

THE SOUL'S REFUGE.

'Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.'—1 PET. IV. 19.

A TRUE Christian's life is one day of three meals, and every meal hath in it two courses. His first meal is, *Nasci et renasci*; to be born a sinner, and to be new born a saint. 'I was born in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me;' there is one course. 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;' there is the other course. His second meal is, *Benè agere, et malè pati*; to do well, and to suffer ill. 'Do good unto all, but especially unto those that are of the household of faith;' there is one course of doing. 'All that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;' there is the other course of suffering. His third meal is, *Mori et vivere*; to die a temporal death, to live an eternal life.

The first is his breakfast, and herein he is naturally *natus et damnatus*, born in sin and condemned for sin; spiritually *renatus et justificatus*, born again in righteousness and justified from sin. The last is his supper, wherein there is one bitter dish, death. *Statutum est omnibus semel mori*, 'It is appointed to all men to die once;' *omnibus semel, plerisque bis*, to all once, to many twice; for there is a 'second death.' And that is truly a death, because it is *mors vitæ*, the death of life: the other rather a life, for it is *mors mortis*, the death of death; after which *mors non erit ultra*, 'there shall be no more death.' Therefore rise, that you may not fall; rise now by a righteous life, lest you fall into an everlasting death. If the soul will not now rise, the body shall one day be raised, and go with the soul to judgment. The second course is incomparably sweet; *vivere post mortem*, to live after death. I say after death, for a man must die that he may live. So that a good supper brings a good sleep; he that lives well shall sleep well. He that now apprehends mercy, mercy shall hereafter comprehend him. Mercy is the *ultimus terminus*, no hope beyond it; and this is the time for it, the next is of justice. The middle meal between both these is our dinner; and that consists *patiendo malum* and *faciendo bonum*, in doing good and suffering evil. And on these two courses my text spends itself. First, 'they that suffer according to the will of God;' there is the passion. Secondly, they may 'trust God with their souls in well doing;' there is the action.

More particularly, in the words we may consider five gradual circumstances.

1. The sufferance of the saints, 'They that suffer.'
2. The integrity of this sufferance, 'According to the will of God.'
3. The comfort of this integrity, 'May commit their souls to God.'
4. The boldness of this comfort, 'As unto a faithful Creator.'
5. The caution of this boldness, 'In well doing.'

1. The sufferance of the saints, 'They that suffer.' All men suffer: 'Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward,' Job v. 7. This life is well compared to a throng in a narrow passage: he that is first out finds ease, he that is in the midst is in the worst place and case, for he is hemmed in with troubles; the hindmost drives out both the former, and if he have not the greatest part in suffering evil, lightly he hath the greatest share in doing it. Outward things happen alike to good and bad. 'There is one event to the clean and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not; to him that sweareth, and to him that feareth an oath,' Eccles. ix. 2. They are both travellers in the thoroughfare of this world, both lodge in one inn, both have the same provision; perhaps the wicked have the better cheer, but in the morning their ways part. There are common evils, as there are common goods. Poverty, sickness, death spares not the greatest; health, wealth, prosperity is not denied to the meanest. All have three mansions:—(1.) This earth; there (as in Noah's ark) are the clean and unclean, righteous and wicked, promiscuously confused. (2.) The grave; this is a common house, a very pesthouse, where all lie together under the surgery of death. It is a cheap and universal house; we pay no rent for it. (3.) But after all are come to this place, there is then a way of parting.

'Est locus hic partes ubi se via findit in ambas.'

Some go to hell, others to heaven. 'They shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation,' John v. 29; some to immortal honour, others to immortal horror.

God gives not all outward prosperity to the wicked, lest they should ascribe it to their own wits or worths, lest they should 'sacrifice to their net, and burn incense to their drag,' Hab. i. 16; nor all affliction to the good, lest they should fall to some sinister and unwarrantable courses: 'The rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands to iniquity,' Ps. cxv. 8. There is a mixture of good and evil; prosperity and adversity have their vicissitudes. *Præsentis vitæ nec prosperitas innocentiam testatur, nec acerbitas miseram animam indicat.** Neither do the crosses of this world witness a man's guiltiness, nor the blessings of the world his innocence. But the good have a larger share in sufferings than the reprobates. *Impius non percutitur nisi à domino, nos ab impiis.* None strikes the wicked but God, but all the wicked strike and vex us. This world, like the earth, is a mere stepdame to good herbs, an own mother to weeds. No marvel if she starves us; all is too little for her own children. *Omnnes patiuntur plurima, quidam ferè omnia.* All suffer many kinds of miseries; many suffer all kinds of miseries.

Christianum est pati; it is the part of a Christian to suffer. Wheresoever he is let him expect it. Adam was set upon in Paradise, Job in the

* Greg.

dunghill: *Job fortior in stercore, quàm Adam in Paradiso.* Job was more strong to resist temptations in the miserable dust than was Adam in that glorious garden. The Jews were commanded to eat sour herbs with their sweet passover. Bitterness ever treads on the heels of pleasure. Jacob hath a son and loseth his wife; Benjamin is born, Rachel dies. Our Lady, coming from that great feast, lost her son Jesus three days, Luke ii. 45. Seven days she had eaten 'sweet bread;' here followed three days' sour bread for it. Good things are to be taken with much thankfulness, evil with much patience.

Let this teach us two duties. First, to prepare for evils before they come; next, to make them welcome when they are come. So they shall neither meet us with fear, nor leave us with sorrow.

(1.) Preparation to suffer is specially necessary. Sudden crosses find weak souls secure, leave them miserable, make them desperate. *Expectatum malum levius mordet.* A looked-for evil smarts more gently. *Repentina bona sunt suaviora; sed repentina mala sunt graviora.* Unexpected joys are more gracious, but unexpected evils are more grievous. Mischiefs come most commonly without warning.

They do not allow, as Jonas did to Nineveh, forty days' respite; not so much as an *hac nocte*, 'this night,' which was allowed to the worldling: 'This night shall they fetch away thy soul from thee,' Luke xii. 20. Happy man that gives himself warning: he that conceits what may be, arms himself against what must be. Thou art in health, eatest, digestest, sleepest—

'Quid si morboſo jaceant tua membra cubili?'

What if sickness shall cast thee down on thy weary couch? Though riches allow thee meat for thy stomach, what if sickness allow thee not stomach to thy meat? How if the very smell, if the very thought, of thy best dishes should offend thee? How if, after many tossed sides and shifted places, *nullo poteris requiescere lecto?* thou couldst find no corner to give thee ease? How couldst thou take this distemper? Thou art rich; thy throat tastes it, thy belly feels it, thy back wears it: how if, from no fear of want, thou shouldst come to deep poverty, to care for to-morrow's provision, with extreme sweat of brows not to earn bread enough to keep life and soul together, nakedness exposing thy body to the violence of heaven, scorching heat of the sun, cold storms of the air? How couldst thou brook the difference between that abundant opulency and this destitute penury? Thou art at home in peace, singing in thine own vineyards; thou sittest in a shock secure, whilst thy reapers fell down the humble corn at thy foot and fill thy barns. What if for religion thou shouldst be sent to exile, where thou mayest weep with Israel to thy deriding enemies, demanding a song of Zion? 'How shall I sing the song of joy in a strange land?' Ps. cxxxvii. 4. How canst thou digest the injuries and brook the contempt of strangers?

These be good thoughts to pre-arm our souls; nothing shall make them miserable that have this preparation. Agabus told Paul, having first bound his hands and feet with his girdle, 'Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle,' Acts xxi. 11. Hereupon the rest of the saints besought him with tears not to go up to Jerusalem. But observe that blessed apostle's resolved answer, *Paratus sum*, 'I am ready.' 'What mean ye to weep, and to break mine heart? for I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus,' ver. 18. The account is past, I am prepared.

Men that want this fore-resolution are like a secure city, that spends all her wealth in furnishing her chambers and furbishing her streets, but lets her bulwarks fall to the ground. Here is provision for peace, none for war; something for content of friends, nothing for defence against enemies. It is usual for young men with wooden wasters to learn how to play at the sharp; they are taught with foils how to deal with points. He is desperate that ventures on a single combat in the field, and was never lessoned at the fence-school. We shall be unable to fight with evils themselves, if we cannot well encounter their shadows.

'Mischiefs are like the cockatrice's eye,
If they see first they kill, foreseen they die.'

What our foresight takes from their power it adds to our own; it enervates their strength and corroborates ours. For by this both they are made less able to hurt us, and we are more strong to resist them. Since, therefore, we must pass through this fiery trial, let us first prove our strength in a gentle meditation, as that martyr tried his finger in the candle before his body came to the fire.

(2.) They must be made welcome when they are come. *Non ut hostes, sed ut hospites admittendi.* They must not be entertained as enemies, but as guests. Their 'feet are beautiful that bring good tidings,' Rom. x. 15. But crosses bring good news. They assure us that we are no bastards. 'If you endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; but if you be without correction, then are ye bastards,' Heb. xii. 8. *Non timeas flagellari, sed exheredari.** Fear not to be scourged, but to be disinherited. There is so much comfort in sorrow as makes all affliction to the elect *carmen in nocte*,† 'a song in the night.' Adversity sends us to Christ, as the leprosy sent those ten, Luke xvii. Prosperity makes us turn our backs upon Christ and leave him, as health did those nine. David's sweetest songs were his *lacrymæ*. In misery he spared Saul, his great adversary; in peace he killed Uriah, his dear friend. The wicked sing with grasshoppers in fair weather; but the faithful (in this like sirens) can sing in a storm.

It is a question whether the sun or the wind will first make a man throw off his cloak; but by all consent the sun will first uncloak him. Imagine by the sun the warm heat of prosperity; by the wind, the blustering cold of calamity; by the cloak, Christ's livery, a sincere profession. Now which of these will uncase thee of thy zeal? The boisterous wind makes a man gather his cloak closer about him; the hot, silent sun makes him weary of so heavy a burden; he soon does it off. Secure plenty is the warm sun, which causeth many to discloak themselves, and cast off their zeal, as it did Demas, who left Christ, to 'embrace this present world.' But the cold wind of affliction gathers it up closer to him, and teacheth him to be more zealous. When a man cannot find peace upon earth, he quickly runs to heaven to seek it.

Plutarch writes, that Antigonus had in his army a valiant soldier, but of a sickly body. Antigonus, observing his valour, procured his physicians to take him in hand; and he was healed. Now being sound, he began to fight in some fear, to keep himself a good distance from danger, no more venturing into the van or forlorn place of the battle. Antigonus, noting and wondering at this alteration, asked him the cause of this new cowardice. He answers, 'O Antigonus, thou art the cause! Before, I ventured nothing

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but a diseased corpse, and then I chose rather to die quickly than to live sickly; I invited death to do me a kindness. Now it is otherwise with me, for I have somewhat to lose.' A poor and afflicted life makes a man bold in his religion. It is nothing to part with hunger, thirst, cold, contempt; but when prosperous fortunes flow upon him, he dares not stick so constantly to Christ. Would you have the rich merchant find fault with idolatry, and stand to justify God's truth? No, he hath somewhat to take to; and although he ventures much, he would be loath to be a venturer in this. Yet this somewhat is nothing in regard to what he loseth, because he will not lose his riches. Affliction sometimes makes an evil man good, always a good man better. Crosses therefore do not only challenge our patience, but even our thanks. Thy soul is sick, these are thy physic. *Intelligat homo Deum esse medicum: sub medicamento positus ureris, secaris, clamas. Non audit medicus ad voluntatem, sed audit ad sanitatem.** Understand God thy physician, he ministers to thee a bitter but wholesome potion. Thy stomach abhors it. Thou liest bound under his hand, while he works upon thee. Thou criest to be delivered; he hears thee not according to thy will, but according to thy weal. 'We are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world,' 1 Cor ii. 32. Thou payest the physician of thy body though he cannot heal thee; wilt thou not thank the Physician of thy soul that hath healed thee? The child cries for the knife, the parent knows it can but hurt him; though he weep for it, he shall not have it. Such children are we, to think God doth not use us kindly unless he give us every vanity we affect. Instead of these toys that would make us wanton, God lays on us the rod of correction to make us sober. Our flesh is displeas'd, our soul is saved; we have no cause to complain. I come now from the sufferance of the saints, to

2. The integrity of that sufferance.—'According to the will of God.' We have suffered enough, except it be according to his will. The manner commends the matter. To go no further, this point is sufficiently directed by our apostle, ver. 14, 'If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are you; for the Spirit of glory resteth upon you. But let none of you suffer as an evil-doer.' For, chap. ii. 19, 'This is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.' This our Saviour taught us: 'Blessed are they that suffer persecution for righteousness' sake' (*non qui patiuntur, sed qui patiuntur propter justitiam*), 'for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' *Non mortes, sed mores faciunt martyres.* It is not the death, but the cause, that gives the honour of martyrdom.

Indeed, there is no man that suffers contrary to the will of God, but many suffer not *secundum*, not 'according to the will of God.' In his concealed will he allows the sufferings of the reprobates: this is his just judgment. They are smitten, but for their faults. *Mærent et merentur*: they lament, and deserve to lament. When the adulterer is wounded for his lust, he cannot think himself a patient *secundum beneplacitum Dei*, according to the will of God. When the usurer is fetched over for his extortion, the depopulator for his inclosing, the slanderer for his libelling, all these suffer, but not for conscience toward God, not 'according to his will.' They only are said to suffer according to his will, that suffer first innocently, then patiently.

(1.) Innocently; for the wicked suffer, *Mali mala, sed merito.* Evil men bear evil things, but after their deserts. The pope hath made many

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saints from this kind of suffering. Straw-saints, such as Garnet was. If they be first drenched at Tiber, and after hanged at Tyburn, *martyres sunt*, they can be no less than martyrs. Not seldom their names are put into the Rubric; but they stand there in those red letters for nothing else but to remember their red and bloody actions. They may pretend some show of religion, as if for cause thereof they suffered; but it is not a mere, but a mixed, cause; not for faith, but for faction; not for truth, but for treason. It is observed, that as the physicians say, none die of an ague, nor without an ague; so none of them suffer from the Romish religion, nor without the Romish religion. Therefore as Aristides, dying of the bite of a weasel, exceedingly lamented that it was not a lion; so these Seminaries may greatly lament that they die not for the Lion of Judah, but for the weasel of Rome. Not *secundum voluntatem Dei*, but *secundum voluptatem Antichristi*: not according to the will of Christ, but according to the lust of Antichrist. But he can make them amends with sainting them; men shall kneel to them, pray to them, climb to heaven by the ladder of their merits. Alas! poor saints! the pope sends them to heaven, but how if they were in hell before? May we not say of them, as Augustine did of Aristotle, Woe unto them, they are praised and prayed unto where they are not, and condemned where they are. Unless, as the vision was to Ormus, that among the apostles and martyrs there was a vacant place left in heaven, which, saith he, was reserved for a priest in England called Thomas Becket; and this revelation was full twelve years before Becket died.* So except the pope can make them saints before they die, I fear his authority can do little afterwards. Yet indeed the pope is a great saint-maker, and hath helped abundance of men to heaven. For he sent them thither through the fire, for the cause of Christ; he condemned, cursed, burnt them to ashes; and thus, spite of his teeth, he hath helped to make them martyrs and saints. For ourselves, if we suffer any wrong of men, let us be sure we have not deserved it. Our innocence commends our suffering; for this is 'according to the good will' and pleasure of God.

(2.) Patiently; a murmuring mind evacuates the virtue of thy sufferings. 'For what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye then take it patiently, this is acceptable to God,' 1 Pet. ii. 20. Let me therefore help your patience by two considerations.

First, What Christ our Head suffered for us; bitter words, and more bitter wounds. Observe him; 'Look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame,' Heb. xii. 2. So let us run with patience the race that is set before us. If we cannot endure an angry word from our brother's mouth, how would we suffer boiling lead, and broiling coals, as the martyrs did? How to be crucified as our Lord Jesus was? What would we do then? Shew me now one dram of this patience. Among gallants a word and a blow; among civil men a word and a writ. The back of patience can bear no load. But 'ought not Christ first to suffer these things, and then to enter into his glory?' Luke xxiv. 24. First he was crowned with thorns, and then crowned with honours. *Caput spinosum in terris, si sit gloriosum in caelis*: That head must first wear a wreath of sorrow on earth, that shall wear a wreath of joy in heaven. 'Hereunto are we called: because Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow in his steps,' 1 Pet. ii. 21.

* Martyrol.

Secondly, That all this is 'according to the will of God.' Our blows come, at least mediately, from the hand of God. And this hand is guided with providence, and tempered with love. Distressed worldlings cry out, It was my own folly that ran me into this danger, or the malice of mine enemy undid me, or surfeit on such meat made me sick. So the cur bites the stone, which could never have hurt him but from the hand that threw it. Look up to the first mover, O madman, and discharge the means. The instrument may be unjust in thy wrongs, but the cause is just from him that inflicted it. What rod soever beats thee, consider it 'according to the will of God,' and be patient. His hand sets theirs on work: I hope thou wilt not dispute with thy Maker. The medicine of thy passion is composed by God himself; no evils nor devils shall put in one dram more than his allowance; no man or angel can abate one scruple. The impatient man wants either wisdom or obedience. Wisdom, if he be ignorant from whom his crosses come; obedience, if he knows it, and is not patient. This is the integrity of the suffering; now follows

8. The comfort of this integrity.—'Let him commit the keeping of his soul to God.' Every man cannot with this confidence; but *qui patitur propter Deum, recurrit ad Deum*. He that suffers for Christ's testimony, is confident of God's mercy. 'Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need,' Heb. iv. 16. Here let us observe three circumstances, *Quis, Quid, Cui*: who, what, to whom.

(1.) Who?—'They that suffer according to the will of God.' Felicity thinks it hath no need of God. But God is more dainty of spiritual comforts than to give them to such as are confident in worldly comforts. The balm of the Spirit shall not be sophisticated or mixed *veneno mundi*, with the poison of the world. 'Give strong drink to the heavy,' saith Solomon. God will not give his consolations to those that are drunk with prosperity, mad-merry with this world; but his wine to the heavy heart. He will 'comfort them that mourn,' Isa. lxi. 2. 'Let them that suffer commit,' &c.

(2.) What?—The soul, and the keeping thereof. The soul is a very precious thing; it had need of a good keeper. 'For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' Matt. xvi. 26. We trust the lawyer to keep our inheritance, the physician to keep our body, the coffer to keep our money, shepherds to keep our flocks; but the soul hath need of a better keeper. Howsoever it goes with thy liberty, with thy love, with thy land, with thy life; be sure to look well to thy soul. That lost, all is lost.

The body is not safe where the soul is in hazard. *Non anima pro corpore, sed corpus pro anima factum est.** The soul is not made for the body, but the body for the soul. He that neglects the better, let him look never so well to the worse, shall lose both. He that looks well to the keeping of the better, though he somewhat neglect the worse, shall save both. The body is the instrument of the soul, it acts what the other directs; so it is the external, actual, and instrumental offender: Satan will come with a *Habeas corpus* for it. But I am persuaded, if he take the body, he will not leave the soul behind him.

(3.) To whom?—To God; he is the best keeper. Adam had his salvation in his own hands, he could not keep it. Esau had his birthright in his own hands, he could not keep it. The prodigal had his patrimony in his own hands, he could not keep it. If our soul were left in our own

* Chrys. de recuperat. laps.

hands, we could not keep it. The world is a false keeper; let the soul run to riot, he will go with it. The devil is a churlish keeper; he labours to keep the soul from salvation. The body is a brittle and inconstant keeper; every sickness opens the door, and lets it out. God only is the sure keeper. 'Your life is hid with Christ in God,' Col. iii. 3. This was David's confidence: 'Thou art my hiding-place; thou shalt keep me,' Ps. xxxii. 7. The jewels given to thy little children, thou wilt not trust them with, but keep them thyself. O Lord, keep thou our only one; do thou 'rescue our soul from destructions, our darling from the lions,' Ps. xxxv. 17. Trust us not with our own souls: we shall pass them away for an apple, as Adam did; for a morsel of meat, as Esau did; for the love of an harlot, as that prodigal did. Lord, do thou keep our souls!

Now, the Christian patient must commit the keeping of his soul to God; both in life and in death.

First, Living. The soul hath three places of being: in the body from the Lord; in the Lord from the body; in the body with the Lord. The two last are referred to our salvation in heaven: either in part, when the soul is glorified alone; or totally, when both are crowned together. Now, the soul must be even here in the Lord's keeping, or else it is lost. If God let go his hold, it sinks. It came from God; it returns to God; it cannot be well one moment without God. It is not in the right *ubi*, except the Lord be with it. It is *sine sua domo*, if *sine suo Domino*. Here be four sorts of men reprobable. They that trust not God with their souls, nor themselves, but rely it only upon other men. They that will not trust God with their souls, nor others, but only keep it themselves. They that will trust neither God with their souls, nor others, nor keep it themselves. They that will neither trust others with their souls, nor themselves, but only God, yet without his warrant that he will keep it.

First, They that trust their souls simply to the care of others: they are either papists or profane protestants. The papist trusts Antichrist with his soul; he's like to have it well kept. If masses and asses can keep it (for so the Jesuits term their secular priests), it shall not be lost. The devil fights against the soul, the pope interposeth an armoury of *Agnus Dei's*, sprinklings, crossings, amulets, prayers to saints. But surely if this armour were of proof, St Paul forgot himself in both these places (Eph. vi. 13; 1 Thess. v. 6), where he describes that panoply, or whole armour of God: He speaks of a plate of *righteousness* for the breast, shoes of *patience* for the feet, the shield of *faith*, the helmet of *salvation*, and the sword of the *Spirit*. To the Thessalonians indeed he somewhat varies the pieces of armour; but in neither place doth he mention crosses, crucifixes, aspersions, unctions, &c. Or they will trust the saints in heaven with their souls—

'Sancta virgo Dorthea,
Tua nos virtute bea,
Cor in nobis novum crea.'

What that prophet (Ps. li. 10) desired of God, they—as if they were loath to trouble the Lord about it, and could have it nearer hand—beg of their St Dorothy: to 'create a new heart within them.' Such a rhyme have they to the Virgin Mary—

'Virgo Mater, maris stella,
Fons hortorum; Verbi cella,
Ne nos pestis aut procella,
Pectatores obruant.'

But the saints are deaf, *non audiunt*. They would pray them to forbear such prayers; they abhor such superstitious worship. They that were so jealous of God's honour on earth, would be loath to rob him of it in heaven. So our carnal professors only trust the minister with their soul, as if God had imposed on him that charge, which the prophet gave to Ahab, 'Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life,' 1 Kings xx. 39. But indeed if he do his duty in admonishing: 'If thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul,' Ezek. xxxiii. 9.

Secondly, They that will not trust others with their soul, but keep it themselves. They wrap it warm in the nest of their own presumptuous merits, as if good works should hatch it up to heaven. But the soul that is thus kept will be lost. He that will go to heaven by his own righteousness, and climbs by no other ladder than his own just works, shall never come there. The best saints, that have had the most good works, durst not trust their souls with them. 'I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified,' 1 Cor. iv. 4. 'In many things we sin all,' Jam. iii. 2. All in many things, many in all things; and the most learned papists, whatsoever they have said in their disputations, reserve this truth in their hearts, otherwise speaking in their deaths than they did in their lives. Now *non merita mea, sed misericordia tua*, not my merits, but thy mercies, O Lord. All our life is either unprofitable or damnable; therefore, O man, what remains? *Nisi ut in tota vita tua deploras totam vitam tuam*,* but that during all thy life thou shouldst lament all thy life? Works cannot keep us, but grace. Let them boast of perfection, we cry for pardon; they for merits, we for mercies; they for justifying works of their own, we only for our sweet Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, They that will neither trust others with their soul nor keep it themselves, but either do sell it for ready money, as Esau sold his birth-right, and Judas sold Jesus, or pawn it for a good bribe, some large temptation of profit, or pleasure, or honour. They will not sell it outright, but mortgage it for a while, with a purpose (that seldom speeds) to redeem it; or lose it, walking negligently through the streets of this great city, the world, their soul is gone, and they are not aware of it; or give away their soul, as do the envious and desperate, and have nothing in lieu of it but terrors without and horrors within. They serve the devil's turn for nothing.

Fourthly, They that will trust God with their soul, but have no warrant that God will keep it. They lay all the burden upon the shoulders of Christ, and meddle no more with the matter; as if God would bring them to heaven even whilst they pursue the way to hell, or keep that soul from the body when the body had quite given away the soul. He never promised to save a man against his will. As he doth save us by his Son, so he commands us 'to work up our salvation with fear and trembling,' Phil. ii. 12. He that lies still in the miry pit of his sin, and trusts to heaven for help out, without his own concurring endeavour, may hap to lie there still.

Secondly, Dying; there is no comfort but to trust the soul with God. So David, 'Lord, into thy hands I commit my spirit,' Ps. xxxi. 5. So Stephen, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,' Acts vii. 59. With these words our Lord Jesus himself gave up the ghost. It is justice to restore whence we receive. It is not presumption, but faith, to trust God with thy

* Anselm.

spirit. The soul of the king, the soul of the beggar, all one to him. David, a king; Lazarus, a beggar: God receives both their souls. From giving up the ghost the highest is not exempted; from giving it into the hands of God the poorest is not excepted. There is no comfort like this. When riches bring *aut nequam, aut nequicquam*, either no comfort or discomfort; when thy wardrobe, furniture, junkets, wine offend thee; when thy money cannot defend thee; when thy doctors feed themselves at thy cost, cannot feed thee; when wife, children, friends stand weeping about thee; where is thy help, thy hope? All the world hath not a dram of comfort for thee. This sweetens all, 'Lord, into thy hand I commend my soul; thou hast redeemed me, O thou God of truth.'

Our spirit is our dearest jewel. Howl and lament if thou think thy soul is lost. But let thy faith know that is never lost which is committed to God's keeping. *Spiritum emittis, non amittis. Durius seponitur, sed melius reponitur.* That soul must needs pass quietly through the gates of death which is in the keeping of God. Woe were us if the Lord did not keep it for us whiles we have it, much more when we restore it. While our soul dwells in our breast it is subject to manifold miseries, to manifest sins; temptations, passions, misdeeds distemper us. In heaven it is free from all these. Let the soul be once in the hands of God, it is neither disquieted with sorrow for sin, nor with sin which is beyond all sorrow. There may be trouble in the wilderness; in the land of promise there is all peace. Then may we sing, 'Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped,' Ps. cxxiv. 7. *Invadit Satanas, evadit Christianus.* It is there above the reach of the devil. There is no evil admitted into the city of heaven to wrestle with the citizens thereof. Death is ready at hand about us, we carry deaths enow within us. We know we shall die, we know not how soon; it can never prevent us, or come too early, if our souls be in the keeping of God. Man was not so happy when God gave his soul to him as he is when he returns it to God. Give it cheerfully; and then, like a faithful Creator, that thou givest to him in short pain he will give thee back with endless joy. And so we come fitly from the comfort of our integrity, to

4. The boldness of this comfort.—'As unto a faithful Creator;' wherein our confidence is heartened by a double argument, the one drawn *a majestate*, the other *a misericordia*: from majesty, from mercy. His greatness, a 'Creator;' his goodness, a 'faithful Creator.'

(1.) Creator; not a stranger to thee, but he that made thee. It is natural to man to love the work of his own hands. Pygmalion dotes upon the stone which himself had carved. But much more natural to love his own images, his children, the walking pictures of himself, the divided pieces of his own body. God loves us as our Creator, because his own hands have fashioned us. But *creavit et vermiculos*, he also created the worms. Yield it, and, therefore, *non odit vermiculos*, he hates not the very worms. *Creavit et diabolum*, he made the devil. No; God made him an angel, he made himself a devil. God loves him *ut naturam*, as he is a nature; hates him *ut diabolum*, as he is a corrupted nature, an evil, a devil. But we are not only his creatures, the workmanship of his hands, but his children. So Adam is called 'The son of God,' Luke iii. 38, his own image. *Fecit hominem in similitudinem suam*, 'he made man after his likeness, in his image,' Gen. i. 26. We are more than *opus Dei*, the mere work of God; for *imago Dei*, the very image and similitude of God. We may, therefore, be bold to commend our souls to God, as 'a faithful Creator.'

Divers men have that for their God which never was their Creator. The proud man makes his honour his god, the covetous man makes his gold his god, the voluptuous makes his belly his god. Now, whereas God not only charged in the first precept, 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me,' but added further in the next, 'Thou shalt not make to thee any image or similitude of any thing, whether in heaven above, or earth beneath, or water under the earth,' &c. These three sins seem to cross God in these three interdicted places; for the proud man hath his idol, as it were, in the air; the covetous man hath his idol in the earth; the drunken epicure hath his idol in the water.* Let them take their gods to themselves; let no Rachel that hath married Jacob steal away Laban's idols. Our Creator is in heaven; boldly give thy soul to him. Who should better have it than he that made it?

(2.) The other argument of our comfort is, that he is *fidelis*, a faithful Creator. He is faithful to thee, how unfaithful soever thou hast been to him. He made thee good, thou madest thyself naught; he doth not there yet leave thee, as man his friend in misery, but sent his Son to redeem thee. Here was great faithfulness. He sends his Holy Spirit into thy heart, to apply this redemption of Christ: here is great faithfulness. Thou often turnest thy back upon him, and following sin, leavest him; he leaves not thee. 'I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee,' Heb. xiii. 5: here is great faithfulness. He hath promised *pœnitenti veniam, credenti vitam*; to him that repenteth, pardon; to him that believeth, salvation: here is faithfulness. Now, hath he promised? he is faithful to perform it. What man or devil dares stand up to challenge God of unfaithfulness?

This infallibility Christ knew, when to his Father's faithful hands he gave up the ghost. You will say, Who might better do it? The Son might well be confident of the Father. Not he alone: the servants have been faithful also in this emission, and found God as faithful in acceptance. So David, Stephen, &c. God is faithful, there is no distrust in him; all the fear is in thyself. How canst thou trust thy jewel with a stranger? God is thy Creator, and a faithful Creator. But how if thou be an unfaithful creature? Thou wilt frequent the doors of thy patron, present gifts to thy landlord, visit thy friend; but how if to him that made thee, thou makest thyself a stranger? How often hath God passed by thee, without thy salutation! In the temple he hath called to thee, thy heart hath not echoed, and sent out thy voice to call upon him. There hath he charged thee, 'Seek my face;' thou hast not answered, 'Thy face, O Lord, I will seek.' By his Spirit he hath knocked at thy door, thou hast not opened to him. Now upon some exigent thou bequeathest thy soul to him; upon what acquaintance? Will this sudden familiarity be accepted?

It is our own ignorance, or strangeness, or unfaithfulness that hinders us. The reprobates think Christ a stranger to them; 'When did we see thee hungry?' &c., Matt. xxv. 44. But indeed they are strangers to Christ, and he may well say, 'When did I see you visit me?' 'I was sick and in prison, and ye came not at me.' Would you have God cleave to them that leave him? Doth a man all his life run from God, and shall God on his deathbed run to him? No, you would not know me; and therefore now, *non novi vos*, I know not you. But the faithful creature knows God a faithful Creator: 'I know whom I have believed.' Thou mayest say with that good father, *Egredere anima mea, quid times?* Go forth, my soul, go forth with joy, what shouldst thou fear? Yea it will go without bidding,

* Joann. de Combis Compend, lib. 5. can. 60.

and fly cheerfully into the arms of God, whom it trusted as a faithful Creator. I have served thee, believed on thee, now I come unto thee, saith Luther. 'I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, says Paul. These are not the voices of worldlings, but of saints. God will be a faithful Creator to receive and preserve their souls. I have served thee, faithful man; I have preserved thee, saith God. *In me credis, ad me venis*: thou believest on me, thou comest to me. Here is now the boldness of our comfort; there is yet

5. A caution of this boldness.—'In well doing.' The wicked man may commit his soul to God's keeping, but how is he sure God will take the charge of it? What should God do with a foul and polluted soul? The soul must at last be committed to some; now he only is the receiver of it in death, that was the keeper of it in life. If Satan have always ruled it, God will not embrace it. As Jephtha said to the elders of Gilead, 'Did ye not hate me, and expel me out of my father's house? and why are ye come unto me now, when ye are in distress?' Jud. xi. 7. Did you thrust God out of your hearts, out of your houses, out of your barns, out of your closets; and shall God open heaven to your souls? They that thus commit their souls to God, God will commit their souls to Satan. It must be delivered up *in patiendo malum*, but *in faciendo bonum*; in suffering that is evil, but in doing that is good. Otherwise if we thrust God from us, God will thrust us from him.

Thus is God even with man. They say now to the Holy One of Israel, 'Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways,' Job. xxi. 14. Hereafter God shall say to them, 'Depart from me, I know you not,' Matt. vii. 23. Man's soul is but an inmate to the bosom, sent to lodge there for a time; but must not take it up for a dwelling; God is the Lord of the tenure, to him it must be surrendered. We have a soul within us, but it is not ours (and yet what is ours if our soul be not?); it must be committed to God, either in evil-doing, as to a judge, or in well-doing, as to a faithful Creator. Some live as if they had no souls; *more belluino*, like human beasts. The vicissitudes of drunkenness, whoredom, sleep, share all their time. Others live as if they should never part with their soul. Therefore *reponunt in multos annos*, they lay up for many years; this was the cosmopolite's self-flattery. 'Soul be merry, thou hast much goods laid up for many years,' Luke xii. Yet others live as if their soul was not their own, but given them to spend at their pleasure, without ever being accountable for it.

But the good live as if their soul was God's; to him they commend it in a sweet conversation with him. Their bodies move on earth, their souls live in heaven. To him they may boldly commend their spirits; for they that fit their souls for God in health, shall never find the offer of their deathbed refused. If a man had no soul, if a mortal one, if his own, if never to be required, he might without wonder be induced to live sensually; he that knows the contrary will live well, that he may die well, and commit his soul to God 'in well-doing.' Here further observe:

A man may do good, yet come short of this comfort; it is given *bene facientibus*, to them that do well. It is not doing good, but doing well, that gets God to keep the soul. You have served me, says God to Israel, but after your own lusts. To serve God is doing good, but after their own lusts, is not doing well. To build a church is a good work; yet if the foundations of it be laid in the ruins of the poor, their children come not to pray for, but curse the builder. Great and good were the works of the Pharisees,

yet all spoiled for want of a *benè*. 'Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven,' Matt. v. 20. Therefore St Paul's counsel directs us, 'So (not only run, but so) run that you may obtain,' 1 Cor. ix. 24. Schismatics run, but they run out of the church; they love the truth, but not in peace. Secure people run, but they run beside the church; they love peace, but not in truth. Others follow the truth in peace, but not for the truth; *dum querunt eam, non querunt ipsam*.* They fail in their *sic*, they miss this same 'well.' *Prosunt aliis, sibi neutiquam*. They do good to others, but not well to themselves. But we have almost lost both *bonum* and *bene*, good and well. It is an ill disjunction, that our fathers had so good works, and wanted our faith; and we have the true faith, but want their works. This 'well' is the very form of a good work; and *forma dat esse rei*, it cannot be good without it. Let me here take just cause to reprove two sorts of people.

(1.) Some there are that trust God with their souls, and destroy their own bodies. But God will take no charge of the soul, but in well-doing. Those virgins that would kill themselves to prevent ravishments, are reprov'd by just censure. *Satius incertum adulterium in futuro, quam certum homicidium in presenti*. Better an uncertain adultery to be endured, than a certain self-murder to be acted. How can they hope for God's hand of mercy, that lay on themselves a hand of cruelty. Bhasis in the Maccabees, falling upon his own sword, and throwing himself down from the wall, yet committed himself to God's keeping, 'calling upon the Lord of life and spirit,' &c., 2 Mac. xiv. 46. The text says twice (with little credit to its own judgment) that it was done manfully. But it was *magnè, potius quam bene factum*, done with desperate valour; with more venture than wisdom, temerity than honesty. This was that the devil left out, when he cited scripture to Christ, Matt. iv. 6. 'In all thy ways;' he made that a parenthesis, which was essential to the text. This the original testified, Ps. xci. 11. *Custodient in vis tuis*; but this was none of his ways down from the pinnacle, to shew the people a tumbling trick, and to break his neck. So the devil labours to secure men of God's providence generally, though they be quite out of the way. He bids men be confident that God will keep their souls, howsoever they walk; so under colour of God's protection, he brings them to destruction. He tells a man of predestination, that he is sure of an eternal election to life, therefore may live at his own pleasure; so from God's decree draws encouragement to a secure life. He tells him of justification, that he is acquitted by the blood of Christ; so emboldens him on the back of presumption to ride post to hell: Whereas predestination and justification are only made known to us by 'well-doing.'

(2.) It is impossible for a man of an ill life, to hope that God will keep his soul. He that lives ill, and hopes well, teacheth his ignorance to deceive his wickedness, and them both to deceive his soul. 'Your iniquities have separated between you and your God,' Isa. lix. 2. But 'Separate yourselves from the unclean thing, and I will receive you,' 2 Cor. vi. 17. Take away the bar, your sins; break off the partition by repentance, then I will keep you, saith God. Commit your souls to the Lord's trust in well-doing, or not at all. If Christ had come down from the pinnacle headlong, and not by the stairs, he had neglected the way, and so been out of the compass of God's promise to keep him. It is an over-bold presumption, to charge God to keep thy soul, whilst thou dost wilfully lose

* Ang.

it. Wilt thou clip the wings of thy soul, and then bid it fly to God? 'It is all one, as if thou shouldst cut off a man's leg, and then send him on an errand. Our presumption is able to tie up God's arms, that he cannot help us. He that walks in profaneness, and commits his soul to God, is like him that throws himself into a deep pit, to try whether God will help him out, and save him from drowning. Man is timorous where he should be bold, and bold where he should be timorous.

God bids us cast our care upon him for this life. 'Take no thought for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, or wherewith you shall be clothed: your heavenly Father knows you have need of all these things,' Matt. vi. 31. Yet we dare not trust God without a pawn; unless we have bread, we think we shall starve. Here we fear, where we ought not. God tells us, the bread of heaven must feed our spirits; more necessary to maintain life in the soul, than is bread to preserve life in the body: we never hunger after this, yet presume we have sound souls, and trust God to keep them. Here we do not fear where we ought. We are so sottish, that we dare trust God with the soul, the more precious part, without well-doing, the means to have it saved; yet dare not trust him with our bodies, unless we can see our barns full, or at least our cupboards.

But in vain thou committest thy soul to God, except thou obeyest God. There is still a commandment with the promise. If thou keep not the precept, thou hast no interest in the promise. If thou wilt not perform thy part, God is discharged of his part: if thou refuse to do well, he will not keep thy soul. The protection of God extends not to us in lewd courses: we are then out of our way, and the devil may take us up as vagabonds. 'If thou do well, shalt thou not be accepted? if thou do evil, sin lieth at the door,' Gen. iv. 7. If thou do evil, sin is thy keeper, not God. There was a temple, called the temple of trust: God will not be to them a temple of trust, that had no trust in their temples.

It is a good thing to have God keep the soul, but the wicked cannot have this hope. He that hath money, lays it up in his coffers; or if he sends it abroad, like a stern jailor, he suffers it not to go without a keeper, sound bonds. He that hath lands, makes strong conveyances to his desired heirs, that they may be kept. If children, he provides to have them safely kept. He keeps his goods from the thief, his chickens from the kite, his lambs from the wolf, his fawn from the hound, his dove from the vermin; yet he keeps not his soul from the devil. O wretched man, that must die, and knows not what shall become of his soul. The world would have it, but he knows it must not; himself would keep it, but he knows he cannot; Satan would have it, and he knows not whether he shall; he would have God take it, and he knows not whether he will. O miserable man, that must part with his soul he knows not whither.

We see what it is to lead an evil life, and to be a stranger to God. He 'knows his sheep,' John x. 14, but the goats are not written in his book. 'The foundation of God standeth sure, having the seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his,' 2 Tim. ii. 19. It is a goodly thing to be famous and remarkable in the world. *Est pulchrum digito monstrari, et dici, hic est.* It is a goodly thing to be said, 'This is the man whom the world honours,' Esth. vi. 9; but perhaps this is not he whom God honours. He that suffers and does according to the will of God, the Lord will take that man into his bosom: 'Such honour have all his saints,' Ps. cxlix. 9. It is no great matter for men to be known to kings and nobles, if the Lord know

them not; nothing to ride in the second coach, as Joseph; to be next to the prince, if they be strangers to the court of heaven.

Therefore let us all lay hold on well-doing, that we may have comfort in well-dying. We desire to shut up our last scene of life, with *in manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum*; Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit. Behold, while we live, God says to us, *in manus tuas, homo, commendo Spiritum meum*; man, into thy hands I commend my Spirit. As we use God's Spirit in life, God will use our spirit at death. If we open the doors of our hearts to his Spirit, he will open the doors of heaven to our spirit. If we feast him with a 'supper' of grace, Rev. iii. 20, he will feast us with a supper of glory. If we 'grieve his Spirit,' Eph. iv. 30, he will grieve all the veins of our hearts. When such shall say, Lord, into thy hands we commend our souls; no, saith God, I will none of your spirit, for you would none of my Spirit. You shut him out, when he would have entered your hearts; he shall shut you out when you would enter heaven. Let us therefore here use God's Spirit kindly, that hereafter he may so use our spirits. Let us in life entertain him with faith, that in death he may embrace us with mercy. So, Lord, into thy hands we commend our souls; keep and receive them, O thou faithful Creator and God of truth, through Jesus Christ. Amen.