E 22, 1760.



By Timothy Allen, A. M.

And Pastor, &c. in *Ashford*.



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R O M A N S VI. 23.

T H E Wages of Sin is Death.

THE great Apostle in this Chapter persuades the believing Romans unto holy living; and for that Purpose draws an Argument, from the intended efficacy of the christian Sacrifice, and Resurrection. 10. & 11. Verses, of this Import, viz. As your dear Lord and Master, died once unto Sin, but from that Time, is wholly and solely alive unto God; So ye also, through him, ought to be wholly dead to the Government of Sin; (and indeed ye are so, if ye are truly his, as ye profess to be) and alive unto God, that ye may be Servants of Righteousness. For to be freed from the Law, which commanded holy Lives as a Medium of our own Salvation, is not to be lawless, or free from Obligations to be holy: for know ye not that his Servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of Law unto Death, or of Obedience unto Righteousness. 15 and 16 Verses.

And having hinted the Notion of an indentured Servant, as expressive of their former Subjection to the Dominion and Master-hand of Sin; as well as of their later Obedience unto Righteousness; he relations

reasons from Equity, thus, ye ought to be, in all Reason, as free from serving Sin now, since ye have commenced Servants of Righteousness, as ye used to be from serving Righteousness, when ye were wholly Slaves to Sin. 18 to 20 verse.

B. Aies, what good did Sin ever do you? You yielded a long and tedious Service to its Government, what valuable Consideration, did you ever receive for it? Your new Master, Righteousness, or Holiness, rewards you every Day for your honest faithful Services, and by that as a Pledge secures everlasting Happiness: but no such Benefit of your old Servitude; nay as far from it, as Misery from Beneficence. *For the Wages of Sin is Death.* Why then will ye serve Sin any longer?

Now I shall endeavour to open these Words a little further to your Apprehension; and then propose the Doctrine of them to be supported and improved.

1. The Notion of Wages in this Text is a Metaphor taken from the Case of a Person who has engaged punctually to perform such a Service, for such a certain Reward. Now when the Service is done according to Covenant between the Parties; that Reward, as that Labourers Wages, becomes his due; he has done what he was to do for those Wages exactly; now the Wages in a line of right are his own; there is no separating him from that Right. A common Labourer may be defrauded, may be kept out of Right, but he nevertheless his Right. And if there were no civil statute to prevent a Suit at Law upon,

Accounts

Account: ~~of~~ contracts of so ancient Date, (which the Law ~~is~~ more for very good Reasons has made.) but were ~~it~~ not done, but the Nature of Right in the Case were simply to govern, if the Labourer is kept out of his Reward (lawfully due, and to be proved) all his Days, his Successor in Law might bring his suit for it; for the Right is still the same, and must remain so, to the thousandth Generation; nothing can solve it but making good the Damage, or full Payment, as long as Parties are to be found. Such is the Case the Apostle alludes to, when he says, The Wages due to Sin's Servants, is Death. And as there is no such Thing, as vacating Rights, in the Kingdom of God, and management of his Affairs; so of course where Service is done for Wages, the Hire will come, because it is intolva- bly connected with the Service done, and a Right to it flows out of the Nature of such Service. So when the Scripture says the Soul that sins *shall die*, 'tis not to be understood, *merely* or *properly* as a sovereign Decree of the heavenly Court, for doubt- less that *Being* of most perfect moral Perfection and Goodness, never denounced Sentence against any, merely because he would but because it was the Sin- ners Right, and was due to him, from the Na- ture of the Case. A God must indeed dispense Mercies *as a Sovereign*; but shall he be thought ever to inflict Penalties merely as such? But then the grand Reason why Sin should ever be followed by Death, is because it is Sin, the Nature of Sin is such as makes Death absolutely inevitable; and this is exactly the Notion of the Metaphor in the **Text.**

2. Let me ask, what Sin has this dire Consequence involved in its very Nature? Ay, what Sin has Death for its Wages, its natural Reward? You may have heard a Papist talk of a Distinction of Sins, into mortal and venial; but venial signifies pardonable, and if there was no Death in its Nature, what need to be pardoned? Shall we then allow the Heavenly Oracle to determine? well that says, *the Soul that sins shall die.* Ezek. 18 4. 20. Does it say how great Sins, or how small, or how many, shall expose to this Consequence? Nothing of it. All Sin, is Sin, therefore all Sin has Death for its Wages. And so,

The Doctrine to be supported and improved is, this, viz.

The natural Demerit of all Sin is Death.

And here let us enquire a little more particularly.

I. *What Sin is, of which such fearful Things are affirmed?*

II. *What is that Death, that is said to be the natural Demerit of such Sin?*

III. *Prove that such Death can't but be so the Consequence of sin, and then apply the whole.*

I. *What shall we understand by sin, whose native Demerit is Death.* Many will perhaps, be ready to say, surely this Enquiry need not engage our Attention long, for who don't know that Sin is a Transgression of the Law of God? And 'tis to be feared, that this is all the Notion multitudes have
of

of Sin; that it is, speaking or acting, contrary to the Law of God. Some more thoughtful Persons, would bring into the Account, mental Actions, that is, Thoughts, and then imagine the Definition is quite compleat. This is one of the most destructive and dangerous Mistakes in the World. It lies at the Foundation, of some of the most troublesome, as well as the most surely damning Mistakes in all the Affairs of Religion. Hence such multitudes terminate their chief religious Concern, not in obtaining a new Heart, or being renewed in the Spirit of their Mind, but in reforming and regulating their outward Actions. This is the Reason why we may long press the nature and absolute Necessity of Regeneration and the new Creature, and yet still, the Hearers seem to conceive that the Object of Attention is merely practical; we urge internal Considerations, they stick in External ones, for there they have always supposed was their chief Wound, and there they chiefly desire and expect to see the Cure. This is the grand Reason why so many in our Churches and Congregations, after they have tolerably reformed their outward Lives are so extremely hard to be moved to any Thing further; why they seem to say within themselves, it can't be, that I am in such Danger, why what Sin do I commit? Can any Mortal charge me with a sinful Course? And don't I perform all the Duties of Religion? What would the Minister be after, he is sure he can't be in great Danger, as long as he is so free from Sin? Surely the great God looks upon me, says he, with a more smiling Countenance

stance than these Men, who are restless after some-
 thing, I know not what. This Notion, that Sin
 consists in an actual Transgression of the Law,
 makes people secure and easy about their Souls,
 when they think their outward Life is according to
 the Letter of the Law; it blinds them to the De-
 formity of their Hearts, hardens them against the
 Terrors of the Law; fills them with Prejudice a-
 gainst the Gospel Way of Salvation, because they
 are not allowed to stand as fair for its Blessings as
 any, when they are as free from Sin as any, in their
 View of Sin. It fixes false Hope, settles down
 the Sinner short of Safety, morally disables him
 for Compliance with the Gospel, and in every View
 directly militates all the Designs of Redemption.
 I don't say actual Transgressions are so, *God*
forbid! *He that committeth sin is the Servant of*
Sin. John 8. 34. But who don't see the Absurdi-
 ty of saying that a Man is the Servant of his
 Actions? Yet this is the natural Implication of the
 Text, if Sin properly consists in actual Transgres-
 sion. 'Tis this defective Notion of Sin which in-
 clines so many People, who always oppose the
 Spirit of Christianity and true Religion, to dispute
 to me of the most essential Points of Gospel Doctrine:
 such as the Necessity of Conversion; our inability
 to good Works antecedent to it; the indwelling
 of the holy Spirit; Perseverance solely on the Foot
 of the Redeemer's Engagements, &c. and though
 you name the Texts where such Things are literal-
 ly contained from the Mouth of God, they will
 laugh at them. They know better, from their
own

own consciousness of sinful Lives. Tell them, in Tenderness, that, besides their outward good Lives, *except they are born again, they never can see the Kingdom of God*; and they will heartily scorn what you say, in the Face of God; for they know God wants nothing of them, but to be quite clear from Sin, &c. and that they are sure they be; at least, all but some Infirmities, and those doubtless Christ will forgive.

But it will be asked, pray what is Sin then? The Assembly of Divines have long since answered it; but 'tis doubtless a Fault to be lamented that they are so little understood; that Parents allow their Children so cursorily to recite their Catechism, without Deliberation, and proper understanding of its Import; by which they might receive vast Instruction, and a ready Solution of the most important Doubts which occur in their religious Course. The Assembly say, (and will not every one's deliberate Judgment say so too) that the first and principle Thing in which Sin consist, is a *want of Conformity to the Law of God*. And their mentioning actual Transgressions, which must in the Nature of Things, be close Consequences, upon a Want of Conformity, or inward Likeness to God and his Law, shows that they themselves designed to distinguish between what firstly, chiefly, and principally constitutes the Nature of Sin, and what is the Effect, Exertion, or Exercise and Produce of that malignant Principle. True, this Effect, or actual Transgressions, can't but be entirely of the same Nature of its Fountain in the Heart, or the

Nature and Temper of the sinful Soul ; but such Actions do no more constitute the Nature or Essence of Sin, than as Actions, they constitute the Essence of the Man.

But perhaps you will say the holy Apostle, 1 John 3. 4. says, *Sin is the Transgression of the Law*. But does he say that outward Actions are the proper Definition, or Description of such Transgression ? Such outward Actions are entirely sinful, and every one of them must, and will be punished with eternal Hell, unrepented off ; but then these may be vastly reformed, and yet the Agent, a Sinner complete, in the View of God, and the holy Law ; because of an entire Want of Conformity in his Heart & Temper of Mind ; for his Reformation may be, and very commonly is, from quite different motives & quite different Ends, in their Kind, from those which the Law proposes ; and so 'tis no Evidence of Conformity in the Eye of God and the Law. He is still the Person the Apostle describes in this Text, *o peccator* *ten Amartian*, who makes Sin, (not acts it as an Imitator) who practises it usually or habitually, or frames, or forges it, for just so the Word signifies. But all this supposes intente volition, and the Work of the Mind ; and such Sin is the most complete Transgression of the Law. Besides He says, he who so maketh Sin *ten anomian pecc*, maketh Difference, or Disagreement with the Law ; he differs from the Law in Principle and Sentiment ; and this is it, and chiefly constitutes the Crime of the Affair, for being such internally, the outward Act flows out directly counter to the Nature and De-
signo

sign of the Law; both together, is just what he calls, committing Sin. Hence the godly Man he says, 3 verse. *agnizei eauton*, makes himself chaste, and uncorrupt, or pure and innocent; but these are predicates of the Heart. This is the true Reason why he says, such as these sin not, 6 verse, and 8 verse, *He that committeth (or maketh) Sin, as was said before, is of the Devil*; who sins from his Heart which wholly wants Conformity to the Law. Therefore also he says, 9 verse, *He that is born of God, doth not commit Sin*, his Want of Conformity being removed, for *his Seed*, his Conformity remaineth in him, he cannot Sin, because he is born of God, He has Conformity, or Likeness, well then, this Apoitle says by the Holy Ghost, (not, he will not Sin, but) he cannot Sin; the whole Reason is, he does not want Conformity to God and his Law, but is really conformed to them. But then, that which firstly and chiefly constitutes the Nature of Sin, and denominates a Person a Sinner before God, is that he inwardly wants Conformity to his Law.

But it may be said, how does this agree to the Notion of Wages in the Text, which is a Reward for *doing* something, and not for *being* something? Answer, nonconformity to God and his Law, in a moral Agent, always supposes dispositions, intentions, and willings, of a contrary Nature to the Law, ready formed and in Action; for all which, with their outward Executions, Death is the native demerit. But 2. What is meant by this Death? Answer, Death is properly a penal Evil, and so naturally

turally relates to the commanding Part of a Law ; and as annexed to divine Commands, it is a Punishment to be inflicted for the want of such Things as divine Commands require. If divine Commands require us to be light in the Lord, that is, to have just apprehensions of God and divine Things ; then Death is the Punishment of Ignorance in that Case. If they require supreme Love to God, then he who wants Conformity in this Case, must be *Anathema Maranatha*, Cursed when the Lord appears. If they require Faith in Jesus Christ, then *he that believeth not must be Damned*, Mark 16. 16. If they require such Faith as justifies the Ungodly, purifies the Heart, works by Love, produces true Obedience ; then whatever Faith a Person has, however clear and strong, if it doth not actually produce these effects in his Heart and Life, but he still wants conformity in these Things, he must die ; for all these Wants are sin essentially, and the Soul that Sins must Die. If God commands Repentance every where, he who lacks it must die the Death : and Cursed is he who offers to the Lord a corrupt Sort, in any of these Cases, while he is capable of that which is true. In short, the want of any Thing inward or outward, which God commands, has Death for its Punishment. For as the Sum of all the Blessings and Benefits of the holy Law, is Life ; so the want of any Thing, required in this Law as a means to that Life (either here or hereafter) must of necessity be the contrary to Life. Indeed, every Way wherein the want of conformity to God and his Law, is injurious to us,

or abusive of divine Favours, respecting this Life or another, Death is naturally due. And so as a sinful Heart, always dictates that which is abusive of our whole animal Nature, so far as its dictates respect the Body, and its Senses and Faculties, directly contrary to the Law which requires it to be possess'd in Purity, and that ever our Flesh should Praise him, Death in that Case, that is natural Death is its Wages. And as Sin prostitutes all the Faculties of the Soul, to its Drudgery, which were all calculated for service in the Kingdom of God; so Death in that Case, that is spiritual Death, are its natural Effect. Sin also, yea all Sin, in its nature has contempt of God, and all the Glories of his Kingdom, so Death that is everlasting becomes its most reasonable Reward. These notions of Death are all that ever concerned the Moral World, as such, and all that ever can; for as no Command has the nature of Law, till Penalty is affixed; so after Law thus compleat, is published to moral Subjects, that is, is published in a rational Government; there can be no alteration of Penalty till the Law it self is altered: Hence there never was, or could possibly be, but one only declaration of Penalty in the moral World, and that must be when the Commands of God were first to obtain as a Law. And if the common Subject of that common Law, loses his conformity, he falls under that Penalty, just as perpetually and universally, as the Law was designed to obtain. But we should enquire a little further about these Notions of Death, and the Manner in which they obtain.

And

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1. To alter a little the abovementioned Order, Death that is the Wages of Sin, is a separation of the Soul from God, but not from the Body; and this is spiritual Death. Death in this View of it, is inseparably connected with every want of Conformity now. This is the reason why Childhood and Youth is Vanity, being wholly without Conformity to the Law, neither seeing its Beauty, nor feeling its Bonds, nor desiring the knowledge of its Ways; they are unlike God and his Law, and love to have it so; spiritual Death sits fast on all their Powers; they are now in a state of Separation from God, and except they are changed they must all likewise Perish. This is the Reason there are such Crouds in every Place, unaffected with eternal Things, not one good Evidence of an interest in Redemption, and title to Glory; and yet generally easy & secure; none startled with the Flames of Destruction, right before their Faces; none surprized with the Shreick of the Damned in their Ears; yet every one plunging downwards, as fast as the Sun goes thro' the Skies; no wonder! they are all unconformed to the holy Law; are under Death now, and in a state of separation from the living God. This is the Reason, why so many read 'Wo to them that are at ease in Zion;' 'Except ye be Converted ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven;' and 'Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord;' and 'These shall go away into everlasting Punishment,' &c. and never once stop, and say, 'Lord is it I?' Why they are in a state of separation from God already; they are spiritually Dead now.

as the natural and necessary Consequence of want of conformity to his holy Law. Many who hear of danger by Sin, of the necessity of being Converted, the infinite Importance of saving Faith, &c. will either put off and delay, or substitute some delusion, and tell themselves, they hope it is right; What can be the meaning of it? why their Souls are Dead in Sin: They see no Beauty in Christ, taste no Sweetness in the Love of God, no Pleasure in Christ's Yoke, have no ardent longings after Purity; and the Reason of all is, they are now dead in Trespases and Sins, and in a state of actual Separation from God, and Jesus Christ, and all Good, and always have been so; and unless infinite Grace speedily prevent, they always will be so.

2. Another View of that Death which is the Penalty due for all Sin, is, that it is a Separation of the Soul from the Body, and cessation of the natural Functions; and this is what we call natural Death. 'Tis appointed to all Men once to Die, and after that the Judgment.' But some may be ready to say, if natural Death is to be considered as a proper Part of the Curse of the broken Law; and executed upon the Subject as a Sinner, how must we understand Gal. 3. 13. *Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us.* For his Saints Die as well as others. *Ans.* 1. The Death of the Body must be considered as a substantial and necessary Part of the Curse due for non-conformity to God; and so tis certain no Persons in the World ever endure it, but Sinners who never felt the powerful Virtues of the christian Sacrifice.

For if Jesus Christ did any Thing to Purpose, he certainly has delivered his People from the Curse of the Law, being made all *that* Himself; so that the true Believers, as such, in this Sense of Death, never die; but may say in this Case as the Psalmist in another, Psal. 118. 17. *We shall not die but live, and declare the Works of the Lord.* Death to a true Christian has nothing of the Nature of the Curse in it. Hence a holy Person may, and how many actually do rejoice sweetly at it, in it, and all the Way thro' it; saying, Oh Death! Is this Dying? Why where is the Sting, which I used mistakenly to expect was always in Death? Oh dying Christian! It was thy ignorant mistake; there is nothing there at all; how should there be, where Sin is forgiven? for that is all that ever made the Sting. No, thy Saviour's mighty Arm has torn it out for thee, as sure as he is thine.

2. The Death of the Body may be considered as merely Natural; for whatever Changes must Cease, if mere Nature in the Case has its Course. Our Bodies are naturally Changeable, and so naturally must cease to be. Only natural Immortality, is naturally unchangeable. Doubtless Mankind continuing innocent must have changed his Place of Existence, and consequently his present Form of Existence; and yet there could be no Death in the sense of the Curse. Now tho' Saints are perfectly delivered from Sin, in the eye of the Law, and as perfectly from Death in that Sense; yet they must change their Place of Existence, and the Manner of it too, in order to possess that glorious Inheritance. But

you will say, make the best of it, there is a great deal of Pain, and is not Pain a Punishment? Ans. And must not innocent Mankind have had Pain in a like Change of animal Nature? Yet no Curse there. And don't pious Persons have great and expensive bodily Pains in their near, and plentiful Enjoyments of God, here in the Body? But Pain over-balanced with Pleasure is no Misery; nay, if there are two Degrees of Pain, accompanied by four Degrees of Pleasure, the Person is two Degrees happy.

3. The Death of the Body to a true Christian, must be considered as a New-Covenant Blessing. 'Tis the very Means by which the Heirs of God, are wafted from this Shore to that. Without it, how should they come at the glorious Inheritance? How necessary therefore to be laid out in the New Covenant Plan? Nothing to the Saints in common, could ever be fully accomplished without it. How important a Piece of New-Covenant Provision then? 'Tis Kindness; as when a civil Father, a benevolent Prince, capitulates with his Enemies, for the safe and fearless Passage of his veteran Troops, at the Close of their Campaign, thro' the Enemies strongest Forces upon the Frontiers, to their Families and Friends. Or as a tender thoughtful Parent erects a strong and faithful Bridge across the roaring Cataract, for his little Sons at Work in yonder Field to return Home to refresh and rest. Hence Death is called *Sleep, Rest, gathered to his own People*. And why should not the great Redeemer do this, as well as make the other happy Alterations which

he has made; from the tedious *Mosaic* Economy, to this free and joyous one of the Gospel? From the bloody, painful Ordinance of Circumcision, to the easy, pleasant one of Baptism? From a toilsome earthly *Canaan*, (to which, yet, how late and easy did they pass?) to his ever ravishing Embrace-ments? But perhaps some will say, if Death to particular Christians be so sweet a Thing, and has nothing of the Curse in it, yet what can be said of the great and terrible Day of the Lord? That Day which is so often distressing to God's People to think of? And as to the Burning of that Day, which is naturally one of the most terrifying Circumstances of the whole Affair to a godly Person; true Christians will suffer by it no more than they do now, perhaps not so much. For as soon as the Godly, that are in their Graves, are raised out of them every where, (which will be the first Thing that is done with the Earth,) then the holy Persons yet living every where will be joined with them, & altogether conveyed, (perhaps by holy Angels, and possibly joined by those Persons already corporally glorious,) up to the Lord in the Air, those who were alive, being changed as in a Moment. And so be as far from the Burning, as the Lord Himself, for We shall then, and evermore be with the Lord. *1 Thes.* 4. 15. 16. 17.

But 'tis Time that we say
 3 Another View of Death as the Wages of Sin, is an entire Separation of Soul and Body too, from God and that forever. *Mat.* 25. 46. *These shall go away into everlasting Punishment.* Only the Wicked, such as always wanted, or were destitute of, Conformity to the holy Law, shall thus be turned
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into Hell ; by the King, it is prepared on purpose for them. The privative and positive Parts of that unremitting Woe, is theirs, only theirs, and that forever. To Save and Secure them from this, as the finishing Part of their Death and Punishment, is the Design of all the Means, Calls, and Long-suffering of God, as well as the Prayers and Tears of their pious Friends, but their want of Conformity now, will bring Destruction, and there shall be no Remedy.

III. *I am to prove, that such Death must be the Demerit of such sin.* And

1. If the holy Law requires Holiness, as descriptive of the State, Temper, and prevalent Bent of the Soul within it self, then the entire Want of such State and Temper of Mind, must, entirely obviate the Design of the Commandment ; and if Happiness is only to be had in the Kingdom of God, according to Law ; such Want must leave the poor Subject wholly in Misery ; that is, under Death in every Sense in which the Law ever did denounce it. If the holy Law is the only Medium of Life, (and the Apostle says, Rom. 7. 10. *It was ordained for that Purpose* ; and therefore Christ obeyed it, &c. that he might bring its own Life to Light, which we had lost ;) then such as are unconformed to it not like it, and in an habitual Opposition to its Requirements, must be entirely destitute of its Life, and consequently be every Way dead in Sin. Besides ; if such want of Conformity, to a Law of such Importance, sufficiently revealed and enforced, must always in rational Beings imply Neglect and Contempt,

tempt, then all these penal Consequences of such Want, do not only evidently derive out of the Nature of such Want, but are a Penalty in that Case, most natural and most just. The Subject described must be wholly Dead as to the present State of his Soul, because he is entirely unlike the only Medium of Life, viz the Law of God : He must suffer natural Death in the sense of the Curse, because as he always wholly abused himself, so the Law has denounced such Death upon him accordingly : He must die eternally, because he has not in him any of the natural, or law Qualifications for Life eternal.

2. If the Law of God alike forbids all Sin, then all Sin alike (as to its reality) demerits its Penalty. The Law of God never forbids Sin simply on Account of its Greatness, or Number of Instances, but only and always, on Account of what it is in it self; it forbids Sin, simply because it is Sin; the Soul that Sins, not so many Times, or to such a Degree, but that Sins at all, shall die : The Wages of Sin, not of so many, or so great Sins, but of Sin, therefore of any Sin, and of all Sin, aggravations and all, is Death. The Penalty of the Law, is predicated entirely on the Nature of Sin, so that it is Sin's Nature that produces the Penalty, but its Penalty is Death in every Sense of it, therefore Death in every Sense of it is the natural Demerit of every Sin in the World, aggravations and all; for aggravations of Sin, are additional Sins.

3. Every Sin, not because of any exterior Circumstances, but because of its own intrinsic Nature and Qualities in all Circumstances, is essentially

ally and infinitely contrary to God ; he must therefore either prostitute his Perfections, and all their immortal Rights to be insulted by it ; or he must pardon the Sinner without any humbling and penitent Sense of his Sins ; which would be none to the Sinners comfort, (for Pardon without Mercy is no Happiness) and infinitely to the Dishonour of God ; or lastly, He must execute the Penalty of Law upon him for every Sin, and punish him just as the Nature of his Sin deserves with death temporal, spiritual, and eternal. With Spiritual Death now every Day, because his Heart and Soul are wholly wrong, and produce a Life constantly and wholly of the same Kind, so that he can't have any Life in the Nature of his Case, in his Soul towards God. The righteous Judge must punish him with natural Death, not only because the Sinner has ten thousand Times forfeited the Favours of Life, and every Thing that belongs to it by abuse, (because his Principles and Springs of Action inward and outward, were entirely of another Sort and Tendency from those in the great God) but because no other Way could he be conveyed to his Inheritance and Possession among Devils and the other Spirits of the Wicked. The most High must confine him there forever, not only because his Heart, by its total Sins and Iniquities has always habitually and actually neglected, and cast Contempt upon all the Goodness there is in God, which must indicate Malignity, and so merit Retribution, exactly equal to the Nature and Qualities of the Object abused ; but because there will be no Moment
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of that eternal miserable Existence, in which the sinful Soul will not be just the same in Principle, Temper, and Intention, as it always was before, and so as meritorious of eternal Death as ever.

But we should now endeavour to make some improving Remarks upon what has been said, and if we view Things justly, what can be more natural, than to conclude; then all Mankind are naturally in a State of Death? For is it not obvious enough that all Men naturally are such Sinners as have been defined? We must naturally be divinely, legally, perfectly, pure, and right in the whole State of our Souls, and all their Faculties, and so conform completely with the divine Law in its most pure Nature; or else we are not so, but some Way deficient; well no matter how little, for the next Degree short of perfect lawful Purity, is moral Imperfection, and there can be no Degree of Agreement between divine Perfection in the holy Law, and moral Imperfection in us; or between the Law as it is, and us, with any Degree of moral Imperfection; and this every Body must know who gets proper Ideas annexed to the Words. There is no Proportion, or Degree of Likeness and Similitude, between moral Imperfection and moral Perfection, that is, between Sin, and perfect Purity, for moral Imperfection is Sin; and to suppose us naturally; in the least possible Degree short of thorough moral Perfection, is to suppose us to be in a State of Sin, and Non-conformity to God's holy Law, and so of course under all the Sentence of a broken Law. Some who have more mild
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and tender Thoughts of Sin, though they know that no Body is naturally so pure as is required, yet they cannot bear the harsh Conclusion, that they are under the Penalty of the holy Law. Would not these Men be gratified if a Third, a middle State was found out for those who are not pure enough to be perfectly clear with the Law, and yet much too good for Damnation? Let them get their Notions of God, his Law, and the Nature of Sin rectified, and they will soon acquiesce, that such as are like God morally, should dwell with him, and such as are morally unlike him, should be banished from him. Nor would they think our Inference hard, because of the flagrant Evidence they would see, that we all naturally are subjects of moral Imperfection, the grand and only Evidence (in its kind) of a State of Death and Separation from God. But we might illustrate this Remark by some other Considerations, viz. The special Quality of the Agent in the Case of the first Sin, and the Nature of the Law he sinned against.

1. The Party who sinned must be considered as a common Nature, and not as an Individual. He had in Fact the same Nature of all his Posterity, and there was no other to have it; and if there was any Transaction with him of a common Nature, alike respecting other Individuals of the same Sort, as himself; then in that Case he was used as a common Nature, or else it must be said he was used improperly; was not the Charge of Fruitfulness, Multiplication, and Peopling the Earth given to him; and did not that, equally at least concern

his Posterity as Himself, certainly it respected them a thousand Times more than Himself, as they were chiefly to do it, and little, very little would ever be done without them; and we find 'tis that original Charge which is yet in Force, never was repealed, but yet stands; therefore God continued promising from one to another, now he would effectuate that Charge by them, and make them fruitful; and the first Individual was made, on purpose to give Birth to this common Charge, and so introduce the new Kind of Beings, on which the Mind of God was so much set. Strange! That he should not be a common Nature, when the proper Trust, the Estate and Possession of a common Nature is in Fact lodged with him, in a solemn Manner, and designedly as a common Lodgment, or Trust for the Kind. And perhaps this is the Reason he is called *Man*, in common, not a *Man*, in particular; and Gen. 1. 25. The Word *Man*, and the Word *them*, indicate the self same Thing, but *them*, is plural, so doubtless is *Man*, in that Place wherein God says *Let us make Man*; meaning, let us give Being to that sort of Creature, not to one individual only. And surely in this Light was every Tree and Herb bearing Seed, &c. on the Face of the Earth given; not as to an individual, but as to Mankind; but what Propriety in all this, unless because He who was so in Fact, was treated within the Case, as such? then 'twas perfectly proper. Why else, the common Command, *have Dominion over the Earth and Subdue it*? Which were only to be effectuated by his Posterity, and they.

they did it, in virtue of the old Command, to their common Father. Besides, all Intimations of moral Truth and Rule, must be matter of Truth, when there is but one Recipient; because the proper Subject of moral Rule and Truth, as such, is all the Individuals of that Sort; hence the Moral Law, which for Substance the first moral Creature of every Sort, who are made Successively as Mankind are, must have, is no more his Law than it is the Law of the rest of the same Sort; consequently he must have it in Truth, and be under infinite Bonds, in the Nature of the Case, for its constant Propagation. The Consequence of all this is, that as the first Sinner was naturally a common Nature, and appears to be so practically, by the Use which God made of him, which is certainly equal to a literal express Constitution; so his Conduct must just equally affect his Posterity as himself. For if a common Nature be ruined, how should Derivatives be found? And but for this Christ could not be the second Adam.

2. The Nature of the Law he Sinned against, will direct us to the same Conclusion. 'Tis certainly the Moral Law, for Substance, must be written, or impressed naturally, on every rational Being; hence even they who have not the written Law, are a Law to themselves, their Consciences, either accusing, or excusing. Rom. 2. 14, 15. And can the Law of a rational Nature, be broken by it, and its self not be hurt? A rational Nature, must stand or fall, by its own proper Law, and when the grand Law, not of all Nature only, which yet is the Case of the Moral Law, and therefore no Wonder that all Na-

ture groans under the Curse ever since its common Law was broken. *Rom.* S. 19, to 22. but) of that common Nature in particular, is broken by it, shall it be clear? or shall it be condemned as guilty by its own Law? Doubtless condemned without a possibility of Escape, unless from some other Quarter Attenuation and Pardon can be found. The first Transgression being against a positive Precept is no Objection; for positive Precepts require nothing but what is contained in the Moral Ones, they are subservient to these, and explanatory of them; so that if a positive Precept is violated, the Design and Import of the Moral Ones is violated. The moral Precepts in general, enjoin us to observe and do all that God says; well, here he says in the positive Precept, Eat not of this Tree, now the moral Bond takes Place, and binds to avoid that Fruit, and the taking of it, notwithstanding is an entire violation of that System of moral Obligation; 'Tis wholly and properly a Breach of that Law of Nature, and all Nature universally has felt it ever since, and groaned under it.

2. We may doubtless conclude in the next Place, that if the natural Demerit of all Sin is Death, as we have seen; then there can be no *Hope*, for Mankind in general, or any in particular, but by Revelation. The subject Dead in Fact, in the State of his Soul, towards God, and holy Living, must be absolutely unable to recover Himself; He is not only without Strength enough, but he is destitute of suitable Dispositions to begin, if he had any Strength; and therefore *must be entirely morally*
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unable to help Himself; this Inference must be most natural from the Doctrine. From what Quarter should Relief come then? God had not said one Word of it in Case of Sin, *not one Word*. Whence shall it be expected? Reason and Conscience say, God is offended; and we may surely expect his Wrath. But no Reason to look out for proposals of Pardon and Peace; for tho' He is a God of Kindness, Tenderness, and Love, yet the incensed Claims of his Justice and Righteousness, are as Sacred and Important as his Benevolence, and now must be first appealed; and we cannot do it, what shall we do? Here now is a *Neplus ultra*, a final End of Expectation, unless God finds out the Way and Means, and will proclaim them. But this is mere Revelation, on which therefore all our Hopes depend.

3. And what can be more natural than to conclude, that such Revelation, with all its Contents, and natural Effects, and Productions, must derive entirely from Grace, mere Favour, and selfmoving Kindness in God. The Subject was originally in debt for the rich Endowments of his Being, to which he had antecedently no Right at all; he was to be sure, no more than able to answer this, had he been quite obedient, and pure as long as his Existence lasted; what shall he do now? In Debt still to Goodness, for Being and Priviledges as before, and so will remain; infinitely in debt also now to incensed Righteousness for Infringments on its holy Rights by Sin, and nothing to pay to either; his Soul is all perverted by Sin, serves God according to Law, none at all; he is in the Flesh
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and *cannot* please God, he is a Sinner and woot be like God; What shall he do? Vengeance coming down, What shall he do? Oh Surprising! God Speaks! Deliver him, I have found a Karform. My own Son shall die, in your Nature and Name, and that can't but be equal to the Demands of Righteousness, for he, as divine, is equal to the Law himself, and when joined to your Nature the Virtue of that Dignity must derive to all it does; now therefore whosoever will, let him come. As many as will, and as vile as they are, come, and they shall not be cast out. But this is all mere Grace from the Foundation to the Top Stone. Therefore saith the Apostle, Eph 2. 8 *By Grace are ye saved, and that not of yourselves, it is the Gift of God.* He don't here say that Faith is the Gift of God, that, is not expressly, only implicitly true of this Text; but that the whole Salvation; is the Gift of God. Which appears by *Texts*, which agrees not to *Pistis*, Faith; but to the whole Affair of that Salvation.

4. Certainly we may infer from such Truths as we have found, the absolute Necessity of a Sinners Conversion. And this is just as manifest as that those who are now dead in Sin, are not fit to dwell with God. Or that *that* which is morally unclean, and works Abomination, and maketh a Lie, cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. This also shews what Sort of Change a Sinners Conversion is, viz. an inward through Change of the moral State, Temper, and Bent of his Heart. For surely one that is not conformed to God and his Law

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cannot dwell with God ; he must be miserable if he were translated to Paraclete itself. He must therefore be convinced of his moral Ruin, his Blindness of Mind, that he don't see divine Things as they are ; sees not the Beauty and Loveliness of Christ ; tastes no Sweetness in vital Religion as all holy Men do ; He must feel his Heart averse to all holy Services, and Objects as such ; that his Will always stands determined to something entirely different from God and his Glory, as his chief, and chosen good. He must feel his Affections placed upon, and bound up in Objects of a different Nature from those that are divine ; and that his Life is consequently all of a wrong Kind, even his holy Things, best Duties, derive from wrong Views, are governed by wrong Designs, and pursue wrong Ends : and therefore as done by him, or done in such a Manner as he cannot but do them yet, they have the Nature of Sin ; for God declares that they who are in the Flesh, cannot [please to mind that] cannot please God. Dead Works cannot please God, and all Works done without spiritual and divine Life are dead Works. The Sinner must then feel himself undone, thoroughly and everlastingly undone, unless he is renewed by the Spirit of God ; must be bowed to the Sovereignty of God, and own his Right to dispose of him ; and 'tis quite Right that God should reject him for ever, because he has sinned. Must see a suitability and sufficiency in Christ for him, and accordingly receive him with all his Heart, in all his Offices, and for all divine Purposes, to his Sanctification

fication and Salvation, and being made alive thro' Faith, to a holy inward Affections, and outward Living, he will have his Fruit unto Holiness, and the End will be everlasting Life. But without such Change of Soul, he will remain dead in Sin, and must die eternally.

5. But nothing is a plainer Consequence of our Doctrine than the absolute Impossibility of good Works, antecedent to such a soul changing Work of Grace. 'Tis surprizing, that where there is some Measure of Reason and Conscience, Persons should ever be able to flatter themselves, that any Thing they do, while their Souls are in a State of Death, and actual Separation from God, which is the Case of every Person in the World before, and until he is converted to God, should answer the Scripture Characters of good Works. The Matter of a Sinner's Duties are all good, and that is no Thanks to him, for he is not the Author of the Matter of one Duty in the World; if God is not the Author solely and entirely of the Matter of what is called Duty; 'Tis miscalled, 'tis no Duty at all. What God has not made Duty is no Duty at all. So that Sinners who do any Duty at all, are not to be faulted on the account of the Matter of the Duties they perform, nor are they to think themselves a whit the better for all their Duties Materially considered, for they never made the Matter of one of them, nor the least Part of the Matter of one of them. You see therefore a Work being Materially good, don't make it a good Work at all; for good Works are ours, but the good *Matter* of our dutiful Works, is entirely

entirely none of ours ; and if this an't True, 'tis not Duty, and therefore not a good Work. It is the Manner in which the Mind goes about a Duty ; the inward Intention, View, and Disposition of the Mind, in going about a Duty, & performing of it, that Determines it a good Work. This I suppose is obvious to every Person's Understanding. Well but how should a poor Creature wholly dead in Sin, without any Conformity to God and his Law, entirely and always in a state of Separation from God, from Christ, from the holy Ghost, from true Light and Knowledge, from a just View of, and Judgment about divine Things, which the natural Man does not discern, and from true Taste of them, or possible Delight in them : I say, how should such a poor depraved Creature, (and this we have found is naturally the Case of us all) how should he go about and perform a Duty, with such right Views and Dispositions of Mind, when he has not got them, nor can have them, until they are wrought in him by the Work of God ? 'Tis downright impossible ; therefore St. Paul having minded Titus, 99. Chap. of the Doctrine of our entire and terrible natural moral Ruin, and inability to all Manner of good Works before Conversion, 3 Verses ; of our spiritual Regeneration, and Justification by mere Grace 5 and 7 Verses, &c. says, *These Things I will that thou affirm constantly, the Reason is that so, they who have believed in God, that is, have experienced these Things I have mentioned to you, in their own Souls, might be careful to maintain good Works.* As knowing the natural Necessity of these

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Things, in Order to good Works, and that no Person ever could do them, but only such as ha been Subject of these diuine Efficiencies for that Purpose. Christ must redeem our Souls actually from all Iniquity, and purify us unto Himself in order that we should be made peculiar to him, & so zealous of good Work. *Tit. 2. 14.*

6. Then there is no such Thing as one Moments safety for a poor Sinner, yet out of Christ. What should make him safe one Moment? His own Goodness cannot, for he can't haue one good Work in the World; and the good Dispositions & Intentions of his Heart can't protect, or plead one Word for him, because in Fact 'tis only his Mistake and there is not one good Disposition there, he thinks so, but God himself has looked down to see, hearing as it were, so much noise about it, *Psal. 53. 2. 3.* And he says they are all entirely wrong, their Hearts are filthy, and they do no good, no not one of them all. Now Dear Sir let God be true, tho' every Man a Liar; ye are utterly mistaken about your own Hearts. there is nothing there that will plead for you, but dreadfully otherwise; 'tis your own Heart that exposes you, the Lusts of it, the Pride of it, the Willfulness of it, the Worldliness of it, the Unbelief of it, the Backwardness of it to good, and in short its present state of Spiritual Death and separation from all Goodness. Where will you find Sanctuary? Do you intend to fly to God when it comes to the last, and hope he won't cast you off; but are you sure he won't? May be he will, for there is a dreadful Word which lies against you viz. 'He that being often reprov'd, still hardeneth his Neck shall suddenly be destroyed and that without Remedy. *Prov. 29. 1.* Pardon me perhaps for your neglect of God and your own Soul you will be found among those who shall mourn at the last when their Flesh and Body are consumed and say each one how have I hated Instruction, & my Heart despis'd Reproof! I haue not obeyed the Voice of my Teachers, nor inclin'd my Ear to them that instructed Me, I wa almost in all Evil in the midst of the Congregation, &c. *Prov. 5. 12.* And so must perish forever for not turning while the Day lasted. Redemption and the Gospel are made on Purpose for the Sinner, and are just fit for his Case and no more. He who accepts them tho' he were dead, yet shall he live; but till he does so is every Moment in a state of Death, a vessel of Wrath fitting for Destruction.

7. Should not the People of God derive a humbling, an awakening and an instructive Lesson from this Doctrine. 1. A humbling one, and that is who hath made you to differ? Have you been enlightened to know the 2 Things of a Truth? Have you seen your moral ruin? Do you know you were dead in Sin, and your Souls, all your Days separated from all Good, till Christ brought you to God, who is the only Way to the Father? Did you ever hear the Thunders of Sinai, feel the Curse of the Law you broke always because habitually, see the Plague of your own Heart; and has the first been silenced with a great Calm; the other born away from you; and the last cleared out of you by the Blood of the Cross; learn practically and habitually to say Lord not unto me, but to thy Name be all the Glory. For I was dead and am alive, was lost and am found.

2. An awakening one; Oh Christian! what do you owe to Jesus Christ? You had never seen him if he had not opened your Eyes! you had never loved him if he had not broke down your wicked Will, and made you as it were, see his Glory! You had never had this Day Hope Evidence, and sweet rest in Religion, if Christ had not died, rose, ascended, reigned there so long, and at last, by Mercy and Power raised you also to sit in Heavenly Places along with him, as it is this Day. Now what do you owe? If all, pay all; if your Body and Spirit are all his, let him have them, keep nothing back. If your Time, Talents, and your all are his; study, strive and pray that the Lord should have his own.

3. Instructive; you have heard what Sin is; do you comfort your self, but I am delivered, Christ has engaged for me, no Danger of my perishing by Sin; remember they that are in Christ, don't walk after the Flesh, but crucify it, 'tis the Spirit and Way of Christians; if you allow the bitter Fruit, you approve the bitter Root and his servants ye are whom ye obey, whether of Sin unto Death, or of Obedience unto Righteousness. If ye are dead to Sin, ye are alive to God, your fruit is Holiness, and your End shall be eternal Life. A M E N.