

LAW. *and* G O S P E L :

Nov

O R,

MAN wholly Ruined by the LAW,

A N D

Recovered only by the G O S P E L :

B E I N G

The Substance of some S E R M O N S preached at
Tredyffryn, in *Pennsylvania*, in the Year
1734, and again at *Piles-Grove*, in *New-
Jersey*, in the Year 1745.

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formerly at *Tredyffryn*, and now at *Piles-Grove*.

Published at the Importunity and Charges of a Number
of his People at the abovesaid *Piles-Grove*.

GALAT. iii. 10. *Cursed is every one that continueth not in
all Things which are written in the Book of the Law to
do them.*

ROM. i. 16. *The Gospel of Christ is the Power of God un-
to Salvation, to every one that believeth.*

P H I L A D E L P H I A :

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Man wholly ruined by the LAW, and recovered only by the GOSPEL.

JAMES II. 10. *For whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all.*

HA V I N G, in a Series of Discourses upon the Covenants of God, relating to Mankind, considered the Covenant of Works, made with *Adam* in his upright State, and in him with all his Posterity : And how *Adam*, by his wilful and sinful Fall, broke that Covenant, and forfeited all its Privileges, both for himself, and for all his Offspring : And having also proved, by the Word of God, That none of fallen Mankind, shall be justified before God, by the Terms of that once broken and forfeited Covenant : And having likewise proved, That all Mankind cleave unto that broken and forfeited Covenant, as their only Way to obtain Peace with God, and heavenly Happiness, until by divine Grace they be divorced from it (a) : I come now, by the Words before us, to shew further, how impossible it is for any of the fallen Race of *Adam*, to obtain eternal Life of Happiness by that Covenant ; seeing the very least Sin, renders every Transgressor guilty of breaking and forfeiting the whole, and every Part of that holy, righteous, and perfect Law and Covenant.

A 2

It

(a) Unprinted Sermons, upon *Psal. xxv. 14. Gen. ii. 16, 17. Gen. iii. 6. 1 Cor. xv. 22. Gal. ii. 16. Gal. iv. 21. &c. &c. &c.*

It is very evident, by the Tenour of this Epistle, especially by several clear Passages contained in it, That the Apostle had to deal with very erroneous and carnal Professors of Christianity; who, as appears, were either (1) Rank *Antinomians*, to wit, such as boasted highly of their Faith, but regarded not to live holy in a Gospel Obedience to the holy Law of God; against these the Apostle disputes particularly in this second Chapter, from the 14th Verse to the End. Or (2) they were *pharisaical*, hypocritical Observers of the Law, who pretended to keep some Commandments, and to perform some Duties, but made no Conscience of other Duties; seemed to hate Adultery, but made no Conscience of killing the Poor and Needy, by not shewing Mercy unto them in their Need. v. 11. with the 15. and 16. They pretended to love their Neighbours as themselves; but it was only the Rich, the Great, and those in gay Clothing, they loved; and despised their godly Brethren, who were poor and in vile Raiment. Verses 2, 3, 4. They pretended to obey God, in shewing Love and Respect to their gay and rich Neighbours; but it was nothing but hypocritical Flattery; for they only respected the Faces, Riches and Raiments, of Men, whereby they sought their own Praise, and regarded not the Honour of God, who commanded them to love their poor godly Neighbours for his Sake, as well as the Rich and Gay, Verses 8, 9.

And thus by an hypocritical and partial Performance of some few Duties, and forbearing from some few outward Acts of scandalous Sins, they thought themselves very good Christians, and very exact Keepers of God's holy and perfect Law; and boasted of their dead fruitless Faith. And O how lamentable it is to see this to be the Case of the most of the Professors of Christianity, every where in the World, at this Day!

Therefore as a thundering Awakening unto all that have

have Ears to hear, and especially unto ignorant, carnal, and hypocritical Christians, the Holy Ghost, by the Apostle, roars out, *Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all!*

The Words are a Reason to prove what the Apostle had asserted in the 9th Verse; to wit, That respecting Persons was a Sin and Transgression of God's Law. But might they then say, and may many now say, How can that be? A little Respect of Persons, if it be Sin, is but one small Sin; and how can that be a Transgression of the Law, to wit, of the whole Law? To whom the Apostle answers, *For, or because, offending in one Point of the Law, is a breaking the whole Law.*

Now for the Division and brief Explication of the Text, you may note,

1. *The Subject spoken of, to wit, the Law.* Now, that this is the moral Law, is evident; for (1) It is the royal Law that commands and binds all Men to love their Neighbours as themselves, Verse 8. which is the Sum of the second Table, even the last Six of the Ten Commandments. (2) It is the Law that forbids Adultery and Murder, Verse 11. (3) It is the Law that convinceth of Sin, Verse 9. Whence it is evident beyond Dispute, that this Law is the *moral Law*, the perfect, immutable, eternal Rule of all Righteousness, with respect unto God and Man; and the very Sum and Substance of the Covenant of Works made with *Adam* in Paradise, and with all Mankind in him, as it hath been elsewhere proved unto you (b).

2. *In the Words we have a Supposition of some Person's keeping this whole Law; Whosoever shall keep the whole Law.* 'Tis not asserting that any doth or can keep the whole Law, except some one small Point wherein he faileth. For, *There is none righteous, no not one: Neither*

(b) Sermons on *Gen.* ii 16, 17. and iii. 6. and *1 Cor.* xv. 22.

Neither is there a just Man upon the Earth, that doeth Good, and sinneth not: Yea, in many Things we offend all (c). Therefore it is only a Supposition, that if any Man, now in our fallen State, doth, or could, keep this whole Law, as God requireth. Then,

3. *Here is a Supposition of such a Keeper of this Law, offending but in one small Point; And yet offend in one Point.* The Greek Word here used, signifies to slip or stumble, as Men in walking hit their Foot against something, or in a slippery Way their Foot slides a little to one Side, whereby they do not fall, but only stagger, or lean a little from their strait Course, which stops them just a Moment in their going (d). So that *offending in one Point*, is to fail in one, the least Thing, that God by this royal Law commandeth or forbiddeth. Hence our Saviour, who is Truth itself, assureth us, That the least lustful Glance of the Eye upon a Woman, is Adultery in the Heart. *Mat. v. 28. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a Woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his Heart.* And then,

4. *The Conclusion and Event, He is guilty of all:* That is, whosoever fails in the least Thing of perfect, perpetual, and uninterrupted Obedience to this royal Law, and every Part of it, he is guilty of breaking the whole Law; and justly liable to suffer all the Curses, Wrath, and Torments, due to every Transgressor of the whole of it.

Now, in Pursuance of my present Purpose, I shall, in the Words, observe only this one

Doctrine, viz. *That the least Sin is a Breach of the whole moral Law of God, and a forfeiting all the Privileges of the Covenant of Works, and exposeth every guilty one, to all the Punishments due to the Breach of that*
holy

(c) *Rom. iii. 10. Eccles. vii. 20. James iii. 2.* (d) *Pecis unde bis*
plausi

holy Law and Covenant. For whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all. Gal. iii. 10. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all Things written in the Book of the Law to do them.

Here, by divine Assistance, I shall briefly shew,

1. *That no Sin is little in its own Nature.*
2. *That Circumstances render some Sins greater or lesser than others.*
3. *What Sins are commonly counted great.*
4. *What Sins are commonly counted no Sins, or at most but very little Sins.*
5. *How the least Sin is a Breach of the whole Law of God, and a forfeiting the whole Covenant of Works.*
6. *How the least Sin deserves all the Punishment due for transgressing the whole Law of God.*
7. *Application.*

1. Then it will appear, that no Sin is little in its own Nature. 1. Because the least Sin comes from the bottomless Pit, and boundless Ocean of Man's Corruption and Enmity against God. The carnal Mind is Enmity against God, Rom. viii. 7. And out of the Heart proceed evil Thoughts, Murders, Adulteries, Thefts, Fornications, false Witness, Blasphemies, Mat. xv. 19. Where you may clearly see, that every Kind of Sin, be it great or little, comes from the very Heart of Man; and that evil Thoughts, yea, the least evil Thought, is as much a Sin as Adultery or Murder. An idle Word, or vain Thought, comes from the same wicked Heart, as Adultery and Murder; and a vain Word or Thought hath as much of the Nature of Sin and Enmity against God, and is as truly called Sin, as Adultery or Murder. Prov. xxiv. 9. *The Thoughts of Foolishness is Sin.* Therefore there can be no little Sin in its own Nature, because every Sin comes from the same wicked Heart; and every Sin hath

hath the very same Nature of Enmity and Rebellion against God. And,

2. *Because every Sin is a Transgression of the one and the very same great and royal Law of God. 1 John iii. 4. Whosoever committeth Sin, transgresseth also the Law; for Sin is the Transgression of the Law. Sin, even every Sin, be it never so little in thy Account, is a Transgression of the great and royal Law of God: Mark it Man! 'Tis not only a Transgression of some one Command or Prohibition of the Law, but a Transgression of the Law, even of the whole Law. If God had given some little Law to thee, thou mightest talk of little Sins; but seeing he gave but one great and royal Law, then the least idle Word, or vain Thought, is a trampling this whole Law under thy Feet: Therefore, there neither is, nor can be, any little Sin in its own Nature; but every Sin is equally a Breach of the whole great and royal Law of the most high God. And,*

3. *Because by the Law of God, the same Punishment is threatened for every Sin. 'Twas the solemn Declaration of God unto Adam in Paradise, In the Day thou eatest, thou shalt surely die. (e). Where you may see that God threatened Death for one Sin: Adam did eat, and by that one Sin, of eating a Morsel of a forbidden Fruit, brought bodily, spiritual, and eternal Death of Sin and Misery upon himself, and all the World of Mankind. For by one Man's Disobedience, many were made Sinners, and by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation; and in Adam all die (f). And the Soul that sinneth it shall die, saith the God of Truth (g). So that if it be but Sin, count you it as little as you can, yet God declares the Punishment of eternal Death to the Guilty, even the same Punishment for Sin, for all Sin, and for every*
Kind,

(e) Gen. ii. 17. (f) Rom. v. 12, 18, 19. 1 Cor. xv. 22. (g) Ezek. xviii. 3, 4.

Kind; and for every Degree of Sin. Therefore there neither is, nor can be, any little Sin, as considered in its own Nature. And that,

4. *Because every the least Sin, is against the infinite Majesty of the most high God.* Hence saith the Psalmist, *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this great Evil in thy Sight, &c. (b).* He well knew that he had greatly sinned against *Bathsheba*, in enticing her to Adultery; and against *Uriah* her Husband, in defiling his Bed; making him drunk, and causing him to be murdered (i); and against his own Soul, in defiling it with so many heinous Abominations; and against God's People, in causing Grief and Shame unto them; and against the Wicked, in giving them Occasion of blaspheming the holy Name of God and his holy Ways, and hardening themselves in Wickedness (k). But the Consideration of his Sins, in all these Respects, was swallowed up in the awful Consideration of its being against God! And, saith the Apostle, *All have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God (l).* God made all Men to his Glory (m) and every Sin is robbing God of his Glory; every Sin is a trampling God and his Glory under Foot, as far as the Sinner can, and a wishing that there were no God to punish his Sin. The Sinner, by every Sin, wisheth that he were stronger than God, that he might pull God out of his Throne. Hence every Sin is called Rebellion against God; *The Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up Children, and they have rebelled against me (n)!* Now the Nature of all Rebellion, is a seeking to overcome and destroy him against whom we rebel; or at least to bring him to agree to our rebellious Terms: And so the very Nature of every Sin, is a seeking either to destroy God,

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or

(b) *Psal.* li. 4. (i) *2 Sam.* xi. 13. and xii. 9. (k) *2 Sam.* xii. 14.
 (l) *Rom.* iii. 23. (m) *Isa.* xliii. 7. (n) *Isa.* i. 2.

or at least to bring him to agree to our sinful and wicked Terms.

We know that many petty Offences committed against our Equals, would be capital High Treason if committed against our King ; and so we must measure every Kind and Degree of Sin, by the infinite Majesty of the most high God, who is King of Kings, against whom we committed it ; and being so measured, and truly considered, there is a Kind of infinite Wickedness and Enmity in every the least Sin ; so that unless we can find some little God, like ourselves, to sin against, there can be no Sin little in its own venomous, rebellious Nature. And that,

5. *Because nothing less than the bitter Death, and precious Blood of the Son of God, could, or can procure the Pardon of the least Sin. Without shedding of Blood, there is no Remission, Heb. ix. 22. and no Bloodshed will do, in this Case, but the precious Blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 'Tis only through his Blood Redemption and Forgiveness of Sin is to be obtained (o). And only his Blood cleanseth from all Sin (p). And it is he alone washeth any from their Sins in his own Blood (q). The righteous God will have every Tittle and Iota of his holy and righteous Law fulfilled (r). And he will have perfect Satisfaction for the least Violation of the least Iota and Tittle of his royal Law : And none could fulfil this Law but his dear Son, in our Nature ; and nothing will or can satisfy the Justice of God, for the least Breach of the least Iota or Tittle of his righteous and perfect Law, but the precious Life and Blood of his dear Son, who is the only Surety of all that receive him by true Faith (s). Seeing then that nothing could, or can, satisfy the Law and Justice of God for the least Sin, and procure the Pardon thereof, but the bitter Death, and precious*

(o) *Eph. i. 7.* (p) *1 John i. 7.* (q) *Rev. i. 5.* (r) *Mat. v. 18.*
 (s) *Heb. vii. 22. Acts x. 43.*

precious Blood, of Jesus Christ. It is evident, that there is no Sin little ; but that every Sin, in its own Nature and Effects, is very great and heinous. So I come to shew,

2. *That Circumstances render some Sins greater or lesser than others.*

1. *This is evident by the Testimony of God in his Word.* Jer. vii. 26. *They did worse than their Fathers.* Their Fathers had sinned greatly, but the Children taking no Warning by the Judgments of God upon their sinful Fathers, but sinning against greater Mercies, their Sins were greater and worse than the Sins of their Fathers. And said Christ unto Pilate, *He that delivered me unto thee, hath the greater Sin (t).* The Sin of Pilate was great, in condemning an innocent, righteous Person, to the most shameful and cruel Death, against the Light and Conviction of his own Conscience (u) ; but the Sin of Judas in betraying and delivering his holy innocent Lord unto Pilate, was far greater. And says the Apostle, *Evil Men and Seducers shall wax worse and worse,* 2 Tim. iii. 13. They are very bad at first, but by customary hardening themselves in Wickedness, they grow worse and worse. So then, it is evident by Scripture Testimony, that Circumstances render some Sins greater than others.

2. *This is evident, in that God threatens greater Punishment to some Sinners than to others.* He assures us, that Refusers and Despisers of his Gospel-Salvation, shall be punished more terrible, in the Day of his awful, righteous Judgment, than abominable Sodomites, Gomorrhites, Tyrians, and Sidonians, who never had the offer of it (x). And that the Servant who knows his Lord's Will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with more Stripes than the Servant that knows

(t) John xix. 11. (u) Mark xv. 10. (x) Mat. x. 14, 15, and xi. 20.

not his Lord's Will, tho' he doth Things worthy of Stripes (y). Therefore, as God, the righteous Judge of all the World, will punish some Sinners more fearful than others, it is evident that Circumstances render some Sins greater than others ; of which Circumstances, I'll briefly touch upon Two or Three ; As,

1. *Sins that are more directly against God, are greater than Sins that are more directly against Man.* 1 Sam. ii. 25. *If one Man sin against another, the Judge shall judge him ; but if a Man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him ?* Where you may see, that Sins which are more directly against God, are greater and more dangerous than Sins which are more directly against Man. Thus when the Psalmist had enumerated many of the Sins of the *Israelites*, he adds, with an Emphasis, as the Height of their Wickedness, *Yea they spake against God* (z). Hence the Sins of Atheism, Idolatry, Unbelief, Blaspheming the holy Name of God, Neglect and Contempt of his Worship and Ordinances, are greater Sins than to blaspheme, wrong, hurt, or murder a Man, who is but a Worm like ourselves.

2. *Sins committed under the Means of Knowledge and Grace, are greater than the same Sins committed by those that have not these Means.* John xv. 22. *If I had not come and spoken unto them, said Christ of the unbelieving Jews, they had not had Sin ; but now they have no Cloak for their Sin.* That is, their Sin had not been so great and dreadful, if they had not heard Christ, and seen his miraculous Works, and after all rejected him. *Unbelief, Impenitency, Obstinacy, Drunkenness, Vain-swearing, Lying, Cheating, Pride, Contentions, Covetousness, Contempt of God and his Word, and Boldness in any Sin,* is far greater, and more heinous, in those that enjoy the Gospel, than the same Sins in heathenish *Indians*, and others that do not enjoy

(y) Luke xii. 47, 48. (z) Psal. lxxviii. 19.

enjoy it. Hence saith our Saviour, *This is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men love Darkness rather than Light, because their Deeds are evil* (a). To Sin under the Sunshine Light of the Gospel, is the highest Contempt of God, and Rebellion against him: Sinners hereby do in Effect defy the Most High to his Face; and declare that they love the Darkness of Ignorance and Sin more than the Light and Happiness of his great Salvation. By their Doings, *They say unto God, depart from us, for we desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? And what Profit should we have if we pray unto him* (b)?

3. *The Sins of Apostates, who draw back from God and his Gospel, are far greater than the Sins of those that never professed his holy Name and his Truth. Those that have escaped the Pollution of the World, through the Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, if they are again entangled and overcome, the latter End is worse with them than the Beginning: For it had been better for them not to have known the Way of Righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto them: But it is happened unto them according to the true Proverb, The Dog is turned to his own Vomit again, and the Sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the Mire* (c). These are upon the Border of the unpardonable Sin, if they have not sinned it already: For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly Gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come, if they fall away, to renew them again unto Repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open Shame (d). When those who have been once zealous for true Religion,

(a) *John iii. 19.* (b) *Job xxi. 14. 25.* (c) *2 Pet. ii. 20, 21, 22.* (d) *Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6.* See also *Heb. x. 26.-----32.*

ligion, and against Sin, and have communicated at the Lord's holy Table, and have tasted some Measure of the Lord's Goodness, and have professed great Love to Christ and his Gospel; and after all this, turn earthly, irreligious, proud, obstinate, prophane and malicious, they do by their Behaviour and Actions, declare that Christ and the Gospel are but a Cheat. Their Apostacy in Effect is a Crying-out as the Jews, *Crucify, crucify Christ and his Religion out of the World!* Oh immortal Souls! Consider with Trembling, that to draw back from the glorious and loving Jesus, for the Love of any Sin or Lust, is the greatest Sin; and that nothing but the rooted, unmortified Love of Sin, and Hatred of Christ, can draw any back from him! And if thou shalt be left to harden thyself in thy Backslidden Apostacy, Oh and alas, it is the unpardonable Sin unto Death (e)!

Therefore, before I pass from this General Head, let every one of you look upon Sins that are, *First*, most directly against God; *Secondly*, Sins against the Light of the Gospel, which are Sins against the greatest Manifestation of the Love and Mercy of God towards you; *Thirdly*, Sins whereby thou coolest in thy Love towards Christ, and drawest back from him. Oh look upon these Sins to be worse than the Sins of any Heathens, *Turks*, abominable *Sodomites*, and *Gomorrhites*; that the Tho'ts of it may bruise thy hard, proud Heart, and may shame and greatly humble thee before God, and rouze thee unto speedy *Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our dear Lord Jesus Christ* (f). *For if after thou hast been often warned and reprov'd, thou hardenest thy Neck, thou shalt be destroyed suddenly without Remedy* (g)! Oh then as thou lovest thy own immortal Soul, *Remember whence thou art fallen and repent, and seek the Lord while*

(e) *Mat. xii. 31. 32. 1 John v. 16. Mark iii. 28. 29. 30. (f) Acts vi. 21. (g) Prov. xxix. 1. 1 Thes. v. 3. Psal l. 21, 22.*

while he may be found, call upon him while he is near ; and forsake thy wicked Ways, and thy unrighteous Tho'ts, and return to the Lord, and he will have Mercy upon thee, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon thee (b). And so much now of the Circumstances that render some Sins greater or lesser than others. So I come to shew briefly,

3. *What Sins are commonly counted great.*

1. *People commonly count Words or Actions of notorious Injustice and Inhumanity, to be great Sins : Such as Perjury, Murder, Tyranny, Robbery, Oppression, breaking or burning of Houses, Adultery, Witchcraft, and the like. These being contrary to the Light of natural, human Reason, People generally count such as are guilty of any of them, to be very great and wicked Sinners.*

2. *People commonly count any Thing spoken or done, against their Self-Interest, to be very great Sins. Hence it is too common, that when People are crossed in any carnal or worldly Self-design ; or if they think that they are wronged of a few Shillings or Pence ; or if their Pride be touched a little, they look upon such Things to be great Wickednesses, almost, if not altogether, unpardonable. They look upon any that stands in the Way of their selfish Designs, to be a very Wicked Wretch : They cannot be reconcil'd to him, nor forgive him, nor pray to God to forgive him ; but wish that God may reward him ; which, in plain Terms, is wishing that God would send him into Hell. Oh how common is it for People to be easy and not moved, by seeing and hearing the glorious Name of God blasphemed and dishonoured ; and yet are in a Flame when their Names are touched, or their selfish Designs are crossed or interrupted by any ; whereby it is very evident, that they count*

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(b) Rev. ii. 5. Isa. lv. 6, 7.

it greater Wickedness to dishonour them, than to dishonour the most High and Almighty Jehovah.

3. *A wicked World counts close Adherence to Christ and his Gospel, and the Practice of true Godliness, to be the greatest Sin and Wickedness of all.* Hence saith Christ to all his faithful Followers, Mat. x. 22. *Ye shall be hated of all Men, for my Names sake.* And again, John xvi. 2. *Whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God Service.* And why do they hate and kill them, but because they count them the very worst of Men? And why did they cry out against the holy Apostle, *Away with such a Fellow from the Earth, for it is not fit that he should live (i)*, but because they counted him the most wicked Villain that ever lived: And even so all the Persecutions of the Followers of Christ, in all Ages, from Cain unto this Day; all the Hangings, Quartering, Burning, Tormenting, and Banishing of Men, for their strict Profession of Christ and his Truths, and their conscientious Practice of Godliness; proves that a wicked blind World counted, and still counts, true Religion and Godliness to be the greatest Sin and Wickedness of all. And so I come to shew,

4. *What Sins are commonly counted no Sins, or at most but very little Sins.*

1. *A little Respect of Persons, is commonly counted no Sin, or at most but a very little Sin.* Thus they, to whom the Apostle wrote this Epistle, tho't it no Sin at all to despise their poor godly Brethren, and to admire the Rich and Gaudy, tho' wicked Oppressors and Blasphemers of the holy Name of God (k). The Apostle James here no ways contradiceth the Apostle Paul, who commands, to give Honour to whom Honour is due (l); but condemns that partial, flattering, and undue Respect of Persons, which too many are too commonly guilty of, and yet think it no Sin,

or

(i) Acts xxii. 22. (k) James ii. 1,---8. (l) Rom. xiii. 7.

or at most but a very little Sin. But, says he, *If ye have Respect of Persons, ye commit Sin, and are convinced of the Law as Transgressors (m)*. That is, Ye are not only guilty of one, but of many Sins; ye transgress not only some one Command, but ye transgress the *Law*, the whole Law of God, by your partial Respect of Persons; For, says he in my Text, *whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all*. And thus although thou countest it perhaps no Sin, or at most but a very little Sin, to give a little partial flattering Compliment to a wicked Person, meerly because he is rich; or wears a gaudy Garb, or for any other sinister End, and despisest a godly, virtuous Person, meerly because he is poor, and in Rags, or mean Clothing, thou art hereby guilty of transgressing the whole Law of God (n).

2. *Idle, vain Words are commonly counted either no Sins, or at the most, but very little Sins*. How common is it with too many to spend many Hours and Days in vain, idle Talk, to no Profit for Soul or Body, either to themselves or others; but only to divert away the Time, as they call it. How many spend whole Hours in telling idle Tales, backbiting and censuring their Neighbours? And how much precious Time too many spend in prophane Ribaldry; and yet it is so customary and fashionable, that it is hardly counted Sin, or at most but a very little Sin, hardly worth confessing it unto God, repenting of, or asking the Forgiveness of it. But our Saviour assureth us, *That for [every] idle Word that Men shall speak, they shall give Account thereof in the Day of Judgment, and that by their Words Men shall be either justified or condemned (o)*. He doth not say for many, but for e-

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(m) James ii. 9. (n) Job xxxii. 21, 22. Psal. xii. 2, 3. Prov. xxvi. 28. and xvii. 5. (o) Mat. xii. 36, 37.

very idle Word ; whereby it is manifest, that any one the least idle Word, is a Transgression of the whole Law of God, and therefore deserves eternal Damnation. And furthermore the Apostle assureth us, *That foolish Talking and Jestings, is as certain to bring the Wrath of God upon the Guilty, as Fornication, Idolatry, or any other heinous Sin (p)*. Hence idle and vain Words, which are counted at most but little Sins, are so great as that the least of them will bring eternal Destruction upon the Head of the Guilty, except he truly repents, by forsaking the Sin, and doing Works meet for Repentance, and by true Faith fieth unto the Blood of Christ for Pardon.

3. *Unclean, lascivious Thoughts, may be by too many counted no Sins, or, at most, but very little Sins.* Whence if lascivious Persons can but keep from actual Fornication and Adultery, they think themselves very innocent from those Sins, tho' they take daily Pleasure in unclean Thoughts and Imaginations. But our Lord assureth us, *That to Lust after a Woman, is to commit Adultery with her in the Heart (q)*. One adulterous Look or Thought, is such a Sin as violates the whole Law of God, though thou may'st count it no Sin, or but a very little Sin ; and the Law and Judgment of God, the righteous Judge, shall stand, and not thy perverse Imaginations. And therefore, without Repentance and Faith in the Blood of the crucified Jesus, one lascivious Thought will be thy eternal Ruin ; for *no unclean Adulterer, in Act or Thought, shall inherit the Kingdom of Christ, and of God (r)*.

4. *Hatred, Malice and Envy, are too commonly counted either no Sins, or, at most, but very little Sins.* Too many, if they can withhold their Hands from Revenge, Fighting, Killing, and Burning their Adversaries, and from doing Mischief to their Possessions ;

(p) *Epb. v. 3, 4, 5, 6.* (q) *Mat. v. 28.* (r) *Epb. v. 5.*

ons ; yet can feed their Minds deliciously with secret wishing Hurt unto them ; they can Hate them, and be implacable towards them ; they can feed upon Envy and Malice, Day and Night, and never think it to be any Sin at all, or, at most, but a very little Sin, which God can hardly see ; yea, they say in their Hearts, if not too common with their Tongues, *That the Lord shall not see it, nor shall the God of Jacob regard it* (s). But God the righteous Judge enumerateth *Malice, Envy, and Hatred*, among the black List of the vilest Sins (t) ; and assureth us, *That whosoever hateth his Brother, is a Murderer, that hath no eternal Life, abiding in him* (u). O poor Soul, be convinced, that the least hateful, envious, malicious Thought, that at any Time ariseth in thy Heart, against any of thy Fellow Creatures, is Murder, yea, a Breach of the whole holy Law of God ; and that without bitter Repentance, and humble Faith in the Blood of Jesus, it will shut thy guilty Soul out of Heaven, and bind thee forever in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone !

5. *Vain wandering Thoughts and Imaginations, are by most little observed, and commonly counted no Sins, or at most but very little Sins.* O how common is it for People to divert themselves in vain Thoughts and wandering Imaginations all the Day long, and hardly ever take any Notice of it, nor so much as think them to be sinful ! Dreaming and imagining a Thousand Things, that never had, nor ever shall have any real Being ! Contriving a Thousand Things, of which there be neither a Promise, nor any Likelihood of their ever obtaining them ! Spending many Tho'ts altogether unprofitable to either Soul or Body ; no ways to the Glory of God, nor having any Tendency to their own Happiness ! O how many vain

(s) *Psal. xciv. 7.* (t) *Gal. v. 19, 20, 21. Tit. iii. 3.* (u) *1 John ii. 15.*

roving Thoughts and Imaginations art thou guilty of in one Prayer, or in hearing one Sermon, or in reading one Chapter in the Bible, or in any other religious Duty? *The Lord knoweth the Thoughts of Man, that they are Vanity (x)*. How justly may the Omnipresent All-seeing God say, *That thou drawest near him with thy Mouth, but that thy Heart, thy Thoughts, are far from him (y)*; and that, *With thy Mouth thou shewest much Love, but that thy Heart, in vain wandering Thoughts and Imaginations, goeth after thy Covetousness (z)*; And yet thou takest very little Notice of these thy vain Thoughts, and if thou dost take any Notice of them, yet countest them either no Sins, or, at most, but very little Sins, as long as thou canst keep up an outward Shew of Honesty and Religion before Men. But thus saith the Lord, *O wash thine Heart from Wickedness---How long shall thy vain Thoughts lodge within thee (a)*? Where thou may'st see that God the righteous Judge declares vain Thoughts to be Wickedness; and as the least Wickedness is a Breach of the whole holy Law of God, so every vain Thought exposeth thy guilty Head unto the Thunderbolts of all the Curses of the Wrath of the Almighty, in this Life and forever (b)! Therefore every vain Thought is so great a Sin that it will be thy eternal Ruin, unless by unfeigned Faith, thou gettest it pardoned, through the precious Blood of Jesus Christ, and by true Repentance, with the Psalmist, *Thou so lovest the Law of God, as to hate vain Thoughts (c)*.

6. *Ignorance of God and his Word, is too commonly counted either no Sin, or, at most, but a very little Sin.* Though God hath given us his holy Book, yet how many are very ignorant of the plain and most necessary Truths therein revealed! How justly may God complain

(x) *Psal. xciv. 11.* (y) *Isa. xxix. 13.* (z) *Ezek. xxxiii. 31.* (a) *Jer. iv. 14.* (b) *Gal. iii. 10. Deut. xxviii. 15, --- 20. Mat xxv. 41.* (c) *Psal. cxix. 113.*

plain of too many as he did of his professing People of old, *I have written unto you the great Things of my Law, but ye have accounted them as a strange Thing,* Hof. viii. 12. How many value a Shilling Bill of Paper Money, more than the best Sheet of the holy Bible; and take more Care and Pains to learn to know a good Bill from a bad one, than to learn and understand the most necessary Truth that concerns their eternal Salvation; and yet count this either no Sin, or at most but a very small Sin? How many live contentedly in Ignorance of God, of Christ, and of his Will, and of their Duties towards God and Man, and yet think it little or no Sin? Though Christ commands all that profess him, to observe his Gospel Ordinances; yet how many live in the sinful Contempt or Neglect of this, and think it little or no Sin? Though God pronounceth his *Curse upon Prayerless Families (d)*, yet how few make Conscience of worshiping God in their Families, and yet think it little or no Sin? How many do we find, that make so little Account of sinful and wilful Ignorance, that they plead their Ignorance as a sufficient Reason for their Neglect of those Duties which God commands them to perform; and so instead of acknowledging the Sinfulness of their Ignorance, they justify themselves therein? But thus saith the Lord, *It is a People of no Understanding, therefore he that made them, will not have Mercy on them; and he that formed them, will shew them no Favour,* Isa. xxvii. 11. And again, *My People are destroyed for Lack of Knowledge,* Hof. iv. 6.

God made *Adam*, and all Mankind in him, in his own Image (e). That Image consisted in the Knowledge of God and his Will, as well as in Righteousness and true Holiness. *Adam* by his Fall, and all Mankind in him, have lost that Knowledge, and are become

(d) Jeri. x. 25.

(e) Gen. i. 27.

become spiritually *blind and ignorant, born like wild Asses Colts* (f). Every Man that will be saved from eternal Destruction, must be restored into that Image again (g). God deals with thee as with a rational Creature, and gives thee his Word, and offers thee his Spirit to teach thee to know thy Creator and Redeemer ; and to teach thee to know his Will for thy Salvation (h). And it is thy Enmity, Pride, and Slothfulness, that hinders thee to learn (i). Therefore tho' thou countest thy wilful Ignorance to be either no Sin, or at most but a very little Sin ; yet God, the righteous Judge, pronounceth Destruction without Mercy upon thy Head, except thou repentest and reformest ; which proves Ignorance to be a very great and dreadful Sin. *Vengeance in flaming Fire will be to all that know not God !* Thef. i. 8.

7. *Forgetfulness is commonly counted either no Sin, or at the most but a very little Sin.* Though People forget God Days without Number, as Israel of old (k) ; tho' they forget his Word of Threatenings, Commands, and Promises ; tho' they cannot repeat five Words out of the Bible, or of a Sermon ; though they forget themselves and their Duties towards God and Man ; yet how many are unconcerned about this, who look upon their Forgetfulness of God, and the Things of their Salvation, to be no Sin, or at most but a very little Sin ; yea, they impudently blame God for not giving them a better Memory, and so justify themselves as innocent and sinless herein. Thou canst remember earthly Things, vain Stories, and vile Ribaldry, too well, or rather too ill ; but carest not, nor takest any Pains, to remember God and his holy Word. But though thou countest this, at most, but a small Sin, yet be it known unto thee, that it is a ve-

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(f) *Epb. iv. 18. Job xi. 12.* (g) *Col. iii. 10. Epb. iv. 24.* (h) *Prov. i. 20, --- 24.* (i) *Psal. x. 4. Prov. xxi. 25. Mat. xxv. 26.* (k) *Jer. ii. 32.*

ry heinous Wickedness, ~~and~~ that the ancient Complaint against *Israel*, is ~~justly~~ applicable unto thee, *They forgat God their Saviour,--therefore he said that he would destroy them* (l). Forgetfulness of God and his Word is a Mother Sin; for he that forgets his Duty, cannot do it; and as the least Forgetfulness of the Law of God, is a Breach of the whole Law, so it shall issue in the eternal Destruction of the Guilty, unless it be truly repented of, and pardoned by the precious Blood of Christ. *Therefore consider this, ye that FORGET GOD, lest he tear you in Pieces when there shall be none to deliver you!* Psal. l. 22.

8. *Out-witting and over-reaching, is too commonly counted no Sin, or, at the most, but a very little Sin.* It is too common with too many, if by telling Lies, or by equivocating, or by over-praising their Goods, or by taking Advantage of the Ignorance or Necessity of those with whom they deal, they can screw out a good Bargain, as they call it, or can get more Price for their Goods than they are worth; O how they will secretly boast of it, and impute it to their Wit and Skill, and think it no Sin at all (m)! But O vain Man, it is a very great Sin! It is not loving thy Neighbour as thyself; it is not doing to others as thou wouldst have others to do unto thee; and so thou art guilty of transgressing the whole Law of God at one Stroke (n). And as the least Out-witting, Over-reaching, and Defrauding, is a Breach of the whole Law of God, so it is a very great Sin, which will bring the eternal Vengeance of God upon thy guilty Head, except by Repentance thou forsake it, and hast it pardoned by a living Faith in the Blood of Jesus Christ: For saith the Lord, *Let no Man go beyond and defraud his Brother in any Matter, because that the Lord is the Avenger of all such,* 1 Thes. iv. 6.

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(l) Psal. cvi. 21, 23. (m) Prov. xx. 14. (n) Mat. vii. 12.

9. *Covetousness is commonly counted either no Sin, or at most but a very little Sin.* Thus many hug the World sweetly in their Hearts, and serve it Day and Night ; and cover their Covetousness under the fine Titles and Names of Necessity, Frugality, Industry, and good Husbandry, or some like Pretence ; and if at any Time, any seems to blame Covetousness in others, where is the Person that seeth and blameth it in himself ? Every one is ready to count it no Sin, but a Virtue in himself ; or if it be so manifest that he cannot hide it under the Name of Virtue, yet he thinks it but a very small Sin, that hath many good Conveniences accompanying it, which he thinks are sufficient to make Attonement for it ; such as to be able to give a few niggardly Alms to the Poor, &c. But whosoever counts Covetousness a little Sin, yet it is no less a Sin than *Idolatry*, Col. iii. 5. 'Tis forsaking God, and making a God of the World, and its perishing Creatures : And the least Degree of Covetousness being a Breach of the whole Law of God, it lays the Guilty open to the Wrath of God, unless it be forsaken and pardoned by the Blood of the Son of God. *No covetous Man, who is an Idolater, hath any Inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God*, Eph. v. 5. O then how great and monstrous a Sin is Covetousness !

10. *Natural, original Corruption, Hardness of Heart, Impenitency, and Unbelief, are too commonly counted either no Sins, or at the most but very little Sins.* O how the Generality of fallen Mankind are under the Dominion of natural Depravity, which is the Seed, Root, and Spring, of all Sin ; and yet think themselves very innocent and holy, if they don't break out into some great and shameful actual Wickedness ! Though they are indeed, as to their natural original Depravity, *Wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, yet think themselves rich*

rich in Grace and Innocency, and do not feel any Need of renewing their Nature (o). Though every Imagination of the Thoughts of their Hearts are only Evil, and that continually; yet they conceit, and will affirm, that their Hearts are very good towards God and Men (p). Thus original Sin, which is the whole Body of all Sin, is generally counted no Sin.

And how general is it, that those who look upon Adultery, Robbery, Murder, and the like, to be great Sins; yet are no more troubled at their hard, impenitent, unbelieving Hearts, than if Hardness of Heart, Impenitency, and Unbelief, were no Sins at all; or, at least, they are no more troubled, than if they themselves were perfectly free and innocent from these Sins. And yet as all the fallen Race of Adam are deeply guilty of Hardness of Heart, Impenitency, and Unbelief, so these are the greatest and most fearful and dangerous of all Sins. Oh poor deluded Soul, Thou by thy Hardness and impenitent Heart, treasurest up unto thyself Wrath against the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God! Rom. ii. 5. And for Unbelief thou art condemned already, and liest under the Wrath of God! John iii. 18, 36. By thy Unbelief thou makest God a Liar, 1 John v. 10. Unbelief is put in the Front of the black Catalogue of Sins, for which those that live and die guilty, shall have their Part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone, Rev. xxi. 8. Impenitency and Unbelief are not only a Breach of the whole Law of God, but also the highest Contempt of the Gospel, and the free Mercy and Grace of God in his dear Son. It is a giving open Defiance to the Almighty, his Law, his Gospel, his Christ, his Salvation, his Heaven and all! As Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, is the Sum of

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(o) Rev. iii. 17. (p) Gen. vi. 5. Hos. xii. 8. Prov. xx. 6. Luke xvi. 15.

the Gospel (*q*) ; so Impenitency and Unbelief, which thou countest little or no Sins, are the only great damning Sins that can ruin thee, or any else, who have the free Offer of the great Salvation of the Gospel. If thou wert guilty of all the actual Sins that can be named, yet if thou truly repentest by forsaking thy Sins, and truly believest in the Lord Jesus, all shall be freely forgiven thee, and eternal Happiness shall be thy Portion (*r*). Therefore, O immortal Soul, do not any longer look upon thy original Corruptions, Hardness of Heart, Impenitency, and Unbelief, to be little Sins ; but be convinced that they are thy greatest Sins, and the only Sins that can ruin thee ; yea, be convinced that every Sin is very great, because failing in any one the least Point, makes thee guilty of transgressing the whole holy Law of God ! Let then this transgressed holy Law, be thy severe Schoolmaster, to scourge thee unto Christ, that thou mayst be justified by Faith, *Gal.* ii. 16. and iii. 10, 24.

And thus much to shew and prove that those Sins which are commonly counted either no Sins, or, at the most, but very little Sins, are indeed monstrous great, and Soul-ruining, Sins ! So I come to shew briefly,

5. *How the least Sin is a Breach of the whole Law of God, and a Forfeiting the whole Covenant of Works.*

1. *The least Sin is a Breach of the whole Law, as the Law is to be considered and taken conjunctively.* Though any one Sin, be not an actual, direct, and intentional Breach of every particular Command, or Prohibition of the Law ; as a malicious, or covetous Thought, is not actual and intentional Adultery or Murder ; yet he that is guilty of the least sinful Thought, is guilty of not keeping the whole Law ; tho' he be not guilty of transgressing actually every particular

particular Precept of it. He transgresseth the whole Law, tho' not the whole of the Law. Thus, he that wounds a Man's Finger, wounds the whole Man, tho' not the whole, or every Member of the Man; and he that breaks the least Link of a Chain, breaks the whole Chain, tho' he breaks not every particular Link of the Chain; and he that faileth in the Performance of the least Article of a Bond, or Covenant of Agreement, breaks and forfeits the whole Bond or Covenant, and makes all void; tho' he should perform every Article except some one little Article which he violates or faileth in: Even so, the least Sin is a Breach of the whole Law, considered and taken conjunctively; a Failing in any one little Point, Command, or Prohibition, breaks, forfeits, and makes void, the whole Law and Covenant, whereby Man, in his upright State, was to keep in Peace, Friendship, and Love with his Creator; so that *by the Works of the Law, no Flesh shall ever be justified*, Rom. ii. 19, 20.

2. *The least Sin is a Breach of Love and Charity, which is the Sum of the whole Law.* Our Saviour assures us, That Love to God and Man, is the Sum of the whole Law, *Mat. xxii. 37,---41. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind---And thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself; on these two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.* And, saith the Apostle, *Rom. xiii. 10. Love is the fulfilling of the Law.* Sincere Love to God and Man, flowing from saving Faith in Christ, in Obedience to God, and regulated by his Word, and performed by the Grace of the holy Spirit, is what the Gospel requires, and regenerate Believers are enabled to do, and is graciously accepted of God, only in the Merits and Intercession of Jesus Christ (f).

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(f) 1 Pet. ii. 5.

But the Law, as a Covenant of Works, did, and still doth, require perfect Love to God and Man, in Man's own Strength, without the least Failure (*t*) ; which none of the fallen Race of *Adam* ever could, or can perform : And so every the least Sin, flows from Hatred of God and Man, and so is a Breach of that perfect Love and Charity which the Law requireth ; and being a Breach of Love, it is a Breach of that whole Law of Love. And tho' fallen unregenerate Persons, may refrain from many notorious Acts of Sin, by restraining Grace ; and perform many Duties towards God and Men, as to the Matter of them, by common Grace ; yet because they are not performed with that perfect Love, every Way, as the Law demands, they are a Violation of that whole Law of Love. *He that faileth in one Point, is guilty of all.*

3. *The least Sin is against the whole Authority of God, in the whole Law, and in the whole of the Law.* The whole Authority of God, the Supreme Lawgiver, is as much in the least *Iota* of his Law, as in the greatest. God forbids the least vain Thought, by the very same Authority as he forbids Adultery and Murder ; so that he who thinks the least vain Thought, tramples upon the whole Authority of the Lawgiver, as much as he that commits Adultery or Murder ; and he that tramples upon the whole Authority of the Lawgiver, tramples his whole Law under his Feet : And so the least Sin is a Breach of the whole Law, because the least Sin is against the whole Authority of God ; which is equal in the least Tittle, as in the greatest Command or Prohibition of his holy, just, and perfect Law. He that despiseth the Authority of God in the least Command or Prohibition of his Law, doth despise his Authority in the greatest ; and he that can presumptuously adventure to tread

(*t*) Gal. iii. 10.

tread upon the Authority of God by committing the least Sin, hath an Heart that will adventure to tread upon the same Authority, by committing the greatest Wickedness, as soon as he meets with suitable Temptation and Opportunity to do it, so as to escape Punishment from Men, which he fears more than the immediate Wrath of the Almighty. And thus, as the least Sin breaks the whole Law conjunctively, and as it is a Breach of Love and Charity, and as it is against the whole Authority of God in the whole of the Law; so it is a Breach of the whole Law, and a Forfeiture of the whole Covenant of Works. *He that offendeth in one Point, is guilty of all.* So I come to shew briefly,

6. *How the least Sin deserves all the Punishment due for transgressing the whole Law of God.*

O ye poor, ignorant, proud, self-righteous Souls! ye are ready to say, Oh, *This is a hard Saying, who can bear it (u)?* and to question, *How can these Things be (x)?* Ye are ready to charge God with cruel Unjustice, if for one vain Thought he chargeth you guilty of transgressing his whole Law, and to deserve all the Punishment due unto Transgressors of his whole Law. If the Case be thus, you are ready to say, as *Israel* of old, *That the Way of God is unequal, and unjust, in his Dealings with you (y).* Or if thou art not grown to this Degree of Atheistical Impudence, as thus to charge the Almighty to his Face, with cruel Unjustice; yet thou feignest and imaginest, *that he is altogether such a God as thyself (z),* who well approves of thy perverse Ways and Judgment of Things; and that that which we call his holy Book (containing the true Revelation of himself and his Will) is either altogether a false Forgery, or that we pervert his Meaning therein, only *(as a Piece of Priest-*

(u) *John* vi. 60. (x) *John* iii. 9. (y) *Exek.* xviii. 25, 29. (z) *Psal.* l. 21.

Priest-craft, as thou callest it) to frighten thee with feigned Dangers, so as to enslave thee to our domineering Tyranny (a). Thus, by one blind Imagination or other, thou hardenest thyself, in thy delusive Dreams, against God and his revealed Will, in his written Word.

But as God and his holy written Word is true, so it is evidently true, that the least Sin deserves all the Punishment due for transgressing the whole Law of God.

1. *Because the least Sin is a Transgression of the whole Law, &c. I have already proved.* And it is indisputably evident, that he who is guilty of transgressing the whole Law, justly deserves the whole Punishment due for transgressing it.

2. *Because the least Sin corrupts and poisons the whole Man, and makes him an utter Enemy unto God.* This is evident by the first Sin of Adam, which was only eating a Morfel of a forbidden Fruit, and lo it corrupted and poisoned his whole Body and Soul, and all the World of Mankind ! Rom. v. 19. *By one Man's Disobedience any were made Sinners.* And every Sin, be it great or little, is of the same Nature, and produceth the very same Effects : It not only renders the Sinner guilty of eternal Damnation, but also imprints a Blot and Stain of venomous Corruption and Depravity upon the whole Soul and Body of the Sinner ; every the least Sin draws a Vail of Darkness, Blindness, and Ignorance upon the whole Man (b) ; every the least Sin kindles Hatred and Enmity against God and Holiness, in the whole Man ; and sets his whole Nature on Fire of Hell, to sin with Greediness (c). The very Nature of all Sin, be it counted never so little, is to harden the Heart, and to turn all the Affections from God and his Law, unto all Sin and Wickedness. The very least Sin, renders

(a) Num. xvi. 3, 12, 13, 14. Jude verse 11. (b) Eph. iv. 17, 18.
(c) James iii. 6. Eph. iv. 19.

ders the whole Man utterly unable and unwilling to keep any Command of the whole Law, pleasing unto God. It renders the Sinner utterly incapable, of himself, to do any Thing but transgressing the Law of God continually, one Way or other ! The least Sin renders *the carnal Mind Enmity against God, so that it cannot be subject to his holy Law !* Rom. viii. 7. How evident then is it, that the least Sin deserves all the Punishment due for transgressing the whole Law of God. And that,

3. *Because fallen, sinful, polluted Man, cannot cure and cleanse himself from the mortal Poison and loathsome Disease of the least Sin.* All Angels and Men cannot cure and cleanse any one Sinner from the least Spot of this filthy Leprosy, or the least Grain of this deadly Poison. And though *the Blood of Christ is a Fountain opened to cure this venomous Disease, and cleanse this infectious Leprosy (d)* ; yet every Sinner is such an Enemy to Christ, and so proud of his Self-sufficiency, so unable and unwilling to come to this Fountain to be cured and cleansed, that none will ever come, except God, by his Almighty Power, draws him. Hence, saith Christ, *Ye will not come unto me, that ye may have Life,* John v. 40. And again. *No Man can come unto me, except the Father draw him,* John vi. 44. Seeing then that the least Sin poisons and pollutes the whole Man, Body, and Soul ; and that the whole Creation cannot cure nor cleanse away the least Spot of the least Sin, nor satisfy the Justice of God for the Guilt of it ; and that every Sinner is utterly unable and unwilling to come unto the Fountain of the Blood of Christ to have his Guilt pardoned, and his Disease cured and cleansed ; how justly then doth the least Sin deserve all the Punishment due for transgressing the whole Law of God. And that also,

4. *Because Punishment for transgressing the whole Law*

(d) *Zech. xiii. 1. 1 John i. 7.*

Law and Covenant, was due to the least Sin, by the Agreement of God with Adam, and with all Mankind in him, in his upright State in Paradise. Gen. ii. 17. But of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it ; for in the Day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. And Chap. iii. 3. saith the Woman to the Serpent, But of the Fruit of the Tree which is in the midst of the Garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye TOUCH it, lest ye die. Where you may see, that so little a Sin of Disobedience to his Sovereign, Creator, and Lord, as TOUCHING the forbidden Fruit, rendered *Adam*, and all his Posterity, in and with him, liable to DEATH ; which, as the Event proveth, consists in bodily, spiritual, and eternal Death ; even the whole Punishment due for breaking that whole Law and Covenant, by that one little Act of eating, or even TOUCHING the forbidden Fruit.

Now *Adam* was made in the Image of God his Creator, perfectly wise, righteous, and holy (e) ; and as he was endued with that Image, he was perfectly of the same Mind with God his Creator and Lord in the whole of that solemn Affair ; nor could he, as such, be any otherwise minded ; and so he perfectly agreed to the whole Proposal, Law, and Covenant, of his Creator and Sovereign Lord, both for himself, and all his Posterity, That if he would eat or TOUCH the forbidden Fruit, then he, and all his Offspring, should justly suffer all the Punishment of the Death which his rightful Lord threatened, as due for breaking that whole Law and Covenant. And thou who curstest old *Adam*, not for his Sin, but because of the sensible Calamities that his Fall brought upon thee, which deprive thee of the Pleasure of swimming sweetly in Sin forever ; as it is very evident, in thy Contempt of Christ, the new and second *Adam*,
who

(e) Gen. i. 27. Col. iii. 10. Eph. iv. 24.

who offers freely to save thee from thy Sins and Miseries, and to raise thee into higher Dignity and Happiness, than thou couldst have in and by the first *Adam*, if he had not fallen : Thou, I say, whoever thou art, if thou hadst been personally there, endued with the same divine Image, as thy Father *Adam* then was, thou couldst not but perfectly agree to that Covenant, and say, Amen, to the awful Threatning for breaking it ; nor couldst thou choose a more wise, righteous, and holy an Undertaker, on thy Part, than he was. Yea, though thou wast not actually and personally there, yet, as the Branches are in the Root of a Tree, so thou and all Mankind were naturally, originally, and foederally there in the Loyns of *Adam* ; perfectly agreeing to every Precept, Article, Promise, and Threatning, of that primitive Law and Covenant : And so *Adam* and thou, and all Mankind in him, by TOUCHING and eating the forbidden Fruit, did, both he and all Mankind, become justly liable to suffer all the Punishment due for breaking the whole and every Article of that Law and Covenant, as it is lamentably evident in the Event ! and all this by the free Agreement of *Adam*, and the Agreement of all Mankind in him, with God, his and their Creator and Sovereign Lord. Thus by one Man Sin entered the World, and Death by Sin, and so Death passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned ; and in *Adam* all die, and every Mouth stopped, and all the World of Mankind guilty before God (f).

And according to that primitive Constitution, it is still, and forever shall be, as to that Law and Covenant, even that the least Sin justly deserves all the Punishment due for transgressing the whole and every Part of it.

And tho' we poor, fallen Apostates, are become
E blind,

(f) Rom. v. 12. 1 Cor. xv. 22. Rom. iii. 19.

blind, ignorant, perverse, and sinfully partial in this Case ; yet God remains unchangeably just and true to his Threatning ; and will justly punish every, and any, the least Sin, of every impenitent, unbelieving Sinner, with the whole Punishment due for breaking his whole Law and Covenant.

And thus thou mayst see how the least Sin deserves all the Punishment due to a Transgressor of the whole and every Part of the Law of God, as it is written, *He that offendeth in one Point, is guilty of all ; and, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all Things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them,* Gal. iii. 10. with the Text.

And if the least *Iota* or Tittle be wanting, then it is *not all* ; and if thou *doest not all*, even every *Iota* and Tittle, thou art wholly, in Soul and Body, under the fearful Curse of the Almighty ; and if thou livest and diest under his righteous Curse, thou shalt know, to thy eternal Woe, that the least Sin justly deserves all the Punishment due to a Transgressor of the whole, and every Part, of his holy, perfect, and righteous Law ; when he roars thee to Hell, with a *Depart from me thou cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels !* Mat. xxv. 41. And there is no Remedy for thee on Earth or in Heaven, but to renounce thy old Covenant in *Adam*, and by true Gospel repentance, and Faith, fleeing for thy Life, unto Christ the second *Adam*, and his gracious Covenant, that thou mayst be saved, and that Sin be not thy eternal Ruin. And so much shall suffice now for the doctrinal Part ; so I come,

7. *To the Application.*

Seeing therefore that it is evident, that the least Sin is a Breach of the whole Law of God, and a forfeiting all the Privileges of the Covenant of Works, we may hence infer and learn several necessary and

profitable Instructions, which I shall but briefly hint at.

1. Hence we may learn, that the Ministers of Jesus Christ, should clearly and faithfully teach and preach this Truth. 'Tis a Truth taught by Moses, the Prophets, Christ and his Apostles, and particularly by the Apostle James in the Text: And as the Apostle Paul did, so all the faithful Ministers of Christ are bound, To declare the whole Counsel of God unto the People to whom they are sent, Acts xx. 27. This Truth therefore being Part of the Counsel of God, receive it as such, and make a right Use of it to his Glory, and your own Salvation.

'Tis true, there are many Teachers in our Days, who hardly ever meddle with this and the like Truths, nor follow them as close as, by the Grace of God, you have had them; because they either are ignorant of them, or were never experimentally convinced of the Corruptions of their own depraved Hearts; and the spiritual Extent of the holy and perfect Law of God; or they are afraid to displease Men, and for the sake of filthy Lucre, aim only at pleasing of Men, and feeding their proud, legal, vain Hopes, till both Teachers and Disciples fall, in a Dream of Delusion, into the Ditch of eternal Perdition! *Mat. xv. 14.*

O immortal Souls! 'tis Ignorance of the Holiness and Righteousness of God (g); 'tis Ignorance of the Holiness, Purity, and spiritual Extent of the Law of God (b); 'tis Ignorance of the Nature of the Covenant made with all Mankind in Adam; 'tis Ignorance of the true Nature and Extent of the Fall of all Mankind in Adam; 'tis Ignorance of the least Sin's being a Breach of the whole Law of God; 'tis Ignorance of the Depth of the Corruption of their own Hearts; 'tis a being so spiritually dead in Sin,

as neither to see nor feel the Motions and Workings of their own Corruptions, in their own Hearts (*i*) ; 'tis Ignorance of the Gospel, and the Way of Salvation by the free Covenant of Grace (*k*) ; 'tis Ignorance of the sanctifying Work of the holy Spirit in Regeneration (*l*) ; 'tis also Ignorance of that Holiness, flowing from true Gospel-faith, which the Law of God, as an everlasting Rule of Righteousness, and the Gospel of Grace, require in the Life and Conversation of all Professors of Christianity ; I say, 'tis Ignorance, either of all, or of some or other of these weighty Points, together with Pride and carnal Self-love growing upon this Ignorance, is the Occasion of the most destructive Errors, Heresies, Infidelity, Atheism and Prophaneness, that reign in the World at this Day, especially among Professors of Christianity.

'Tis from Ignorance in this Point, *Pelagians* deny original Sin, and dream that fallen Man hath Power to save himself, without renewing Grace ; and *Arminians* dream that fallen Man hath a Free-will to be converted by meer moral Swasion, without special effectual Grace ; and the wild *Antinomian* rejecteth the moral Law as a Rule of moral Duties to Believers, because he cannot, or will not, distinguish between it as it is a Covenant of Works, and as it is an everlasting Rule of moral Righteousness unto Believers ; 'tis Ignorance of this Point, makes the proud *Socinian* to reject the Merits of Christ, and dream that he can be his own Saviour ; 'tis Ignorance in this Point, makes *Quakers* dream that it is possible for Man to attain to sinless Perfection in this Life ; and *Papists* to dream of Works of Supererogation, or doing more Good than God by his perfect Law requireth ; Ignorance in this Point, is the Reason of so much Ungodliness, and so little of the Fear of God

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appearing in most Professors of Christianity every where, of whatsoever Denomination they be.

If this Truth was rightly understood, and soundly believed, all destructive and dangerous Errors would fall before it, *like Dagon before the Ark (m)*; neither would Prophaneness, practical Atheism, and Irreligion, be so common among Professors of Christianity as it is.

As therefore this is a weighty Truth of God, which we his Ambassadors are bound to declare unto you, so do you receive it in Faith and Love, and strive to make a right Improvement of it, to stir you up to lay fast hold on the one only Way of Deliverance from Sin and Wrath, by Jesus Christ, as he is freely offered to you in the Gospel.

2. *We may also hence learn and see the infinite Holiness and Justice of God.* O how infinitely pure is the Holiness and Justice of the Judge of the whole World, who is the Author of this Law, seeing the least Sin, yea, the least Inclination to Sin, is a Breach of the whole Law! O how pure are his Eyes, who cannot look upon the least Sin without infinite Anger and Displeasure (n)! And how justly may we cry out with the Men of Beth-shemesb, *Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God!* 1 Sam. vi. 20.

3. *Hence also see the wonderful Purity, Spirituality, and Largeness, of this holy, and perfect Law of God.* It is a Law that is holy, just, and spiritual, Rom. vii. 12, 14. Hence, says the Psalmist, *I have seen an End of all Perfection, but thy Commandment is exceeding broad,* Psal. cxix. 96. Oh the Largeness of that Law, that reacheth unto, and findeth out the very least of our Sins! Oh the Spirituality, Purity, and Justice of that Law, which punisheth the least unpardoned Sin with eternal Destruction! Oh the in-

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(m) 1 Sam. v. 3. (n) Hab. i. 13.

comparable Contexture of that Law, which cannot be touched with the Commission of the least Sin, without breaking and forfeiting the whole ! Behold then how holy, just, spiritual, and large, the Law of our God is ; and learn to stand in suitable Awe of it. Let every one of you sincerely say unto God, *My Heart standeth in Awe of thy Word*, Psal. cxix. 161.

4. Hence also see the fearful Nature of, and the unspeakable Evil that is in the least Sin. Seeing the least Sin that thou canst be guilty of, is a Breach of the whole Law of thy God, and makes thee justly guilty and liable to suffer all the Punishment due to a Transgressor of the whole Law ; Oh then, there must be an infinite Poison of Enmity and Rebellion against the infinite and Almighty Jehovah and his Law, in the least Sin that thou art guilty of ! *Know therefore and see, that it is an Evil and a bitter Thing, to forsake the Lord by the least Sin*, Jer. ii. 19.

5. And moreover you may hence learn, how innumerable Ways and Times, all of us are guilty of transgressing all the holy Commandments of our God. Seeing offending in one Point, makes us guilty of all ; Oh how innumerable Ways and Times are we guilty of all in one Day ; much more in all our Days ! Oh, says the godly Psalmist, *Mine Iniquities are more in Number than the Hairs of my Head*, Psal. xl. 12. And again, *Who can understand his Errors ? Cleanse thou me from secret Faults*, Psal. xix. 12. Oh how many Millions of Ways and Times every one of us are guilty of transgressing every Command of the Law of our God ! And how many Millions of Times over, doth every one of us deserve the whole Punishment which is justly due for transgressing the whole and every Part of it !

6. We may hence further see and learn, that no good Work which we or any of Mankind can do, can merit any Blessing at the Hand of God. The least Ignorance,
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the least Forgetfulness, the least Hardness of Heart, the least Unbelief, the least vain Thought, and the least Deadness and Defect of perfect Love, in any Duty or good Work, is a Breach of the whole Law of God, and renders the Guilty and his Work liable to the Curse and Wrath of God forever: And Oh how much Sin is mixed with the best Duties and Works of the best of Men in this imperfect State! And therefore saith the Holy Ghost, by the wise Man, *There is not a just Man upon Earth, that doeth Good, and sinneth not*, Eccles. vii. 20. And saith holy Paul, *I find a Law, that when I would do Good, Evil is present with me*, Rom. vii. 21. And saith holy John, of himself and all Believers, *If we say that we have no Sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us*, 1 John i. 8. Now then seeing the least Sin makes the Transgressor guilty of transgressing the whole Law; how impossible is it for any, by his best Duties and Works, to merit any Blessing or Favour at the Hand of God? And what mad Delusion is it in any, to dream of meriting Heaven by his best Obedience to this Law, that will accept of nothing less than perfect Satisfaction for the Violation of it in *Adam*, and in our own Persons; and also perfect, sinless, uninterrupted, perpetual Obedience, to the whole and every Tittle and Jot of it (o)?

7. *We may here also see what continual Cause of Shame and Humiliation every one of us hath before our holy and righteous God.* For, as the Apostle saith of himself and all true Believers, *In many Things we offend all*, James iii. 2. And seeing one the least Offence, makes us guilty of all; and that the all-seeing, holy, and righteous Eye of God, marketh every secret vain Thought and Imagination of our Hearts: If we believe and rightly consider this, we will never draw near unto God, in any religious Duty, with-

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(o) Gal. iii. 10. Rom. iii. 20.

out holy Blushing, Shame, and Humility; confessing, *That we are ashamed, and blush to lift up our Faces to our God, because our Iniquities are grown over our Heads, and that our Trespases are grown up unto the Heavens; and that therefore we lie down at his Feet in our Shame, and that our Confusion covereth us, because we have sinned against the Lord our God,* Ezra ix. 6. Jer. iii. 25.

8. This Truth may also teach us what continual Work of godly Sorrow and Repentance, we have while we live in this World. Not only old Sins committed in Time past, but also our daily Sins make unto us continual Work for the continual Exercise of godly Sorrow and Repentance. The least Sin makes us guilty of all; and we are daily guilty, innumerable Ways! Repentance is a turning from all Sin unto God; and as Sin follows us at our Heels, yea, works in our very Bosoms, so it gives Cause of continual Sorrow and Repentance, in striving to mortify it, and in turning from it, unto God and Holiness. *Herein we find the daily Lustings of the Flesh against the Spirit, and of the Spirit against the Flesh, and these contrary the one to the other, so that we cannot do the Things that we would; and makes us, with the Apostle and all Believers, to groan, being burthened; and to sigh often daily, Oh wretched Men that we are, who shall deliver us from this Body of Death (p)?* As a Believer must live by Faith, so he must live in the continual Exercise of Repentance while he continues in this World (q).

9. You may here further see what great Work must be done for, and in a Sinner, before he be fit for Heaven. *Nothing that defileth, shall enter there, Rev. xxi. 27. Neither Spot nor Wrinkle, of the Guilt or Pollution of any the least Sin, or any such Thing, must be upon any that shall enter into that holy and glorious Place, Eph. v. 27. See-*

(p) Gal. v. 17. 2 Cor. v. 4. Rom. vii. 24. (q) Gal. ii. 20. Psal. iii. 12 -- 17.

v. 27. Seeing therefore, that any the least Sin, makes us guilty of all, and pollutes and poisons our whole Soul and Body ; Oh what great and marvelous Work is here, for the ever running Fountain of the Blood of the holy Jesus, continually to wash away our daily Guilt ; and for his holy sanctifying Spirit, to cleanse away our renewed daily Pollution, by his continual renewing Grace ; till we, guilty, polluted Wretches, be at last made perfectly righteous and holy, meet for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light (r) !

10. Whence you may yet further see, the absolute indispensable Need of the Merits and continual Intercession of Christ, and the Sanctification of the holy Spirit, to save a Sinner. For seeing every Sinner is guilty of innumerable Sins, and the least Sin ruins him forever, as to any Thing he can do to help himself ; then thou must remedilessly perish forever, unless Christ freely saves thee from all thy Guilt, and the holy Spirit sanctifies thee from all thy Filth ; therefore thy Case is so desperate, that thou must have Christ and his holy Spirit to save thee, whoever thou art ; otherwise thou art everlastingly undone ! There is no Salvation in any other, nor any Name given under Heaven among Men, that can save thee, but the Lord Jesus, Acts iv. 12. And thou must have, as his meritorious Death, so his continual living Intercession to save thee, Heb. vii. 25. Rom. viii. 34. And thou shalt never taste Salvation without the Sanctification of the holy Spirit, 2 Thes. ii. 13.

11. Hence we may yet further see the infinite Value and Virtue of Christ and his Blood. For whereas every the least Sin breaks the whole Law, and that we are guilty of breaking the whole, Times and Ways without Number ; therefore Christ and his Blood, that pardons and justifies every true Believer from all his

F Guilt,

(r) Zech. xiii. 1. 1 John i. 7. Ezek. xxxvi. 27. John iv. 14. Philip i. 6. 1 Pet. i. 5. Col. i. 12.

Guilt, must needs be of infinite Value and Virtue: As Christ is God-man, so his Blood is *the Blood of God*, Acts xx. 28. And therefore it is *precious Blood*, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. *And Christ and his Blood is most precious unto every Believer*, 1 Pet. ii. 7. Yea so precious, *That they count all perishing Things but Dung, that they may win him, and be found in him, not having their own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is thro' the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith*, Phil. iii. 8, 9.

12. *We may also here see and learn, the almighty Efficacy of the holy Spirit, in sanctifying a Sinner.* Seeing the least Sin makes the whole Soul and Body of every Sinner, a loathsome, stinking, most abominable Thing, in the Sight and Nostrils of the infinitely holy Jehovah; and that every Sinner poisons and pollutes himself, and makes himself thus loathsome, and abominable, Times and Ways without Number, daily; then the Work of the holy Spirit in cleansing, sanctifying, purifying, and sweetly perfuming, such a filthy Creature, by his Grace, must needs be of almighty Efficacy and Virtue. 'Tis no less than *the exceeding Greatness of the Working of his mighty Power*, Eph. i. 17, 18, 19, 20.

13. *Here also we may learn what to think of all those that allow, defend, or excuse themselves, in any the least Sin, against God or Man.* O Man, thou allowest, defendest, and excuseth thyself in the continual, actual Violation of the whole Law of thy Creator and Preserver; *and so art under all the Curses of his whole Law*, Deut. xxviii. 15,--21. and Chap. xxix. 19, 21.

14. *And moreover, we may hereby see and learn, our great Ignorance of Sin, and our dreadful Stupidity, and Hardness of Heart under Sin.* Oh if we did but fully see the infinite and everlasting Evil of Guilt, Filth, and Misery, of every the least Sin, the Sight of it would certainly wound, bruise, and melt our Hearts, otherwise

otherwise than it doth. Beholding his Sins to be more in Number than the Hairs of his Head, even innumerable, made the Heart of the godly Psalmist to fail and faint within him, Psal. xl. 12. And feeling them a Burthen too heavy for him, made him to go mourning all the Day long; and roar, by Reason of the Disquietness of his Heart, Psal. xxxviii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. And that it is not so with us in some Measure daily, is an Evidence that our Ignorance of our Sins, and our Stupidity, Hardness of Heart, and Unbelief of the Word of God, is very great and shameful! Therefore, Let us search our Ways, and rent our Hearts, and truly turn unto the Lord, that Sin be not our Ruin (f).

15. Here also you may see the unspeakable Love of God the Father, in giving his only begotten dearly beloved Son, to suffer and die the most terrible Death, for such guilty Traitors and Rebels, and such filthy Wretches, as we are. Guilty, guilty we are of transgressing the whole Law of our God, casting it behind our Backs, trampling it, and his whole Authority in it, under our Feet, and hereby rebelling, with a high Hand, against the Throne, Crown, and Dignity, of his most high Majesty, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords: Therefore, that he should deliver his dear Son to Death in the Room of and for such guilty abominable Traitors and Rebels, is the Effect of unexpressible Love. Oh, Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins (t). And herein, God commendeth his Love towards us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us (u).

16. Here also you may behold the incomparable Love of Christ, in giving himself a Ransom to redeem such wicked Traitors as we are. Our Debts to the Law and Justice of God, are beyond Number; and we

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(f) Lam. iii. 40. Joel ii. 12. 13. Ezek. xviii. 30. (t) 1 John iv. 19. (u) Rom. v. 8.

can do nothing but increase our Debts, by heaping Sins, Guilt, and the Curses of God and his Law, upon our Heads ; that therefore the holy and glorious Son of God, should most willingly humble himself to be clothed with our Nature, and in our Nature give his innocent Body and Soul to suffer all the Shame, Curses, and Torments, due to such Wretches as we ; was, and is, the Effect of his incomparable Love towards us. Hence the Apostle prayeth, *That we may know the Love of Christ which passeth Knowledge, that we may be filled with all the Fulness of God,* Eph. iii. 14, ---20.

17. Here you may also be convinced of the invincible Love of the holy Spirit, in undertaking to cleanse and sanctify such abominable Dunghills, of the Filthiness of Sin, as we are. The least of our numberless Sins, make us so venomous, filthy, and loathsome, that neither we nor all the Creatures on Earth or in Heaven, can cleanse and cure us. Hence we are commanded, *Neither to quench nor grieve the holy Spirit (x) ;* because if we despise and grieve the holy Spirit of Grace, we shall eternally perish in our Filth, and shall lose all the Benefits of the Blood of Christ ; for *those that have not the Spirit of Christ, are none of his,* Rom. viii. 9. And when the Psalmist prayed for a clean Heart, he prayed also, *That God would not take away his holy Spirit from him (y) ;* because he knew it was beyond the Power of any but the holy Spirit, to create a clean Heart in him, or in any else. How incomparable and invincible then is the Love and Grace of the holy Spirit, in his undertaking to cleanse, wash, cure, and thoroughly sanctify us, from all the leprous Filth, putrifying Sores, and mortal Wounds, of our numberless loathsome Sins !

18. Hence we may further see our continual Need of the Mercy of the Father, and the Merits of the Son, and

(x) 1 Thes. v. 19. Eph. iv. 30. (y) Psal. li. 10, 11.

and the Grace of the holy Spirit, should be unto us continually. We become guilty every Moment of eternal Perdition, for transgressing the whole Law of our God ; and every the least Sin which we are any Ways guilty of, puts us into this woful Case, of our selves, or any Thing that we can do to help ourselves: Oh how dear and precious then should the Thoughts of the pardoning Mercy of our heavenly Father be unto us, who continually pardons our innumerable Sins (a) ! And Oh how ravishing sweet should the Meditation of our dear Jesus, and his Merits, and continual Intercession be unto us, who procureth continual Pardons unto us (b) ! And how precious should the Thoughts of the holy Spirit of Grace be continually unto us, who continually is renewing and sanctifying us; continually enabling us, by Repentance and Faith, to obtain our Pardons from our merciful Father in the Blood of his dear Son ; and who continually applyeth the Promises of Pardon and Grace unto us, for our Comfort, under all our Guilt, Fears, and Doubts ; and who continually keeps us from destructive Errors and Delusions, and leads us into, and keeps us in, all saving Truths unto eternal Glory ! Oh dear Souls, Meditations upon the Mercy of the Father, and the Mediation of the Son, and the Grace of the Spirit, should be ever sweeter unto us than our very Lives (c) !

20. We may hereby also learn how highly we should value the holy and sweet Gospel of our Lord Jesus, in the whole and every Part of it. The Law ruins us eternally for the least Sin, and there is no Relief for us but only by the blessed Gospel. 'Tis only the Gospel that reveals the free Love and Mercy of the Father in Jesus Christ his dear Son unto us ; 'tis only the Gospel that reveals Jesus Christ as an all-sufficient Helper.

(a) *Psal.* ciii. 1, 2, 3. (b) *Heb.* vii. 25. & *John* i. 7. (c) *Psal.* civ. 34. *Psal.* lxxiii. 3, 8.

Helper and Saviour unto us ; 'tis only by the Gospel the holy Spirit worketh and perfecteth all Grace in our Souls unto eternal Glory ; if we lose the Gospel, we lose all solid Grounds of Hope (d) ; but while the vilest Sinners enjoy the Gospel, there is Hope for them (e). Therefore we should value the Gospel *sweeter than the Honey-comb, and more precious than Thousands of Gold and Silver (f)*. The very Feet of those that preach the Gospel of Peace, and bring glad Tidings of Salvation, should be very beautiful in our Eyes (g). All the Ordinances of the Gospel should be as pleasurable unto us, *As a Feast of fat Things, a Feast of Wines on the Lees, and of fat Things full of Marrow, and of Wines on the Lees well refined (h)*.

So I shall conclude with a few Exhortations. And here then,

I. *Let us all study to know Sin in its dreadful Nature. By the Law is the Knowledge of Sin, Rom. iii. 20.* Let us then study to know the Holiness, Spirituality, and Extent of the Law ; and examine all our Actions, Words, and Thoughts, by it, that we may see wherein we transgress it by Sins of Commission or Omission. Let us search deep and very close into our Hearts, that we may know our Corruptions and Depravities, which are the Seed, Root, and Spring, of all our sinful Thoughts, Words, and Actions. *Our Hearts are deceitful above all Things, and desperately wicked (i)*. Therefore we must watch our Hearts diligently, in order to find out the deep Roots of our Sins (k). And as Repentance is a Work during our Life, so searching out our Sins is a Work during our Life also. And as Sin is a subtle Traitor, that every Way studies our Ruin ; so it hides itself secretly in some dark Corner or other of our Hearts ;
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(d) *Eph. ii. 12.* (e) *1 Tim. i. 15, 16.* (f) *Psal. xix. 7, 8, 9, 10. Psal. cxix. 72, 127.* (g) *Rom. x. 15.* (h) *Isai. xxv. 6.* (i) *Jer. xvii. 9.* (k) *Prov. iv. 23.*

and must be narrowly searched out with the Candle of the holy Law of God, and destroyed, else it will secretly work our Destruction unknown to us.

As the Method of the Physician is to search to the Bottom of the Wound in order to make a sound Cure, so the only right Method for us to obtain a sound Cure for our Souls, is to search the Wound of the putrifying Sores of our Sins to the Bottom ; that in the Light of the Law and the Gospel, we may see the World of Corruption that is in our Hearts ; that by the Sight and fore-feeling thereof, we may be driven unto Christ our only Soul-physician, and kept under his Hands till we be perfectly healed. For this End then let us conscientiously study to know our Sins, and the dreadful Nature of them.

2. *Let us ever keep in our Minds the dreadful Merit of the least Sin.* You have heard, again and again, that the least Sin justly deserves eternal Damnation, by the just Law of the righteous Lawgiver and Judge of all the World : Let us then not measure and weigh our Sins by our own corrupt and perverse Imaginations and Judgments, but by the holy and perfect Law of God, that we may proportion our godly Sorrow, Humiliation, and Repentance, answerable thereunto ; and may value the Gospel-salvation according to its unvaluable Worth.

3. *Let us study to understand the Law as it is a Covenant of Works.* The Law, as a Covenant of Works, can do nothing but shew our Sins unto us, and curse us, for our least Sin, into the eternal Flames of Hell (k). Let us understand and be convinced of this, that we may abhor the Opinion of any Man in any Good that we can do, but to count ourselves every Way unprofitable Servants by all our best Services (l).

4. *Give all Diligence to understand the Nature and Preciousness of the Gospel as it is a Covenant of Mercy and*

(k) Gal. iii. 10. Mat. xxv. 41. (l) Luke xvii. 10.

and Grace. 'Tis a new and living Way to save thee from the Guilt, Filth, and Bondage of Sin, by the Almighty Power, free Mercy and Grace, of God in Jesus Christ, thro' the Sanctification of the holy Spirit. 'Tis a Way wherein God freely gives Grace, and freely rewards the Fruits of his own Grace in thee, for his own sake (m). *He gives Grace and Glory (n).* *The Gospel is Glad-tidings of great Joy to the vilest Sinners, that will accept of the Salvation freely offered by it (o).* Give all Diligence therefore rightly to understand the Gospel, that thy Feet may be turned into, and guided in, the only Way to eternal Happiness.

5. *Give all Diligence to know Jesus Christ and thy absolute Need of him as he is revealed in the Gospel. Life eternal is to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent, John xvii. 3. Determine and resolve with thyself, to know nothing in Comparison of Jesus Christ, and him crucified (p)* Know him so as to know thyself undone unless he saves thee. Know him as to his glorious Person, Offices, and Benefits. Know him so as to believe in him as he is made of God, *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and compleat Redemption,* to all that receive him (q). Know and believe in him, so as to count all Things but *Dung,* that thou mayst win him, and be eternally saved by him (r).

6. *Praise God for his holy Law, which discovereth thy Sins unto thee, and thy woful Misery by the least Sin.* We may truly say with holy Paul, *That we could never know Lust to be a damning Sin, except the Law had said, Thou shalt not covet, Rom. vii. 7.* Thou wilt never truly value the Gospel, till thou art thoroughly convinced of thy Sins and Misery; and it

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(m) *Isai. lv. 1, 2, 3.* (n) *Psal. lxxxiv: 11.* (o) *Luke ii. 10, 11. Isai. i. 18. and Chap: iv: 6, 7. Rev. xxii. 17.* (p) *1 Cor. ii. 2.* (q) *1 Cor. i. 30.* (r) *Philip. iii. 8, 9.*

is only by the Law thou must be convinced of that, Bless God then for his Law, and make Use of it as thy Schoolmaster to whip thee unto Christ, that thou mayst be justified by Faith, Gal. iii. 24.

7. Praise God for his Gospel and his Son to save thee from the Curse of the Law. The Voice of all Believers is, *Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us*, Gal. iii. 13. As then every the least Sin makes us liable to all the direful and eternal Curses of the Law; so we should always thank and praise God for his dear Son to redeem us from these Curses; and to purchase for, and bestow upon us, all spiritual and heavenly Blessings; and we should praise him for his blessed Gospel, wherein Christ is freely offered unto us. *Oh let us sing unto the Lord, and shew forth his Salvation from Day to Day*, Psal. xcvi. 2.

8. Let us regulate and manifest our Thankfulness and Praise for the Salvation of the Gospel, by our Gospel-obedience to the Law in all Things. Let us endeavour to understand clearly and solidly the wide Difference between the Law as a Covenant of Works, and as it is an everlasting Rule of our moral Love and Righteousness towards God and towards all Men. *The Law, as a Covenant, is not of Faith, but as a Rule of Gospel-obedience, it is not against the Promises of the Gospel, but perfectly agreeth with them*, Gal. iii. 12, 21. The Sum of the Law is perfect Love to God and Man, *Mat. xxii. 37, 38, 39*. The Law, as a Covenant, cursing us to Hell; for any the least Defect in this, drives us, by the Gospel, unto Christ for Pardon and Justification, *Gal. iii. 10, 24*. And then when by Faith we have rightly understood, and in some saving Measure tasted the Grace and Love of God by the Gospel; the Gospel sends us to the moral Law, as it is a Rule of Love and Righteousness, to learn our Duties of Gospel-love and Righteousness towards

towards God, not only as our Creator and Preserver, but also as our Saviour from our Sins and Miseries; and also to learn our Duties of Love and Righteousness towards all Men. The Law as a Rule teacheth us our Duties, and the Gospel gives Grace and Strength to do our Duties. And as our best Gospel-obedience is very imperfect, so the Gospel leads us unto, and keeps us in, Communion by Faith; by whose continual Intercession, our Persons and sincere, tho' imperfect, Love and Obedience is acceptable and well-pleasing in the Sight of the Father, *Eph. i. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 5.*

Let us then well understand this real Distinction, That we may not on the one Hand set up the Law, as a Covenant, in the Room of the Gospel; nor, on the other Hand, cast away the Law as the Rule of our Gospel-obedience, under Pretence of exalting the Gospel, Christ, and free Grace. Some Sort of painted Morality, in outward Shew, may be where there is no real Christianity; but real, true, and saving Christianity, can never be in any Man without real Morality, in a conscientious Performance of all moral Duties towards God and Man.

High Pretences to Piety in observing some Duties of the first Table, while Righteousness towards Men, required in the second Table of the Law, is neglected; or, on the other Hand, high Pretences to Righteousness, Honesty, and Mercy towards Men, when true actual Piety towards God is neglected, in whole or in Part, is a shrewd Sign of an unrenewed hypocritical Heart. *For then thou shalt not be ashamed when thou hast Respect unto all the Commandments of God, Psal cxix. 5, 6.*

Be conscientious then, O immortal Souls! to search the Scriptures, and to use all the Means which God appointed and affordeth unto you, that you may rightly understand the Law and the Gospel, so as to improve

improve both to the Glory of the Righteousness, as well as the rich Grace of God in Christ, to your eternal Salvation.

And pray always with all Prayer and Supplication, That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give you the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of him; the Eyes of your Understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the Hope of his Calling, and what is the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance in the Saints, Eph. i. 17, 18. Pray, that you being in Christ delivered from the Curse of the Law, as a Covenant, the Spirit of Grace, according to the New Covenant of the Gospel, may write the Law in your Hearts, which may produce outward Gospel-obedience unto it, in all Things, as it is written in your Bibles; and that your sincere outward Obedience may be an Evidence of its being written in your Hearts, to your Comfort here, and your endless Glory hereafter, thro' the boundless Mercy, of the Father, in the Son, by the holy Spirit: To whom be all Honour and Glory forever and ever. *Amen.*

E R R A T A.

Page 12. Line 4. for *fearful* read *fearfully*.

Page 19. Line 7. for *common* read *commonly*.

F I N I S.
