

Articles and Sermons :: A Holy Life - The Beauty of Christianity by John Bunyan

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A HOLY LIFE THE BEAUTY OF CHRISTIANITY:

or,

AN EXHORTATION TO CHRISTIANS TO BE HOLY.

BY JOHN BUNYAN.

Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.'—

London, by B. W., for Benj. Alsop, at the Angel and Bible, in the Poultry. 1684.

THE EDITOR'S ADVERTISEMENT.

This is the most searching treatise that has ever fallen under our notice. It is an invaluable guide to those sincere Christians, who, under a sense of the infinite importance of the salvation of an immortal soul, and of the deceitfulness of their hearts, sigh and cry, "O Lord of hosts, that judgest righteously, that triest the reins (most secret thoughts) and the heart." "Try MY reins and my heart." for it is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.' He, in whose heart the Holy Spirit has raised the solemn inquiry, What must I do to be saved?' flies from his own estimate of himself, with distrust and fear, and appeals to an infallible and unerring scrutiny. Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.' Reader, are you desirous of having your hopes of pardon, and of heaven, weighed in the unerring balances of the sanctuary; while you are yet in a state of probation? Meditate and ponder over this faithful little work. If accompanied by the Divine blessing, it will test your faith and practice in the crucible and by the fire of God's word. It is intended to turn your spirit inside out—to lay bare every insidious enemy that may have crept in and lie lurking in the walls of Mansoul. It exhibits sin in all its hideous deformity, stript of its masquerade and disguises; so that it appears, what it really is, the great enemy to human happiness. It is calculated to stir up our pure minds to incessant vigilance, lest we should wander upon tempting, but forbidden paths; and be caught by Giant Despair, to become the object of his cruelty in Doubting Castle.

This work was first published in 1684, in a pocket volume, comprising nine sheets duodecimo; but became so rare, as to have escaped the researches of Wilson, Whitefield, and other editors of the collected works of Mr. Bunyan,—until about the year 1780, when it was first re-published in an edition of his works, with notes, by Mason and Ryland. The evident object of this treatise was to aid Christian efforts, under the Divine blessing, in stemming the torrent of iniquity, which, like an awful flood, was overspreading this country. The moral and religious restraints, which the government under the Commonwealth had imposed, were dissolved by the accession of a debauched prince to the throne of England; a prince who was bribed, to injure or destroy the best interests of the country, by the voluptuous court of France. He had taken refuge there from the storm; and had been defiled and corrupted beyond ordinary conception. The king and his court were surrounded by pimps, panders, courtesans, and flatterers. The example of the court spread throughout the country—religion became a jest and laughing-stock; and those who were not to be cajoled out of their soul's eternal happiness—whose vital godliness preserved them in the midst of such evil examples and allurements, were persecuted with unrelenting rigor. The virtuous Lord William Russel, and the illustrious Sydney, fell by the hands of the executioner: John Hampden was fined forty thousand pounds. The hand of God was stretched out. An awful pestilence carried off nearly seventy thousand of the inhabitants of London. In the following year, that rich and glorious city, with the cathedral—the churches—public buildings—and warehouses, replenished with merchandise—were reduced to ashes. The Dutch fleet sailed up the Thames and threatened destruction to our navy, and even to the government,—filling the court and country with terror. Still profligacy reigned in the court and country—a fearful persecution raged against all who refused to attend the church service. Thousands perished in prison, and multitudes were condemned to expatriate themselves. The timid and irresolute abandoned the faith,—desolation spread over the church of God. At this time, at imminent risk, John Bunyan not only fearlessly preached, but published his faithful Advice to Sufferers; which was immediately followed by this important work, calling upon every one who named the name of Christ, 'at all hazards, to depart from iniquity.' They were words in season, and were good, like apples of gold in pictures of silver.' (Prov. 25:11)

The contrast in public manners must have been painfully felt by one, who had seen and enjoyed the general appearance, and doubtless many real proofs of piety, which prevailed under the protectorate of Cromwell. He was now called to witness the effects of open and avowed wickedness among governors and nobles, by which the fountains of iniquity were opened up, and a flood of immorality let loose upon all classes; demoralizing the nation, and distressing the church. It must have been difficult to form any thing like an accurate estimate of the number of those who abandoned their christian profession. The immoral conduct of one bad man is more conspicuous than the unobtrusive holiness of ninety-nine good men; more especially, when a professor becomes profane. Thus Bunyan argues, 'One black sheep is quickly espied among five hundred white ones, and one mangy one will soon infect many. One also, among the saints, that is not clean, is a blemish to the rest, and as Solomon says, 'One sinner destroyeth much good.' ' p. 527. It is more congenial to our fallen nature to notice, and be grieved with, evil conduct, than it is to rejoice over that excellence which may cast the observer into the shade; besides the jaundiced fear that good works may arise from improper motives. These principles equally applied to the state of society under the Presbyterian government: but when the restoration to the old system took place, so vast a change passed over society, like a pestilence, 'that sin, through custom, became no sin. The superfluity of naughtiness,' says Bunyan, 'is at this day become no sin with many.' p. 509. 'There are a good many professors now in England that have nothing to distinguish them from the worst of men,' but their praying, reading, hearing of sermons, baptism, church fellowship, and breaking of bread. Separate them but from these, and every where else they are as black as others, even in their whole life and conversation.' p. 508. 'It is marvellous to me to see sin so high amidst the swarms of professors that are found in every corner of this land.' If the conduct of many professors were so vile, as there can be no doubt but that it was, how gross must have been that of the openly profane? It accounts for the wicked wit and raillery of Hudibras, when so many professors threw off the mask and gloried in their hypocrisy—Butler shut his eyes to the cruel sufferings of thousands who perished in jails, the martyrs to the sincerity of their faith and conduct. The falling away was indeed great; and Bunyan, with all earnestness, warns his readers that, 'To depart from iniquity is to shun those examples, those beastly examples to drunkenness—to whoredom—to swearing—to lying—to stealing—to sabbath-breaking—to pride—to covetousness—to deceit—to hypocrisy, that in every corner of the country present themselves to men.' p. 517. 'O the fruits of repentance thick sown by preachers, come up but thinly! Where are they found? Confession of sin, shame for sin, amendment of life, restitution for cozening, cheating, defrauding, beguiling thy neighbour,—where shall these fruits of repentance be found? Repentance is the bitter pill, without the sound working of which, base and sinful humour rest

unstirred, unpurged, undriven out of the soul.' p. 519.

'I would not be austere,' said Bunyan, 'but were wearing of gold, putting on of apparel, dressing up houses, decking of children, learning of compliments, boldness in women, lechery in men, wanton behaviour, lascivious words, and tempting carnriages, signs of repentance; then I must say, the fruits of repentance swarm in our land.' 'The tables of God's book are turned upside down. Love, to their doctrine, is gone out of the country.' 'Love is gone, and now coveting, pinching, griping, and such things, are in fashion; now iniquity abounds instead of grace, in many that name the name of Christ.' p. 529, 520. 'Alas! alas! there is a company of half priests in the world; they dare not teach the people the whole counsel of God, because they would condemn themselves, and their manner of living in the world: where is that minister now to be found, that dare say to his people, walk as you have me for an example, or that dare say, what you see and hear to be in me, do, and the God of peace shall be with you.' p. 520. Such was the general character of the parish priests, after the black Bartholomew Act had driven the pious and godly ministers from the parish churches. It is almost a miracle that Bunyan escaped persecution for his plain dealing. We cannot wonder, that under such teachers, 'Christians learned to be proud one of another, to be covetous, to be treacherous, and false, to be cowardly in God's matters, to be remiss and negligent in christian duties, one of another.' p. 525. A scandal was thus brought upon religion. 'Upon this I write with a sigh; for never more than now. There is no place where the professors of religion are, that is free from offence and scandal. Iniquity is so entailed to religion, and baseness of life to the naming the name of Christ, that 'All places are full of vomit and filthiness.' 'Ah! Lord God, this is a lamentation, that a sore disease is got into the church of God.' p. 529. It was a period when a more awful plague raged as to morals and religion, than that which, about the same time, had ravaged London with temporal death—the plague of hypocrisy—of naming the name of Christ, and still living in sin. 'Hypocrisies are of that nature, that they spread themselves over the mind as the leprosy does over the body. It gets in the pulpit, in conference, in closets, in communion of saints, in faith, in love, in repentance, in zeal, in humility, in alms, in the prison, and in all duties, and makes the whole a loathsome stink in the nostrils of God.' p. 538 These licentious times, in which we live, are full of iniquity.' p. 539. 'They change one bad way for another, hopping, as the squirrel, from bough to bough, but not willing to forsake the tree,—from drunkards to be covetous, and from that to pride and lasciviousness—this is a grand deceit, common, and almost a disease epidemical among professors.' p. 532. 'The sins of our day are conspicuous and open as Sodom's were; pride and covetousness, loathing of the gospel, and contemning holiness, have covered the face of the nation.' p. 534. The infection had spread into the households of professors. 'Bless me, saith a servant, are those the re

religious people! Are these the servants of God, where iniquity is made so much of, and is so highly entertained! And now is his heart filled with prejudice against all religion, or else he turns hypocrite like his master and his mistress, wearing, as they, a cloak of religion to cover all abroad, while all naked and shameful at home.' p. 536. 'He looked for a house full of virtue, and behold nothing but spider-webs; fair and plausible abroad, but like the sow in the mire at home.' The immoral taint infected the young. 'O! it is horrible to behold how irreverently, how easily, and malapertly, children, yea, professing children, at this day, carry it to their parents; snapping and checking, curbing and rebuking of them, as if they had received a dispensation from God to dishonour and disobey parents.' p. 535. 'This day, a sea and deluge of iniquity has drowned those that have a form of godliness. Now immorality shall, with professors, be in fashion, be pleaded for, be loved and more esteemed than holiness; even those that have a form of godliness, hate the life and power thereof, yea, they despise them that are good.' p. 543.

This melancholy picture of vice and profligacy was drawn by one whose love of truth rendered him incapable of deceit or of exaggeration. It was published at the time, and was unanswered, because unanswerable. It was not painted from imagination by an ascetic; but from life by an enlightened observer—not by the poor preaching mechanic when incarcerated in a jail for his godliness; but when his painful sufferings were past—when his Pilgrim, produced by the folly of persecutors, had rendered him famous through Europe—when his extraordinary pulpit talents were matured and extensively known, so that thousands crowded to hear him preach—when his labours were sought in London and in the country—when his opportunities of observation had become extended far beyond most of his fellow-ministers. The tale is as true as it is full of painful interest. The causes of all this vice are perfectly apparent. Whenever a government abuses its powers by interfering with divine worship—by preferring one sect above all others; whether it be Presbyterian, Independent, or Episcopalian—such a requiring the things that are God's to be rendered unto Caesar, must be the prolific source of persecution, hypocrisy, and consequent immorality and profaneness. The impure process of immorality as checked by the rival labours of all the sects to promote vital godliness. Can we wonder that such a state of society was not long permitted to exist? In three troublous years from the publication of this book, the licentious monarch was swept away by death, not without suspicion of violence, and his besotted popish successor fled to die in exile. An enlightened monarch was placed upon the vacant throne, and persecution was deprived of its tiger claws and teeth by the act of toleration.

However interesting to the christian historian, and humbling to human pride, the facts may be which are here disclosed; it was not the author's intention thus to entertain his readers. No; this invaluable tract has an object in view of far greater importance. It is an earnest, affectionate, but pungent appeal to all professors of every age, and nation, and sect, to the end of time. The admonition of the text is to you, my reader, and to me; whether we be rich or poor, ministers or ministers unto, it comes home equally to every heart, from the mightiest potentate through every grade of society to the poorest peasant. May the sound ever reverberate in our ears and be engraven upon our hearts, 'Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.'

The analysis of this book exhibits—How solemn a thing it is to name the name of Christ, as the author and finisher of our faith—God manifest in the flesh, to bear the curse for us, and to work out our everlasting salvation. The hosts of heaven rejoice over the penitent sinner ransomed from the pit of wrath. Is it possible for the soul that has escaped eternal burnings—that has experienced the bitterness and exceeding sinfulness of sin—that has felt the misery of transgression—that has been brought up out of that deep and horrible pit—to backslide and plunge again into misery, with his eyes open to see the smoke of their torments ascending up before him? Is it possible that he should heedlessly enter the vortex, and be again drawn into wretchedness? Yes; it is alas too true. Well may the Lord, by his prophet, use these striking words, 'Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out broken cisterns, that can hold no water.' (Jer. 2:12,13)

The extreme folly of such conduct would render the fact almost incredible, did we not too frequently witness it in others, and feel it in our own hearts. This volume places these facts plainly before us, and affectionately exhorts us to be watchful, and diligently to inquire into the causes of such evil, and the remedies which ought to be applied. It shews us the great varieties that are found in the tempers and qualities of God's children, in words calculated to make an indelible impression.

'But in this great house of God there will not only be golden and silver Christians, but wooden and earthly ones. And if any man purge himself from these, from their companies and vices, he shall be a vessel to honour, sanctified, and meet for the masters use, and prepared for every good work.' p. 518 Bunyan earnestly cautions his readers to constant watchfulness, 'for sin is one of the most quick and brisk things that are.' p. 515. And jealousy over ourselves, lest our hearts should deceive us. 'The young man in the gospel that cried to Christ to shew him the way to life, had some love to his salvation; but it was not a love that was strong as death, cruel as the grave, and hotter than coals of juniper.' (Song 8:6) It cost n

nothing—no self denial, no sacrifice. 'Such will love as long as mouth and tongue can wag' will pray and hear sermons, but will not cut off a darling lust; such deceive their own souls. Some are allured but not changed: 'There is some kind of musicalness in the word; when well handled and fingered by a skilful preacher,' it has a momentary influence; 'they hear thy words, but do them not.' (Eze.33:30) Above all things, beware of hypocrisy, for when it once enters, it spreads over the soul, as the leprosy does over the body. p. 521. 'He is the same man, though he has got a new mouth. p. 532. 'Many that shew like saints abroad, yet act the part of devils when they are at home. Wicked professors are practical atheists.' 'The dirty life of a professor lays stumbling blocks in the way of the blind.' p. 545. 'A professor that hath not forsaken his iniquity, is like one that comes out of the pest-house, among the whole, with his plaguey sores running upon him. This is the man that hath the breath of a dragon; he poisons the air round about him. This is the man that slays his children, his kinsmen, his friend, and himself. They are the devil's most stinking tail, with which he casts many a professor into carnal delights, with their filthy conversations.' p. 530. 'Oh! the millstone that God will shortly hang about your necks, when the time is come that you must be drowned in the sea and deluge of God's wrath.' p. 530. Rather than thus rush upon Jehovah's fiercest anger, 'Tell the world, if you will not depart from iniquity, that Christ and you are parted, and that you have left him to be embraced by them to whom iniquity is an abomination.' p. 530. Thus faithfully and affectionately did Bunyan deal with his hearers and readers. And he takes an occasion, now in his maturer years, to confirm the sentiments which he had formerly published in his 'Differences in Judgment about Water Baptism no Bar to Communion.' 'It is strange to see at this day how, notwithstanding, all the threatenings of God, men are wedded to their own opinions, beyond what the law of grace and love will admit. Here is a Presbyterian, here an Independent, here a Baptist, so joined each man to his own opinion, that they cannot have that communion one with another, as by the testament of the Lord Jesus they are commanded and enjoined.' 'To help thee in this, keep thine eye much upon thine own base self, be clothed with humility, and prefer thy brother before thyself; and know that Christianity lieth not in small matters, neither before God nor understanding men.' 'I have often said in my heart, what is the reason that some of the brethren should be so shy of holding communion with those, every whit as good, if not better than themselves? Is it because they think themselves unworthy of their holy fellowship? No, verily; it is because they exalt themselves.' p.538. He goes on to declare that the difficulties which sin and Satan place in the way of the Christian pilgrim ought never to be concealed. Salvation is to be worked out with fear and trembling. It is only by divine aid, by dependence upon our heavenly Father, that it can be accomplished. 'To depart from iniquity to the utmost degree of requirement, is a copy too fair for mortal flesh exactly to imitate, while we are in this world. But with good paper, good ink, and a good pen, a skilful and willing man may go far.' p. 546, 547. Mr. Ryland's note on the Christian's trials is, 'when the love of sin is subdued in the conscience, then peace will flow in like a river, God will be glorified, Christ exalted; and the happy soul, under the teachings and influence of the all-wise, omnipotent Spirit, will experience sweet peace and joy in believing.' Millions of pilgrims have entered the celestial city, having fought their way to glory; and then, while singing the conqueror's song, all their troubles by the way must have appeared as sufferings but for a moment, which worked out for them an eternal and exceeding weight of glory, And then how blessed the song to him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto our God. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.—Geo. Offor.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FOLLOWING DISCOURSE

When I write of justification before God from the dreadful curse of the law; then I must speak of nothing but grace, Christ, the promise, and faith. But when I speak of our justification before men then I must join to these good works. For grace, Christ, and faith, are things invisible, and so not to be seen by another, otherwise than through a life that becomes so blessed a gospel as has declared unto us the remission of our sins for the sake of Jesus Christ. He then that would have forgiveness of sins, and so be delivered from the curse of God, must believe in the righteousness and blood of Christ: but he that would shew to his neighbours that he hath truly received this mercy of God, must do it by good works; for all things else to them is but talk: as for example, a tree is known to be what it is, to wit, whether of this or that kind, by its fruit. A tree it is, without fruit, but as long as it so abideth, there is ministered occasion to doubt what manner of tree it is.

A professor is a professor, though he hath no good works; but that, as such, he is truly godly, he is foolish that so concludeth. (Matt. 7:17,18; James 2:18) Not that works makes a man good; for the fruit maketh not a good tree, it is the principle, to wit, Faith, that makes a man good, and his works that shew him to be so. (Matt. 7:16; Luke 6:44)

What then? why all professors that have not good works flowing from their faith are naught; are bramble bushes; are 'nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.' (Heb. 6:8) For professors by their fruitlessness declare that they are not of the planting of God, nor the wheat, 'but tares and children of the wicked one.' (Matt. 13:37, 38)

Not that faith needeth good works as an help to justification before God. For in this matter faith will be ignorant of all good works, except those done by the person of Christ. Here, then, the good man 'worketh not, but believeth.' (Rom. 4:5). For he is not now to carry to God, but to receive at his hand the matter of his justification by faith; nor is the matter of his j

justification before God ought else but the good deeds of another man, to wit, Christ Jesus.

But is there, therefore, no need at all of good works, because a man is justified before God without them? or can that be called a justifying faith, that has not for its fruit good works? (Job 22:3; James 2:20, 26) Verily good works are necessary, though God need them not; nor is that faith, as to justification with God, worth a rush, that abideth alone, or without the man.

There is, therefore, a twofold faith of Christ in the world, and as to the notion of justifying righteousness, they both concur and agree, but as to the manner of application, there they vastly differ. The one, to wit, the non-saving faith, standeth in speculation and naked knowledge of Christ, and so abideth idle: but the other truly seeth and receives him, and so becometh fruitful. (John 1:12; Heb. 11:13; Rom. 10:16) And hence the true justifying faith is said to receive, to embrace, to obey the Son of God, as tendered in the gospel: by which expression is shewed both the nature of justifying faith, in its actings in point of justification, and also the cause of its being full of good works in the world. A gift is not made mine by my seeing of it, or because I know the nature of the thing so given; but then it is mine if I receive and embrace it, yea, and as to the point in hand, if I yield myself up to stand and fall by it. Now, he that shall not only see, but receive, not only know, but embrace the Son of God, to be justified by him, cannot but bring forth good works, because Christ who is now received and embraced by faith, leavens and seasons the spirit of this sinner, through his faith, to the making of him capable so to be. (Acts 15:9; Gen. 18:19; Heb. 11:11) Faith made Sarah receive strength to conceive seed, and we are sanctified through faith, which is in Christ. For faith hath joined Christ and the soul together, and being so joined, the soul is one spirit with him; not essentially, but in agreement and oneness of design. Besides, when Christ is truly received and embraced to the justifying of the sinner, in that man's heart he dwells by his word and Spirit, through the same faith also. Now Christ by his Spirit and word must needs season the soul he thus dwells in: so then the soul being seasoned, it seasoneth the body; and body and soul, the life and conversation.

We know it is not the seeing, but taking of a potion, that maketh it work as it should, nor is the blood of Christ a purge to this or that conscience, except received by faith. (Heb. 9:14)

Shall that then be counted right believing in Christ unto justification, that amounts to no more than to an idle speculation, or naked knowledge of him? shall that knowledge of him, I say, be counted such, as only causes the soul to behold, but moveth it not to good works? No, verily. For the true beholding of Jesus to justification and life, changes from glory to glory. (2 Cor. 3:18)

Nor can that man that hath so believed, as that by his faith he hath received and embraced Christ for life before God, be destitute of good works: for, as I said, the word and Spirit comes also by this faith, and dwells in the heart and conscience. Now, shall a soul where the word and Spirit of Christ dwells, be a soul without good works? Yea, shall a soul that has received the love, the mercy, the kindness, grace and salvation of God through the sorrows, tears, groans, cross, and cruel death of Christ, be yet a fruitless tree! God forbid. This faith is as the salt which the prophet cast into the spring of bitter water, it makes the soul good and serviceable for ever. (2 Kings 2:19-22)

If the receiving of a temporal gift naturally tends to the making of us to move our cap and knee, and binds us to be the servant of the giver, shall we think that faith will leave him who by it has received Christ, to be as unconcerned as a stock or stone, or that its utmost excellency is to provoke the soul to a lip-labour, and to give Christ a few fair words for his pains and grace, and so wrap up the business? No, no; 'the love of Christ constraineth us' thus to judge that it is but reasonable, since he gave his all for us, that we should give our some for him. (2 Cor. 5:14,15)

Let no man, then, deceive himself, as he may and will if he takes not heed with true notions, but examine himself concerning his faith, to wit; Whether he hath any? and if some, Whether of that kind that will turn to account in the day when God shall judge the world.

I told you before that there is a twofold faith, and now I will tell you that there are two sorts of good works; and a man may be shrewdly guessed at with reference to his faith, even by the works that he chooseth to be conversant in.

There are works that cost nothing, and works that are chargeable. And observe it, the unsound faith will choose to itself the most easy works it can find. For example, there is reading, praying, hearing of sermons, baptism, breaking of bread, church fellowship, preaching, and the like; and there is mortification of lusts, charity, simplicity, open-heartedness, with a liberal hand to the poor, and their like also. Now the unsound faith picks and chooses, and takes and leaves, but the true faith does not so.

There are a great many professors now in England that have nothing to distinguish them from the worst of men, but their praying, reading, hearing of sermons, baptism, church-fellowship, and breaking of bread. Separate them but from these, and everywhere else they are as black as others, even in their whole life and conversation. Thus they have chosen to themselves the most easy things to do them, but love not to be conscionably found in the practice of the other; a certain sign their faith is nought, and that these things, even the things they are conversant in, are things attended to of them, not for the ends for which God has appointed them, but to beguile and undo themselves withal.

Praying, hearing, reading; for what are these things ordained, but that we might by the godly use of them attain to more of the knowledge of God, and be strengthened by his grace to serve him better according to his moral law? Baptism, fellowship, and the Lord's supper, are ordained for these ends also. But there is a vast difference between using of these things, and a using of them for these ends. A man may pray, yea pray for such things, had he them, as would make him better in morals, without desire to be better in morals, or love to the things he prays for. A man may read and hear, not to learn to do, though to know; yea he may be dead to doing moral goodness, and yet be great for reading and hearing all his days. The people then among all professors that are zealous of good works are the peculiar ones to Christ. (Titus 2:14) What has a man done that is baptized, if he pursues not the ends for which that appointment was ordained. The like I say of fellowship, of breaking of bread, etc.. For all these things we should use to support our faith, to mortify the flesh, and strengthen us to walk in newness of life by the rule of the moral law. Nor can that man be esteemed holy whose life is tainted with immoralities, let him be what he can in all things else. I am of that man's mind as to practical righteousness, who said to Christ upon this very question, "Well, master, thou hast said the truth;—for to love the Lord our God with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices." (Mark 12:28-33) To love my neighbour as myself, to do as I would be done unto, this is the law and the prophets. And he that is altogether a stranger to these things, how dwelleth the love of God in him; or how will he manifest to another that his faith will save him?

Satan is afraid that men should hear of justification by Christ, lest they should embrace it. But yet, if he can prevail with them to keep fingers off, though they do hear and look on, and practise lesser things, he can the better bear it; yea, he will labour to make such professors bold to conclude they shall by that kind of faith enjoy him, though by that they cannot embrace him, nor lay hold of him. For he knows that how far soever a man engages in a profession of Christ with a faith that looks on, but cannot receive nor embrace him, that faith will leave him to nothing but mistaken and disappointments at last.

The gospel comes to some in word only, and the faith of such stands but in a verbal sound; but the apostle was resolved not to know or take notice of such a faith. (1 Thess. 1:4, 5) 'For the kingdom of God, saith he, 'is not in word, but in power.' (1 Cor. 1:18-20) He whose faith stands only in a saying, I believe, has his works in bare words also, and as virtual is to him as the other, and both insignificant enough. 'If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works is dead, being alone.' (James 2:15-17) This faith, therefore, Satan can allow, because it is somewhat of kin to his own. (vs. 10)

Besides, what greater contempt can be cast upon Christ than by such wordy professors is cast upon him? These are the men that by practice say, the gospel is but an empty sound. Yet, the more they profess, the louder they proclaim it thus to be, to his disgrace, while they, notwithstanding their profession of faith, hold and maintain their league with the devil and sin. The Son of God was manifest that he might destroy the works of the devil, but these men profess his faith and keep these works alive in the world. (1 John 3) Shall these pass for such as believe to the saving of the soul? For a man to be content with this kind of faith, and to look to go to salvation by it, what to God is a greater provocation?

The devil laugheth here, for he knows he has not lost his vassal by such a faith as this, but that rather he hath made use of the gospel, that glorious word of life, to secure his captive, through, his presumption of the right faith, the faster in his shackles.

It is marvellous to me to see sin so high amidst the swarms of professors that are found in every corner of this land. Nor can any other reason be given for it, but because the gospel has lost its wonted virtue, or because professors want faith therein. But do you think it is because of the first? no, the word of our God shall stand in its strength for ever; the faith of such therefore is not right; they have for shields of gold, made themselves shields of brass; or instead of the primitive faith, which was of the operation of God, they have got to themselves a faith that stands by the power, and in the wisdom of man. (2 Chron. 12:9, 10; Col. 2:12; 1 Cor. 2:4, 5) And, to say no more to this, for what is God so angry with this land, but for the sin of the professors that dwell therein, while they have polluted his name with their gifts, and with their idols? God, I say, has been provoked most bitterly by us, while we have profaned his name, making use of his name, his word, and

d ordinances, to serve ourselves, 'O Lord, what wilt thou do to this land.' We are every one looking for something; even for something that carrieth terror and dread in the sound of its wings as it comes, though we know not the form nor visage thereof. One cries out, another has his hands upon his loins, and a third is made mad with the sight of his eyes, and with what his ears do hear. And as their faith hath served them about justification, so it now serves them about repentance and reformation: it can do nothing here neither; for though, as was said, men cry out, and are with their hands upon their loins for fear; yet, where is the church, the house, the man that stands in the gap for the land, to turn away this wrath by repentance, and amendment of life? Behold the Lord cometh forth out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the places of the earth, and the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, and as the waters that are poured down a steep place. But what is the cause of all this?—For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel. (Micah 1:5)

It is that that is observed by them that can make observation, that all that God has done to us already has been ineffectual as to cause that humility and reformation, by which his judgments must be turned away. Repentance is rare this day, and yet without doubt, that without which, things will grow worse and worse. As for them that hope that God will save his people, though but from temporal judgments, whether they repent and reform, or do otherwise, I must leave them and their opinions together: this I have found, that sometimes the repentance, even of the godly, has come too late to divert such judgments. And, how some of the godly should be so indulged as to be saved from punishment without repentance, when the true and unfeigned repentance of others will not deliver them, leaves me, I confess, in a wilderness! But that which is most of all to be lamented is, that sin, through custom, is become no sin. The superfluity of naughtiness is at this day become no sin with many. Surely this was the case with Israel, else how could they say when the prophets so bitterly denounced God's judgments against them, 'Because we are innocent, surely his anger shall turn from us.' (Jer. 2:35) When custom or bad example has taken away the conscience of sin, it is a sign that soul is in a dangerous lethargy; and yet this is the condition of the most that profess amongst us this day. But to leave this and to proceed.

As there is a twofold faith, two sorts of good works, and the like, so there is also a twofold love to Christ; the one standing, or stopping, in some passions of the mind and affections; the other is that which breaks through all difficulties to the holy commandment to do it. Of both these there is mention made in the scripture; and though all true love begins at the heart, yet that love is but little set by that breaks not through to practice. How many are there in the world that seem to have the first, but how few shew the second. The young man in the gospel, (Mark 10:17) did by his running, kneeling, crying, inquiring, and entreating of Christ, to shew him the way to life, shew that he had inward love to Christ and his own salvation; but yet it was not a love that was 'strong as death,' 'cruel as the grave,' and hotter than the coals of juniper. (Song 8:6) It was a love that stopped in mind and affection, but could not break out into practice. This kind of love, if it be let alone, and not pressed to proceed till it comes into a labouring practising of the commandment, will love as long as you will, to wit, as long as mouth and tongue can wag; but yet you shall not, by all your skill drive this love farther than the mouth; 'for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.' (Ezek. 33:31)

Nor may this love be counted for that of the right kind, because it is in the heart, for the heart knows how to dissemble about love, as much as about other matters. This is feigned love, or love that pretends to dear affections for Christ, but can bestow no cost upon him. Of this kind of love the world is full at this day, especially the professors of this age; but as I said, of this the Lord Jesus makes little or no account, for that it hath in it an essential defectiveness. Thus, therefore, Christ and his servants describe the love that is true and of the right kind, and that with reference to himself and church.

First, with reference to himself. 'If a man love me,' saith he, 'he will keep my words.' (John 14:23) And again, 'He that hateth my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.' And, 'He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings.' And the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.' Behold you now where Christ placeth a sign of love, it is not in word nor in tongue, not in great and seemingly affectionate gestures, but in a practical walking in the law of the Lord. Hence such, and such only, are called the undefiled in the way. You know who says, 'I am the way.' 'Blessed,' saith David, 'are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.' (Ps. 119:1)

But here again the hypocrite will give us the slip by betaking himself to exterior matters, as to his 'mint and anise and cummin.' (Matt. 23:23) Still neglecting the more weighty matters of the law, to wit, judgment, mercy, faith; or else to the significant ordinances, still neglecting to do to all men as he would they should do to him. But let such know that God never ordained significant ordinances, such as baptism, the Lord's supper, or the like, for the sake of water, or of bread and wine; nor yet because he takes any delight that we are dipped in water, or eat that bread; but they were ordained to minister to us by the aptness of the elements, through our sincere partaking of them, further knowledge of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and of our death and resurrection by him to newness of life. Wherefore, he that eateth and believeth not, and he that is baptized, and is not dead to sin, and walketh not in newness of life, neither keepeth these ordinances nor pleaseth God. Now to be dead to sin, is to be dead to those things forbidden in the

moral law. For sin is the transgression of that, and it availeth not to vaunt that I am a saint and under this or that significative ordinance, if I live in' the transgression of the law.' (1 John 3:4) For I am convicted of the law as a transgressor, and so concluded to be one that loveth not Christ, though I make a noise of my obedience to Christ, and of my partaking of his significative ordinances. The Jews of old made a great noise with their significative ordinances, while they lived in the breach of the moral law, but their practice of significative ordinances could not save them from the judgment and displeasure of their God. They could frequent the temple, keep their feasts, slay their sacrifices, and be mighty apt about all their significative things. But they loved idols, and lived in the breach of the second table of the law: wherefore God cast them out of his presence: hark what the prophet saith of them, (Amos 4:4) 'Come to Bethel, and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes after three years: and offer a sacrifice of thanks giving with leaven, and proclaim and publish the free-will offerings: for this liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord God.' Thus, as I said, the hypocrite gives us the slip; for when he heareth that love is in the keeping of the commandments of God, then he betakes him to the more external parts of worship, and neglecteth the more weighty matters to the provoking of the God of Israel.

Second, As love to God is shewed by keeping of his commandments; so love to my neighbour, is the keeping of the commandments of God likewise. 'By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God,â—in us, both to God and man, 'that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.' (1 John 5:2, 3) He that keepeth not God's commandments, loves neither God nor men.

Thus then we must learn to love one another. He that keepeth God's commandment, doth to his brother what is right, for that is God's commandment. He that keeps God's commandment, doth to his brother even as he would be done unto himself, for that is God's commandment. He that keeps God's commandment, shutteth not up his bowels of compassion from him, for the contrary is his commandment. Further, he that keepeth God's commandment sheweth his brother what he must do to honour the Christ that he professeth, aright: therefore, he that keeps the commandment, loves his brother. Yea, the keeping of the commandment is loving the brethren.

But if all love, which we pretend to have one to another, were tried by this one text, how much of that that we call so, would be found to be nothing less? Preposterous are our spirits in all things, nor can they be guided right, but by the word and Spirit of God; the which, the good Lord grant unto us plentifully, that we may do that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Yea, and that there may, by them, be wrought sound repentance in us for all that hath been done by us amiss, lest he give 'Jacob to the spoil, and Israel to the robbers;' for that they have sinned against him by not walking in his ways, and by not being obedient to his law. (Isa. 42:24)

Let me add, lest God doth not only punish us in the sight, and by the hand of the wicked; but embolden them to say, it was God that set them on; yea, lest they make those sins of ours, which we have not repented of, not only their bye-word against us to after generations, but the argument, one to another, of their justification for all the evil that they shall be suffered to do unto us: saying, when men shall ask them, 'Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger?' (Deut. 29:24; 1 Kings 9:8; Jer. 22:8) 'Even because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, and walked not in his ways.'

JOHN BUNYAN

A HOLY LIFE THE BEAUTY OF CHRISTIANITY

'AND, LET EVERY ONE THAT NAMETH THE NAME OF CHRIST DEPART FROM INIQUITY,â—2 TIM. 2:19

TIMOTHY, unto whom this epistle was writ, was an evangelist, that is, inferior to apostles and extra-ordinary prophets, and above ordinary pastors and teachers. (2 Tim. 4:5; Eph. 4:11) And he with the rest of those under his circumstances was to go with the apostles hither and thither, to be disposed of by them as they saw need, for the further edification of those who by the apostolical ministry were converted to the faith: and hence it is, that Titus was left at Crete, and that this Timothy was left at Ephesus. (1 Tim. 1:3) For they were to do a work for Christ in the world, which the apostles were to begin, and leave upon their hands to finish. Now when the apostles departed from places, and had left these evangelists in their stead, usually there did arise some bad spirits among those people, where these were left for the furtherance of the faith. This is manifest by both the epistles to Timothy, and also by that to Titus: wherefore Paul, upon whom these two evangelists waited for the fulfilling of their ministry, writeth unto them while they abode where he left them, concerning those turbulent spirits which they met with, and to teach them how yet further they ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth. And to this purpose he gives them, severally,

divers instructions, as the judicious reader may easily understand, by which he encourageth them to the prosecution of that service which for Christ they had to do for those people where he had left them, and also instructeth them how to carry it towards their disturbers, which last he doth, not only doctrinally, but also by shewing them, by his example and practice, what he would have them do.

This done, he laboureth to comfort Timothy with the remembrance of the steadfastness of God's eternal decree of election, because grounded on his foreknowledge; saying, though Hymeneus and Philetus have erred from the faith, and, by their fall, have overthrown the faith of some, 'Yet the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.' Now lest this last hint should still encourage some to be remiss and carnally secure, and foolish, as I suppose this doctrine abused, had encouraged them to be before; therefore the apostle immediately conjoineth to it this exhortation; 'And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.' Two truths strangely, but necessarily joined together, because so apt to be severed by the children of men; for many, under the pretence of their being elected, neglect to pursue holiness; and many of them again that pretend to be for holiness, quite exclude the doctrine and motives that election gives thereto. Wherefore the apostle, that he might set men's notions as to these things right, he joins these two together, signifying thereby, that as electing love doth instate a man in the blessing of eternal life; so holiness is the path thereto; and, that he that refuseth to depart from iniquity shall be damned; notwithstanding he may think himself secured from hell by the act of God's electing love. For election designeth men not only to eternal glory, but to holiness of life, a means, thereto. (Eph. 1:4, 5) And the manner of this connection of truth is the more to be noted by us, because the apostle seems to conjoin them, in an holy heat of spirit, saying, 'The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.' And, 'let every one that shall but so much as name the name of Christ, depart from iniquity;' or, as who should say, God will be revenged upon them for all, or, notwithstanding, they appropriate unto themselves the benefits of election.

In the text we have, FIRST, An exhortation. SECOND, The extension of that exhortation. The exhortation is, That men depart from iniquity. The extension of it is, to them, all of them, every one of them that name the name of Christ. 'And let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity.'

In the exhortation there are several things to be taken notice of, because insinuated by the apostle. The first is, that iniquity is a very dangerous and hurtful thing, as to the souls of sinners in general; so to them that name the name of Christ.

First, Iniquity is a very dangerous and hurtful thing to men in general; for it is that which did captivate the world at the beginning, and that made it a bond-slave to the devil. It has also done great hurt to mankind ever since. To instance a few things:

1. It is that which hath stupefied and besotted the powers of men's souls, and made them even next to a beast and brute in all matters supernatural heavenly. (2 Peter 2:12) For as the beast minds nothing but his lusts and his belly, by nature, so man minds nothing but things earthly, sensual, and devilish, by reason of iniquity.
2. It has blinded and darkened the powers of the soul, so that it can neither see where it is, nor which is the way out of this besotted condition. (Eph. 4:18)
3. It has hardened the heart against God, and against all admonition and counsel in the things of the gospel of Christ. (Rom. 2:5)
4. It has alienated the will, the mind, and affections, from the choice of the things that should save it, and wrought them over to an hearty delight in those things that naturally tend to drown it in perdition and destruction. (Col. 1:21)
5. It has made man odious in God's eyes, it has provoked the justice of God against him, and made him obnoxious to hell-fire. (Ezek. 16:5)
6. Yea, it so holds him, so binds him, so reserves him to this, that not he himself, nor yet all the angels of heaven, can deliver him from this deplorable condition. (Prov. 5:22)
7. To say nothing of their pleasure and delight that it makes him take in that way to hell in which he walketh. (Isa. 66:3; Prov. 7:22, 23) Never went fat ox so gamesomely to the shambles, nor fool so merrily to the correction of the stocks, nor silly bird so wantonly to the hidden net, as iniquity makes men go down her steps to the pit of hell and damnation.

O it is amazing, it is astonishing to consider what hurt sin hath done to man, and into how many dangers it has brought him; but let these few hints at this time suffice as to this. I will now speak a word to the other particular, namely,

Second, That as iniquity is dangerous and hurtful to the souls of men in general, so it is to them that name the name of Christ. As to the so and so naming of him, to that I shall speak by and by, but at this time take it thus: That religiously name his name. And I say iniquity is hurtful to them.

1. It plucks many a one of them from Christ and the religious profession of him. I have even seen, that men who have devoutly and religiously professed Jesus Christ, have been prevailed withal, by iniquity, to cast him and the profession of his name quite off, and to turn their backs upon him. 'Israel,' saith the prophet, 'hath cast off the thing that is good.' (Hosea 8:3) But why? 'Of their silver and their gold have they made them idols.' The sin of idolatry threw their hearts from God; their love to that iniquity made them turn their backs upon him. Wherefore God complains, that of forwardness to their iniquity, and through the prevalence thereof, they had cast him behind their back. (Ezek. 23:35)

2. As it plucks many a professor from Christ, so it keeps many a one from an effectual closing with him. How many are there that religiously profess and make mention of the name of Christ, that yet of love to, and by the interest that iniquity hath in their affections, never close with him unto salvation, but are like to them, of whom you read in Paul to Timothy, that they are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. (2 Tim. 3:1-7)

3. And concerning those that have indeed come to him, and that have effectually closed with him, and that name his name to good purpose; yet how hath iniquity hurt and abused many of them. (1.) It has prevailed with God to hide his face from them, a thing more bitter than death. (2.) It has prevailed with God to chastise, and to afflict them sorely, a thing in which he taketh no pleasure. (Lam 3:33) (3.) It has provoked God to give them over to the hand of the enemy, and to deliver them to the tormentors. (Jer. 12:7; Matt. 18:34) (4.) It hath brought them to question their interest in Christ, and whether they ever had grace in their souls. (Psa. 31:22) (5.) And for those that have yet believed they were in his favour, this iniquity hath driven them to fear that God would cast them away, and take all his good things from them. (Psa. 51)

Yea, he that would know the hurt that iniquity hath done to them that name the name of Christ, let him consider the cries, the sighs, the tears, the bemoanings, the bewailings, the lamentations, the sorrows, the confessions, the repentings and griefs wherewith they have been attended, while they have complained that they have been put in the stocks, laid in the dungeon, had their bones broken, suffered the terrors of God, been distressed almost to distraction, and have been fed with gravel, gall, wormwood, and with the water of astonishment, for days, yea, years together. (Job 13:27; Psa. 6:6; Psa. 31:9, 10; Psa. 38:8; Psa. 60:3; Psa. 88; Psa. 116:3; Jer. 8:14; Jer. 23:15; Jer. 31:18; Lam. 3:4, 16; Ezek. 4:16; 2 Cor. 12:21) By all which, and many more which might be mentioned, it appears that iniquity is a dangerous and hurtful thing.

But I proceed, and come in the next place to the extension of the exhortation, namely, that it reacheth to all those that name the name of Christ. 'And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.'

To handle this a little, and to shew you what the apostle here means by naming of the name of Christ: he meaneth not an irreligious naming of that worthy name, nor those that name it irreligiously. This is evident, because he passeth by their manner of naming of it without the least reproof, the which he would not have done had the fault been in their manner of naming of the name of Christ. Now I say, if he intendeth not those that name the name of Christ irreligiously, then, though the exhortation, 'let every one,' seems to extend itself to all, and all manner of persons, that any ways name the name of Christ, yet it is limited by this, to wit, that rightly, religiously, or according to the way of the professors of Christ, name his worthy name. And it must needs be so taken, and that for these reasons:

First, For that, as I said before, the apostle taketh no notice of their manner of naming of his name, so as to reprove any indecency or unseemliness in their naming of him; wherefore he alloweth of the manner of their naming of him.

Secondly, because the apostle's design in this exhortation was, and is, that the naming of the name of Christ might be accompanied with such a life of holiness as might put an additional lustre upon that name whenever named in a religious way; but this cannot be applied to every manner of naming the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. For if a man shall name the name of Christ unduly, or irreligiously, though he shall never so much therewithal depart from iniquity, and be circumspect to the utmost in all civility and morality, yet he answers not the apostle's end, which he seeks by this his exhortation. For,

1. Suppose a man should name the name of Christ vainly, idly, in vain mirth, wantonness, false or vain swearing, or the like, and shall back this, his manner of naming the name of Christ, with all manner of justness and uprightness of life, would this answer the apostle's end in this his exhortation? Verily no; for this manner of naming the name is worthy reprehension; 'Thou shalt not take my name in vain,' or vainly make use thereof: and moral goodness attending the so-naming of the name of Christ will do more hurt than good. (Ex. 20)

2. There is a reproachful and scandalous naming of the name of Christ, such as the Jews and Pharisees did accustom themselves unto, as to call him Jesus, the deceiver; and Christ, in a way of scorn and contempt. Nor were these men quite destitute of that which put a lustre upon their opinions; for, said the Lord Christ himself unto them, 'Ye indeed appear beautiful outward.' (Matt. 23:27)

3. There is such a naming of the name of Christ as to make it a cloak for false and dangerous errors: that men, by the use of that name, and the putting of it upon such errors and delusions, may put off their errors to others the better. 'Many shall come in my name, to wit, with their delusions, presenting them, in my name, to the world, and shall put them off, in my name, to the destruction of the soul. (Matt. 24:5) Now, can any imagine that the apostle should extend his exhortation to such, that they, thus continuing to name the name of Christ, should depart from iniquity. To what end should such be comprehended in this of exhortation of his? to no purpose at all: for the more an erroneous person, or a deceiver of souls, shall back his errors with a life that is morally good, the more mischievous, dangerous, and damnable is that man and his delusions; wherefore such a one is not concerned in this exhortation.

4. There is a naming of the name of Christ magically, and after the manner of exorcism, or, conjuration; as we read in the Acts of the apostles. vagabond Jews, the exorcists, there say, 'We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth.' (Acts 19:13-15) Thus they called over them that had evil spirits, the name of the Lord Jesus. But what if these should clothe this, their devilish art, and devilish way, of using or naming of the name of the Lord Jesus, with departing from iniquity, so as to commend their whole life to by-standers, for such: as is morally good: what advantage would Christ, or Paul, or the gospel, get thereby? verily none at all; but rather damage and reproach, as will soon appear to any man's reason, if it be considered that goodness of life, joined to badness of principles is like the devil clothed in white, or Satan transformed into an angel of light. And Paul was grieved in his spirit, when the wench that had a spirit of divination did acknowledge him to be the servant of the most high God, for he knew it would nothing further, or help forward, the Lord's design, but be rather an hinderance thereto. For when witches and devils come once to commend, or make use of the name of Christ, Christ and Paul like it not; therefore Paul's exhortation, which here are presented with by the text, is not extended to any of the four sorts aforementioned, but,

Third, To those upon whom his name is called, they should depart from iniquity. I say those whom God has so far dignified, as to put the name of Christ upon them. (Acts 15:17) And I will add, that apply that name to themselves. And the reason is, because God is now concerned. (ch. 11:26) God has changed thy name from Pagan to Christian, and thou chooseth to call thyself by that name, saying, 'I belong to Christ.' Now thou must depart from iniquity, for that notice is taken of thee, both by heaven and earth, that thou art become a disciple, and 'let every one that' so 'nameth the name of Christ,' or that nameth it, being himself by God and himself put under such circumstances as these, 'depart from iniquity.' (1 Peter 4:16)

Fourthly, It is spoken to those that name the name of Christ either in the public or private worship of God, being themselves professed worshippers of him; and the reason is, for that the ordinances, as well as the name of God, is holy, and 'he will be sanctified in them that come nigh him.' (Lev. 10:3) He therefore that approacheth the presence of Christ in prayer, or any other divine appointment, must take heed of regarding 'iniquity in his heart.' (Psa. 66:18) Else the Lord will stop his ears to his prayers, and will shut his eyes, and not take notice of such kind of worship or worshippers.

Fifthly, Those that the apostle in this place exhorts to depart from iniquity are such as have taken unto themselves the boldness to say, that they are in him, abide in him, and consequently are made partakers of the benefits that are in him. 'He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk, even as he walked.' (1 John 2:6) And the reason is, because Christ is a fruitful root, and a free conveyer of sap into the branches; hence it is written, that 'the trees of the Lord are full of sap.' (Psa. 104:16) So then, he that nameth the name of Christ by way of applying to himself his benefits, and as counting that he is found of God in him, and so abideth, ought himself to walk even as he walked, that he may give proof of what he saith to be true, by bearing forth before men that similitude of righteousness that is in his root and stem: for such as the stock or tree is, such let the branches be, but that cannot be known but by the fruit: 'ye shall know them by their fruit.' (Matt. 7:16) So then, he that thus shall name the name of Christ, let him depart from iniquity: yea, let every such man do so.

Sixthly, This exhortation is spoken to them that name Christ as their Sovereign Lord and King: let them 'depart from iniquity.' 'The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; he will save us.' (Isa. 33:22) are great words; and as they cannot be spoken by every one, so they ought not to be spoken lightly by them that can. Nor may he that claims so high a privilege be but obedient, submissive, apt to learn, conscientiously to put in practice what he hath learnt of his Judge, his Lawgiver, and his King. Lest when some shall hear him say that Christ, by name, is his Lawgiver and his King, and shall yet observe him to do things evil, and to walk in ways that are not good, they shall think evil, and speak so of his King; saying, Learnt you this of Christ your King? or doth your King countenance you in ways that are so bad? or, do you by thus and thus doing submit to the laws of your king? yea, your King, his name and gospel shall bear the burden of the evil, together with the shame thereof, if thou that namest the name of Christ shalt not depart from iniquity.

Lastly, Whatever man he be that by his naming of the name of Christ shall intimate that he hath any reverence of love to, or delight in that Christ, whose name he nameth, that man should depart from iniquity, not only for the reasons that are above mentioned, but for those that may be named afterwards.

But having thus far opened the word, and shewed who and what manner of man the apostle had in his eye, in this his exhortation, I shall come, in the next place, to make some observations upon the text. As,

That it is incident to men to name the name of Christ religiously, that is, rightly as to words and nations, and not to 'depart from iniquity.' This was the occasion of this exhortation, for Paul saw that there were some that did so; to wit, that named the name of Christ well, as to words, but did not depart from iniquity. Some such he also I found among them at Corinth, which made him say, 'Awake to righteousness, and sin not.' (1 Cor. 15:34) He found such at Ephesus, and cries out to them most earnestly, saying, 'Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead.' (Eph. 5:14) For albeit they were professors of Christ, yet they lived too much like those that were dead in trespasses and sins, This he also found among the Hebrews, wherefore he saith to them, 'Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.' (Heb. 12:1) These professors are easily beset with sin, yea, it did hang upon them as weights to hinder them from making of that profession of Christ, whose name they named, as beautiful as