

ADDRESSES to OLD MEN, and YOUNG MEN, and LITTLE CHILDREN.

In Three DISCOURSES

I. The *OLD MANS* Honour; or, *The Hoary Head found in the way of Righteousness.*

A Discourse Recommending unto OLD MEN, A Saving *Acquaintance* with the Lord JESUS CHRIST.

II. The *YOUNG MAN'S* Glory; or, a *Wreath of Graces for the Head of Youth.*

A Discourse Recommending unto *YOUNG MEN* A blessed *Victory* over the Devil.

III. The *LITTLE CHILDS Lesson; Or, A Chi•• wise* unto Salvation.

A Discourse instructing and inviting *LITTLE CHILDREN* to the Exercises of Early <◇> .

To which may be added, A short Scriptural Cate|chism, accommodated unto their Capacities.

By COTTON MATHER.

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SEnum est Prophetare. Etiamsi videas aliquan|do Juvenem Prophetantem, non dubites de eo dicere, si secundum Interiorem Hominem Senu-Propterea est Propheta.

Orig Hom. in Ps 36.

De Verbo Divino, *Capit hic* Infans, Panem *Rubustior* AEtas, <...> *Optato curva Senecta cibo.*

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The Dedication of The Old Mans Honour.

To my Honoured, and Worthy Friend, Major JOHN RICHARDS.

Sir,

Were there nothing else to command my Regards for you, besides the Old Age, which your Out-living of Threescore Winters has brought you to the Border of, That were enough to give you a room in my Esteem and Reverence, and Veneration. I cannot but approve the care of the Greek Language, to make no more than $\langle \diamond \rangle$ Letters Difference between the words for Old age, and Honour; and I cannot but applaud that condition of the World, whereto refers that famous Distic•• Magna fuit quondam Capitis Reverentia Cani,

In{que} suo pretio Ruga Senilis erat.

The Marks of Respect put upon Old age among Antient Lacedemonians have been the matter of $\langle \diamond \rangle$ pleasant and famous Histories; and the mode•• Venetians owe not a little of their Prosperity as well a Reputation unto the Figure which is allowed Old age among them. That people is not like long-liv'd, among whom, Fathers and Mothers, those that have lived long, are not acknowledged; that plant whose Younger Branches put a st••ght $\langle \diamond \rangle$ the Elder, is for that cause by the Ingenious Bota••• called, Herba Impia, or a Wicked Cudweed When Old such an one, is used as a Term of Disgrace, & when Javenis vetulo non assurrexerit, I still think that I see none of the smallest among the Verbal and Real $\langle \diamond \rangle$ of the World. But something beside, [Page \[unnumbered\]](#) and beyond your meer Approaches to that Age, which will place a Silver Crown of Gray-hairs upon your Head, it is that causes me now to Dedicate unto you, the little Treatise of, The Old Mans Honour, now laid before you. 'Tis because you have, The Old Mans Honour, adorning of you; not only by having Served your People, both as a Ruler to them at home, and as an Agent for them abroad, when God gave you Opportunity; and we know the Name of that people with whom i• was a Law, that none but Good Old Men should have the Honour, either Magistratum Gerere, or Legationem Obire; but chiefly by your Acquaintance with Him that is from the Beginning. Many years are now rolled away since you began that blessed Acquaintance; and I am well satisfy'd that the most fruitful old Polycarp, you will profess self not yet weary of your Glorious Master. As my Duty to Desire, so I have Reason to Expect, the nearer you come to be an Old Man, the more well put off the Old Man, which is Corrupt ••ording to Deceitful Lusts; that while you are Old Man you will be found in the Old Way, ••ein you will find Rest for your Soul;

and ‹› •ou will be One of those in my Dear Flock, whom after I have Preached unto others, I do not my prove a Cast-away [which let Free Grace pre|•••] I shall meet at the Right-hand of the Lord Jesus Christ with unspeakable joy, and whom I shall spend an Happy Eternity in the praises of a merciful Creator and Redeemer with; All which is humbly pray'd for, by

Sir,

Your most Affectionate Friend and Servant, C. Mather.

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THE OLD MANS HONOUR OR, The HOARY HEAD found in the way of RIGHTEOUSNESS.

I John II. XIII.

I Write unto you FATHERS, because ye known Him that is from the Beginning.

HISTORY tells us that the Antient *cedoemonians* in their Publick and ‹› Festivals, did use to have Three made among them; the first, of *Old Men*, ‹› made a Song to the Spectators, of this ‹›

We have been Young and Strong all heretofore, Till Age forbad our doing any more;

The Second, of *Young Men*, who had this their Song,

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We still are Young and Strong, and will maintain Our Cause against all that on Earth remain.

The Third, of *Children*, who sang,

*And We that on the Stage look now so small,
As we succeed, hope to surpass you all.*

It were a *Spectacle* very much more Desirable and Considerable, if Christians of all *Ages* might •his Day stand forth among us; and in the *Capa|•••* not only of *Men*, but also of *Saints*, give ‹› a good account of themselves. Behold, in •••ext represented unto us, What should be ‹› *experience*, and what the *Resolution* of all *Ages*, ‹› would march off with the *praise of God* as ‹› of *Men*! If *Old Men* would Expire joyful|•••ey should be able to say, *We*

have been well *ointed with our Saviour*. If *Young Men* would Happily, they should be able to say, *We truly Victorious over our Destroyer*. If would Grow up Hopefully, they should to say, *We have already acknowledged God Father*. For me to recommend these At|ents unto the several Ages here, will be a of my Endeavour to give *the Food in due son unto that Houshold* of the Lord Jesus, which am an unworthy *Servant* in; and, *Unto thee, O Glorious Lord, I now how my knee, that in this taking, thy Grace may be sufficient for me*.

[Page 3](#) We have before us, an Inspired Epistle, which not only as *Austin* observes, has been *Unquestionably* and *Universally* received as *Canonical*; but also *Jerom* testifies, has as *Unquestionably* and *Uni|versally* been ascribed unto the Holy Apostle *John*. There is indeed running thro' the whole Epistle, the plain *Character* of the Spirit breathing in that Apostle, of whom one of the Antients does report, That when thro' extream Age, he was unable to *Walk* or *Speak* to the Church, he would be carried by the Disciples thither, and with his Aged, Fee|ble, Broken Voice, only say unto them, *My Dear Children, Love one another*.

Our Apostle in our Context, is pressing the *eneral Duty of Conformity* to the Lord Jesus Chr and under that Head, the *particular Duty of Curity* towards all our Brethren; and hereupon addresses all Christians of *several Ages*, there|withal very pertinently and elegantly declaring to them the Reasons of his thus Addressing them.

All Christians are first addressed under the name of *New-born Babes*; for indeed we all should be like *Babes* for our Humility, for our Innocency, for our Placability; or else, our Lord has told us, *Ye shall not enter in o the Kingdom of Heaven*. But these *Babes* are then ranked under three Denomi|nations, *Fathers, Young Men, Little Children*; to each of these does the Apostle say, *I write unto you*; For truly, our God hath His *Children* in all Ages, and all Ages ought very much to be con|versant with the *written Word* of God.

[Page 4](#) Let us begin at the first, and of them: note,

First, The *Persons* apply d unto. *Fathers*. By these are meant, not meerly *Fathers in Grace*, but likewise, *Fathers in Age*; the Expression intimates *Old Men*, that are in the School of the Lord Je|sus Christ, And mark, the old Apostle calls them, *Fathers*; which was not from any *Relation* of theirs to him, but from his *Reverence* to them. 'Tis to teach us. That, *Old Men* should have

much *Respect* and *Honour* from us; we ought still to <◇> them as our *Fathers*, & use no Terms unto them, which discover not our sense of something venerable in them, but remember that Charge of <◇>, in Lev. 22. 19. *Thou shalt Honour the Face <◇> of the Old Man, and Fear thy God*; there is no <◇> of the *Great God* where the *Face* of an *Old <◇>* is not beheld with Regards of Honour.

Secondly, The *Character* and *Priviledge* of these persons. 'Tis, *Ye have known Him that is from <◇> Beginning*. By that is meant, our Lord Jesus Christ; of whom this very Apostle elsewhere speaks, in *John* 1. 1, 2. *In the Beginning was the <◇>*, which Name *he* (and none but *he*) in every one of his Books, put upon the Lord Jesus Christ; and he adds, *The same was in the Beginning with God*. But if you ask, why the Lord Jesus Christ, is here called, *He that is from the Beginning <◇>* I answer,

'Tis first, to assert the *Divinity* of the Lord Jesus Christ; against those *Carpocratians*, are *Celeftans* and *Ebionites*, who were the *Antichrists*, <◇> [Page 5](#) appearing in the Days of *John*. Those Heretics affirmed our Blessed Lord Jesus to be a *Meer man <◇>* but in opposition to them, 'tis here said, *That <◇> Lord had a Being from, and at, and Indeed influite*, before the *beginning of the World*.

'Tis also to commend the Lord Jesus Christ upon the score of His *Antiquity*; *old men* love to pretend unto the Knowledge of *old Things*; and it is here intimated, That as they knew *Him*, so there was nothing *older* than He for them to be conversant withal.

Let this then be the *Doctrine* which our Thoughts may at this Time a little dwell upon.

DOCTRINE.

That a peculiar Acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God as well as Man, is the <◇> Attainment of old men walking in the Ways of GOD.

We have three Propositions here to be regarded.

Proposition I.

All men, and particularly *Old Men* should study a *peculiar Acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ*. All men should be of the same Resolve with *That Man*

in a Cor. 2. 2. *I determined not to know any thing, but Jesus Christ, and Him Crucify'd.* This [Page 6](#) was the *Determination* of one whom the Antients do nor unfi•ly call, *An uns•table Admirer of the Lord Jesus Christ!* and there was no Occasion for that Famous and Learned Philosopher among the Antient Heathens to *pity* the Apostle *Paul* upon this account, that such *Rare Parts* as *Pauls* were, should be thrown away upon the *Knowledge of Je|sus Christ.* A Needless, Bootless pity! For No ⟨◇⟩ can any where find a fitter Subject for his Acquaintance, than the Lord Jesus is; not have •ay of those *Doctors* who have worn the pompous Titles of *subtil*, and *profound*, and *Angelical*, bin worthy of the Titles, unless this Acquaintance have made them so.

Si Christum discis nihil est si coetera nescis.
Si Christum nescis nihil est si coetera discis.

But *Old Men* should have a very particular Dis|position hereunto. For having try'd an Acquain|tance with all other Things, they can upon a long Experience, resent the •a•ty and *Vexation* that is in them all, and ⟨◇⟩ out, *I have seen an end of all persection in the world.* It is therefore time for *them* to Resolve, *I have determined to know nothing but Him that is from the Beginning!*

If you Enquire, ⟨◇⟩ is a *peculiar Acquain|tance* with the Lord Jesus Christ?

I• imports, First, A *Speculative* or *Notional* ⟨◇⟩ of the Christian Religion, and especi|ally ⟨◇⟩, *That Great M•tery of Godliness, God •a|• in the flesh.* *Old Men* should become well [Page 7](#) informed about the *Natures* of Him, who is *God* and *Man* in One Person; about the *Offices* of Him, who is the *Prophet*, the *Priest*, and the *King* of our Souls; about the *Endowments* of Him, who is both *Able* and *Willing* to *save us unto the uttermost*; a|bout the *Benefits* of Him, who bestows upon us *Justification*, and *Sanctification* and *Redemption*, and all the *Inheritance of Adoption*; in fine, about the *Conditions* of Him, *who Humbled himself, and be|came obedient unto Death, Wherefore God hath highly Exalted Him.* These are the points of our *Cate|chism*, and the first *Principles of the Doctrine of Christ*; it is a shame for *any*, but above all, for *Old Men*, to be Ignorant of these principles.

But here is not all; a *Devil* once could say to our Lord Jesus, as in Lue. 4. 34. *I know thee, who thou art.* Wherefore it imports, Also, a *Fiducial* and an *Experimental* Knowledge of the Lord Je|sus Christ. *Knowledge* is put for *Faith*, in Isa. 53. 11. *By his Knowledge, my righteous Servant, shall justifie many.* We ought so to *know* the Lord Jesus Christ, as to prize Him, and Love Him, and Apply our selves unto Him, and appropriate Him unto our selves, and say unto

Him, like the Disci|ple, *My Lord and my God*; or with the Believer, *My Beloved is mine, and I am His!* And *Knowledge* must be with *Tast*, as in I Pet. 2. 3. *Ye have tasted that the Lord is Gracious.* We ought so to *know* the Lord Jesus Christ, as to be very Really sensible of the Beauty and Sweetness that is in Him, & like that woman once, we should *feel Vertue going* [Page 8](#) *forth from Him* unto our Souls; or like *Paul*, find upon our selves the *power* of what is in our Lord. *Old Men* are miserable Non-proficients, if they do not arrive to *such* a knowledge of our Lord Redeemer. In a word, *All men*, and especially *Old Men* should so know the Lord Jesus, as to lead a life of Communion with Him.

But if you Enquire, WHY we should be studi|ous of such an *Acquaintance* with the Lord Jesus Christ? Briefly,

First, We have nothing so *Noble* to be acquaint|ed withal, as the Lord Jesus Christ. It was once asked in Cant. • 9. *What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved?* and the Answer was, *O He is altogether Lovely.* Thus if any demand, *What is the Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, more than a|ny other Knowledge!* the Answer may be, *'Tis the Knowledge of him that is altogether Lovely.* Gram|••• and *Rhet'rick* is the Knowledge of *Speech*; Lo|•• is the Knowledge of *Respect* and *Reason*; *Phy/sicks* are the Knowledge of *Qualities*, and *Mathe|matics* are the Knowledge of *Quantities*. But sure, None of these Things are comparable to our dearest, glorious Lord Jesus Christ; of whom 'tis said, in Col. 1. 19. *In him does all Fulness dwell.* To be acquainted with Him, 'tis to know the brightest Thing in the Third Heaven it self; 'tis to *Know* those Mysteries, which the very *Angels* do bend themselves to pry into; 'tis to *Know* that, which with  we should count our selves *Losers* by every thing that would obstruct us in the *Excellent Knowledge* of.

[Page 9](#) Secondly, We have nothing so *Useful* to be ac|quainted withal, as the Lord Jesus Christ. For,

The *Knowledge* of the Lord Jesus Christ will fill us with a blessed variety of other *Knowledge*. As now, *Would we know God?* we are told in 2 Cor. 4. 6. *The glory of God is to be seen in the Face of Jesus Christ.* Right Notions about the *Wisdom*, and *Power*, and *Justice*, and *Goodness* of God, are shaped in our Minds, by the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus; when we know Him, we are like *Moses*, put into the Clefs of a *R••k*, where the *glory of the great God* now passes before us. Or, *would we know our selves?* The Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, will help us to know what our *sins* are. Well sings the Christian Poet,  *Who would know Sin, Let him repair*

Unto Mount Olivet.

The Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ will help us to know what our *plagues* are. We may pass a judgment upon our own *Wounds* by the *plaster* in Him provided for us; and by what was Exacted from our *Surety*, we may guess what our own *Debts* have been. And we may come likewise to know our *Duties*, by the Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has been a complete *Copy* and a perfect *Pattern* for us; and His Call unto us is, *Lock on me and do likewise*. In short, Jesus Christ is the *Key* that unlocks all the *Scriptures*. We have *searcht* the *Scriptures*, and *known* them to good purpose, when we have Dug so far into them, as to find them all *testifying* of [Page 10](#) the Lord Jesus Christ. The Knowledge of Him exposes to us the *Pearl of great Price* in that *Sacred Field*. *All men* should know these things, but for *old men* to be un-instructed in them, is remarkably disgraceful and pernicious.

Again, The *Knowledge* of the Lord Jesus Christ, will afford an unspeakable *satisfaction* to our Souls. An Artist, that has met with some *New*, tho' but *small*, Discovery, with a strange *Satisfaction* cries out, *I have found, I have found!* But above all, the Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, is a *River of honey* to them that are made partakers of it; hence could the Psalmist say, in Psal. 17. 5. *I will behold thy Face, I shall be satisfied*. This *Manna* will fully answer the vast craving raging Appetites of an Immortal Soul; whatever fiery *thirst* was once in such a Soul, yet now, *It shall never thirst*. We read in Phil. 2. 1. about, *Consolation in Christ*; the Knowledge of Christ places us amidst the Springs and Veins of an interminable *consolation*. *All men* should seek for such a *Satisfaction*; but it is particularly incumbent upon *old men*, who may complain with *Bartillai*, that they are past the relish of those *worldly pleasures* in which others *labour to delight* themselves. Once more,

The *Knowledge* of the Lord Jesus Christ, will convey an *Eternal Salvation* to our Souls. A man may go to Hell, with all other *Sciences* about him; and sink into that horrible devouring Pit, with such a shriek as that, *Qualis Artifex pereo! Behold an Artist, going to be Damned!* The Floor, [Page 11](#) the hideous Floor of Hell, is paved with the skulls of admirable *Scholars*. You know who said, *No's cum nostris Doctrinis mergimur in Infernum*. Who better *Scholars* than the *Devils* themselves? All the Learning that many have, serves only as a bag of *Gold* about a Drowning Man; it sinks them the deeper into the scalding Floods of the Lake that burns with fiery Brimstone: But the Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ is a *saving* thing. He that calls in Isa, 45. 22. *Look unto me, and be saved*, also says, *O know me, and you shall be saved*. A Look to Him,

will bring an Healing to our Dy|ing Souls; as a Look to the *Coper Serpent*, once did unto the *Israelites*.

This *Knowledge* will cause us to *escape the pollu|tions of the World*; this *Knowledge* will cause us to *grow in Grace*; and in fine, this *Knowledge* has no less a thing spoken of it, than that in Joh. 17. 3. *It is Life Eternal*. The fame that makes it thus Necessary for *All men*, makes it for *Old men* more eminently so. *Old men* have a *Night* coming up|on them; and they above all, had need get their *Lamps* lighted with such a *Knowledge*, as may light them into the Chambers of Everlasting Glo|ry.

Proposition II.

'Tis the special Attainment of Old Men walking in the ways of God, that they have this Acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ. For,

[Page 12](#) First, The *Knowledge* of the Lord Jesus Christ is a *special Attainment* in whomsoever 'tis. It can't be said of all people. *They have known him that is from the Beginning*. 'Tis the distinguishing favour of God, that has made *some* Acquainted with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; and hence 'twas the Rapturous Doxology of our Lord, in Mat. 11. 25. *I thank thee, O Father, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and Revealed them unto Babes*. Those few, that have the true *Knowledge* of the Lord Jesus Christ, are those to whom, the most high God may say, *You only have I known, among all the Families of the Earth*. And as there is a singular *Difference* or *Dignity* in this *Attainment*, which renders them that have it, the *happy Servants* that may see the Glory and hear the Wisdom of Him that is, *A Greater than Solomon*; so there is a singular *Excellency* in it, upon this Account; that it finds a singular *Acceptance* with God; we are told in Joh. 6. 29. *This is THE work of God, that ye believe on Him, whom He hath sent*; God is pleased with no work that we can do, so much as this, *that we so know his Son, as to put our trust in Him*; and it brings a singular. *Advan|tage* to men; 'tis wished in 2 Pet 1. 2. *Grace and Peace be multiplied unto you, thro' the Knowledge of Jesus our Lord*; may we but well *Know* our Lord Jesus, that's the way fo... manner of *grace* and *peace* to be *multiply'd* unto us.

Secondly, *Old Men* walking in the ways of God, are usually those •hat have *most* of this *Attainment*. [Page 13](#) The God of Heaven does gradually give unto Christians, a more large and clear insight into the *Covenant of Grace*, and so they have a *growing Ac|quaintance* with the Lord Jesus Christ, the *Media|tor* of that Covenant. At our first Conversion we have indeed so much *knowledge* of the Lord Jesus Christ, as *Draws us to Run after Him*; but we find that

Knowledge increasing as long as we live. 'Tis with us, as it was with *Apollos*, in Act. 18. 2^o, 26. *This man was instructed in the way of the Lord* but after this, there was *Expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly*. The *old Christian* comes to know *more perfectly* the *Alsufficiency* of the Lord, Jesus Christ, and to know *more perfectly* his own infinite Need of such a Redeemer. The *old Chris|tian* has had more Teaching than we that are younger men; he has been *taught* by Ordinances and been *taught* by Providences, and been *taught* by the Spirit of God accompanying of both; and he hath over and above been *taught* by an *old Experience*; *Experience* has taught him that he has no *Righteousness* and no *Strength* of his own: *Ex|perience* has taught him that the Lord Jesus Christ, is one *mighty to save*; he goes to the Lord Jesus Christ as one whom he has had an *old Acquain|tance* with, he was been *inured* unto the Trade of Believing on that Almighty Lord.

Proposition III.

The *God-head* of the Lord Jesus Christ is to be [Page 14](#) acknowledged by all that would pretend unto any true Knowledge of Him. We do not know *Him that is from the Beginning*; unless we own that He is *without all Beginning*, unless we think him to be as the Philosopher expressed it, [*Presbytao...oon Ontoon*] *The most Ancient of all Beings*; and unless we are sensible of the Challenge made by *Wisdom* for Him, in Prov. 8. 23. *I have been declared Prin|cess, from the Beginning*. No *Arian*, or *Socinian* has a Knowledge of our blessed Jesus, enough to Entitle him to the Denomination of a *Christian* in the Churches of God. Our Lord is indeed a real and a proper *man*; but it is the Marble Rock up|on which our whole Christianity is founded, that He is more than so; for 'tis his Title, in Rom 9. 5. *God over all blessed for ever*. Thus the Name of *the most High*, (or *Gneljon*, which the Poet means I suppose by *Anchialus*) the peculiar Name of God among his ancient people, is given to our Lord Jesus. Let it be observed, first, That the *Names* of *GOD* are put upon our Lord. The Lord Je|sus Christ is the Redeemer, of whom *Job* says, *In my Flesh I shall see God*. The Lord Jesus Christ is the *Angel*, of whom *Jacob* says, *He is the God that Redeemed me from all Adversity*. 'Tis the Lord Je|sus Christ, whom *John*, in 1. Joh. 5. 20. calls, *The True God*, whom *Paul* calls, in Tit. 2. 13. *the Great God*; & whom *Isaiah* in Cap 9. 6. calls, *the Mighty God*. What tho' He once were *smitten* with many Sorrows in an evil world? still in his deepest Obscurity, He was, as we may read that [Page 15](#) clause in Isa. 53. 4. *A smitten God*. Yea, 'tis *Je|hovah*, who says in Zech. 12. 10. *They have pierced me*; Behold, the Incommunicable Name of *Jeho|vah* given to a crucify'd Jesus; unto which Name answers that in the New Testament, *the Lord which is, and which was, and is to come*. Hence al|so our Lord exhibits Himself by that

Name, in Joh. 8. 58. *I AM*. And elsewhere He is called, *the Lord of Glory*; that is, the most gracious Lord.

And as the *Incommunicable Names*, thus also the *Incommunicable Attributes* of the Almighty God, belong to our Blessed Saviour. Shall we speak of *Eternity*? Says our Lord in Joh. 17 5. *I had glo/ry before the world was*. Shall we speak of *Omnipo/tance*? 'Twas said by our Lord, in Mat. 18. 20. *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them*; or shall we speak of *Omniscience*? 'Twas said by our Lord, in Rev. 2. 23. *I am He that searches the Hearts and Reins*. None but a *God* may speak at such a rate as this!

What shall I say more? let it be observed,

Secondly, That the *Works* of God are perform|ed by our Lord Jesus Christ. The *Creation* of the World, is the Work of God; but of our Lord Jesus Christ, is it said, in Joh. 1. 3. *All things were made by Him*. The *Government* of the World, is the work of God; but of our Lord Jesus Christ, is it again said, in Heb 1. 3. *He upholds all things by the word of his power*. 'Tis undoubted, *That none can forgive sins but* ⟨◇⟩ nevertheless 'tis said in Mat. 9. 6. *The Son of Man has power to forgive* [Page 16](#) ⟨◇⟩ Who but God can *send the Holy Spirit*? yet said our Lord Jesus in Joh. 16. 7. *I will send the Comforter*.

In a word how many *Miracles* has our Lord Jesus wrought, & this in his *own Name* How often were the *Sick* Healed, the *Dead* raised, the *Possessed* Res|ened, by the Hand of this, Blessed Redeemer, co|ming in his *own Name* unto us! And hence also, let it be observed, Thirdly, That the *Rights* of God are pertaining to our Lord Jesus Christ. None but *God* may be the Object of our *Worship*. Yet we are commanded in Joh. 5. 23. *To honour the* ⟨◇⟩ , *its we honour the Father*. And *Joshua* adored ⟨◇⟩ *Captain to the Hosts of the Lord*. Our ⟨◇⟩ should be to none but God; yet the Dying *•phen*, in Act. 7. 59. *They stoned Stephen calling* ⟨◇⟩ *God, and saying, Lord Jesus*. Our *Faith* should be in none but God; yet we read in Rom. 15. 12. *There shall be a Root of Jesse, in Him shall the Gentiles trust*. We may *Swear* by none but God; yet the Apostolical Oath ran in such Terms at those in Rom. 9. 1. *I say the truth in Christ*. Hence also, 'tis into the name of *Christ*, that we are *Baptised*, when we receive the first of our Sa|craments; which implies his being a *God* unto us.

The Lord Jesus Christ is no less than *God*; and oh how much is our *Love* to Him obliged, our *Hope* in him strengthened by that Consideration!

In our Improvement of these things,

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IMPROVEMENT I.

We may Infer from hence, as we go along, *how foolish, how absurd, how wicked are the Defpisers of the Lord Jesus Christ*. If the Lord Jesus be *God* as well as *Man*, and if an *Acquaintance* with Him be an *Attainment* in us, then 'twere very reason|ble to Admire Him, Adore Him, and Magnifie Him for ever; to *Despise* him, is of all Follies the most abominable.

But are any so *absurd* and *wicked*? I would to God, there were *None*. But I am to tell you, All that *Neglect* a Christ, so far *Despise* a Christ. Say sincerely, Have you made sure of a *Christ* or no? Have you Accepted him, Embraced him, tho|roughly *Closed* with him? Can you certainly and joyfully say, *Christ is mine*? It is to be doubted, that many must confess this thing to have been left undone all this while. But what is the rea|son of this horrible Neglect? Why, men are so taken up with *secular* and *sensual* matters, that they have no leisure to acquaint themselves with a precious Jesus? A filthy *Lust*, and a wretched *World*, are the things for the sake of which, a Matchless *Christ* is Neglected by Impenitent Un|believers; it may be said of them, as in Mat. 22. 5. *they made light of him, and went their ways; One to his Farm, another to his Merchandise*. Did not the Jews *Despise* a Jesus, when they preferred a *Barabbas* before Him? every Unbeliever does [Page 18](#) as had as this comes unto; and there are two ter|rible considerations to be therefore laid before all such woful Creatures.

Consider first, The time will come when there shall *None* of you all *Despise* an Inestimable Jesus. As 'twas said in Isa. 13. 12. *I will make a man more precious than fine gold, even a man than the gol|den wedge of Ophir*: So there will a time come, when whole *Wedges*, yea, and whole *Mountains* of the finest *gold*, will not be so *precious* to your poor Souls, as that *man* who is *from the Beginning*. When you shortly see a *God* angry, with you, a Soul going from you, and an *Hell* gaping for you, how much do you think, a *Christ* will then be worth? The Day is at the door, when the most •••inate Sinner among us all, will pierce the very Heavens, with such a lamentable cry as that, *O for a Christ, a Christ! a thousand worlds for a saving Acquaintance with Him!*

Consider Secondly, The holy Jesus will then despise, all such as have not seasonably Repented their slighting of him. It is said in Psal. 73. 20. *O Lord thou shalt despise their Image*. Thus, the Sha|dow, (the *ghost*) of such a sinner,

appearing before Christ, the Judge of departed Spirits, with importunate Petitions for pity, and pardon, and mercy, will be answered with nothing but an infinite Contempt. The Lord Jesus will then condemn the *Souls* of such miscreants, and when they shriek, *what will become of me?* He will say, *Let the Devils take them, if they will, I will make no* [Page 19](#) *provision for them.* He will then also condemn their *prayers*, and when they Supplicate unto him with never such raging Ardors, *Lord, Lord, open to us!* He will only Reply, *I know you not.* Wherefore, *Hear, ye Despisers, and wonder, that ye may not perish.*

But of these things, there must be a further Improvement made.

IMPROVEMENT II.

It remains, that *Old men* be now called upon, to do several *good things which the Lord then God requireth of them.* As the Prophet *Joel*, chap. 1. 2. began a Sermon so; *Hear this ye old men;* this is the preface that I am to give unto the rest of my Discourse, *Hear, this ye old men; O hear that your Souls may live.* I have not forgotten, that I am to *Entreat old men as Fathers*, and therefore, *my Fathers*, I do with a most filial Affection <◇> you, to attend unto a few Directions; which have this to challenge your *earnest heed*, that they are not *Mine*, but *Gods*.

The first Counsel.

I entreat you Fathers, that you be not content with a *common measure* in the more *common know/ledge* of him *that is from the Beginning.* He is called, *the Antient of Days;* O that all *ancient men* would study to know much of a Subject so agreeable! You best know, what you have all this while been contriving and laboring for the *getting of;* [Page 20](#) but an *old man* once under the inspirations of the Almighty, gave that advice to *Solomon*, in Prov. 4. 7. *Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get Wisdom.* And surely, an *old man* himself is not unconcerned in that Advice! A *common knowledge* of the Lord Jesus Christ, indeed is not enough to make you happy; but I am sure, the want of *such knowledge* will render you both *wretched* here and *undone* for ever. He was a wise man that said, in Prov. 19. 2. *That the Soul be without knowledge, it is not good;* but it is not so *bad* being without a *ny Knowledge*, as being without the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. This *ignorance* will prove the woful *mother* of two things. It will render your *Unbelief* incurable. As it was said, in I Cor. • 8. *Had they known, they would not have Crucify'd the Lord of glory;* so may it be said, those that remain in their Distance from the Lord Jesus Christ *They refuse the Lord of glory, because they have not the Knowledge of Him.* And it will also render your *Destruction* unavoidable. It

was of old com|plained, in Hos, 4.6. *my people are destroy'd for the lack of knowledge*; but the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus is that, the *lack* whereof is most of all destructive; the world will one day with hot Thunderbolts be set on a light *Fire* for it. Well then, look to it, *Fathers*, that you been't unac|quainted with the *Great Mystery of Godliness*. If you have never yet studied that *Mystery*, I pray begin, and count not your selves *too old to learn*; that man is *too old to*  , that is *too old to learn*. [Page 21](#) The Ancient Heathen had an higher opinion than so, of their meaner Learning. *Socratos* would go to School when an *old man*, pleading that it was better to be *Opsimathes* than *Amathes*, better to be *Late-learned*, than to be *Unlearned*. How much ought *old men*, to think thus of that *Learning* with|out which *All men* must find, *That He that made them, will not have mercy on them, and He that for|med them will shew them no Favour?* 'Tis to be feared, that there is a lamentable ignorance about the Lord Jesus Christ, in many that have lived unto old Age under the Gospel of that blessed Lord. A famous Divine tells us, of an *old man*, who had enjoyed the constant Preaching of the Word, and yet when he lay on his Death-bed, he still thought, *Jesus Christ was an amiable Youth*, and other things too ridiculous to be recited. And he has been a scandal to me to see, how little many *old men* among our selves do understand about *The Covenant of Redemption*, and some other i••|portant Articles. But, O get a little more know|ledge of Jesus Christ, before you go; lest that most forlorn and fearful case be yours, in Job ••. 12. *They shall dy without Knowledge*. To be *corporal|ly blind* with Age, is not unusual; But for men to be *Spiritually blind* in Age is very dreadful. The *Gray Hairs* on the outside of your Heads, are not more Honourable, than the *wrong Thoughts* in the inside of them are pernicious, while you have not a good knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, Old *Luther* did not reckon it a shame to profess [Page 22](#) himself, *Discip••um Catechism•*, one that still was every day learning his *Catechism*. Whether it be a *shame* or no, for you that are *old men*, to be students in your *Catchisms*, I am certain, 'tis a more burning shame for you to be ignorant of the points which your *Catechisms* are to teach you. You have not so much as the *beginning* of true knowledge, till you know Him *that is from the Be|ginning*. The Apostle rebuked it, as a *shameful* Deficiency in those, Heb. 5. 12. *For the time, ye ought to be Teachers, yet ye need that one Teach you, which be the first principles of the Oracles of God*. They say, *old men* are *twice Children*; but O for shame, do not want the instruction which when you were *first Children*, you ought to have had a|bout the Lord Jesus Christ. Nay, albert, you knew never so much about the Lord Jesus Christ, yet there is a vast deal more behind still to learn. *Old men*, study a blessed Jesus, till you fathom yet more of his matchless Excellencies! If one of the Roman Emperours, had such a value for know|ledge, as in his *old Age* to be a sort of pupil still, and say, *'Tis good for*

old men *to be learning still*; surely, it becomes *you* to have as much value for the peerless knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In a word, since you are so near to your Eternal *Sabbath*, you should gather a double portion of this *Manna* for your Souls; and follow these Di|rections in it.

First, *Pray* much for the knowledge of the [Page 23](#) Lord Jesus Christ. Would we have this *Know|ledge*? we are counselled in Prov. 2. 5. *cry after it*; he that writ that Counsel did himself obtain *knowledge* by *asking* for it. It is said, in Jam. 1. 5. *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it*. A sincere *Prayer* will do more, towards the *Unveiling* of Christs FACE, and the *Unsealing* our EYE, than the *prayeriess Enquiries* of many years. Now that the *Eyes* of your *Bodies* are almost out, O follow the Lord Jesus with such a cry for your *Souls*, as once that poor *Son of sorrow* made, *Lord, that we may receive our sight!* Those Mini|sters that study much on their *Knees*, will *Preach best*, and those *Christians* that wrestle much on their *Knees*, will *know most*, of the Lord Jesus Christ. Be continually praying like *Moses*, *Lord, I beseech thee, shew we thy glory*; and let not your *Declining Sun* set with you, till by ardent prayer, you have got the *Day-star to arise in your Hearts*.

Secondly, *Think* much for the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. The *custome* of *Isaac* will very much befriend the *Knowledge* of Jesus; that *young man* has left a pattern for *old man* to follow. *Old men*, you have now time to *think*; O spend as much as you can of that little time in *Meditations* upon the Lord Jesus Christ. 'Tis said of *Moses* in Exod. 19. 3. That he *went up to God*, and then the Lord called unto him, *come up?* The *Jewish* Expositors have this gloss upon it; That *Moses* first made a *spiritual Ascent* by *Meditation*, & then he was favoured with a *bodily Ascent* unto very [Page 24](#) heavenly Communions. *Meditation*, 'twill carry you up into the Mount of God, when you are so *old*, that you cannot *Ascend* a Chamber in your Houses without help or pain; yea, 'twill carry you within the *Vail* of God, and bring you to the view of, *Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant*. Every day then discourse unto your selves on some Divine Subject, until you feel some lively Impres|sion of it, on your Souls; and have special Eye to the Lord Jesus Christ in your Assiduous *Medi|tations*: said the Psalmist, Psal 119. 100. *I have more understanding than all my Teachers, for thy Te|stimonies are my meditation; I understand more than the Ancients*. Behold the way, for you that are *Ancients*, to get much *Understanding* of the Lord Jesus Christ; let your daily *meditation* be on those Oracles of God, whereof he says, *They testify of me*.

Thirdly and lastly, Frequent the *Ordinances* of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the knowledge of him; these are the *glasses*, of which we are told, 2 Cor. 3. 18. Therein *we behold the glory of the Lord*; and so, *we attain the knowledge of the Lord*. *Old men*, as long as ever your legs can carry you, O be getting into those *Galleries* where you may find the Lord Jesus Christ. Yea, attend upon His Worship, tho you do it as good old *Jacob*, *learning on the top of a staff*. Be glad of every *App oint/ment*, wherein you have that Invitation, *behold, the Lamb of God*; be glad of every *Opportunity* where|in you may have that privilege, *to see the goings of the great King in the Sanctuary*. Repair to all the [Page 25](#) *Ordinances*, of the Lord, saying like *<◇> <◇>* Greeks of old, *we would see Jesus! we would <◇> Jesus!* But for this end, especially repair to the *Supper* of the Lord. It is an horrible thing to see an *old man* turn his back on the Holy Table, and it is a *sorrowful* thing for such an one to dy ou• of Church-fellowship. The psalmist could say, in psal. 92. 13, 14. *they that are planted in they House of the Lord, shall bring forth fruit in old Age* • 'tis a barren *old man* that is not found in *the house of the Lord*. I beseech you, that before you go out of the world, you get into the *Church <◇>* when you are at the Sacrament in the *Temple*, you may like old *Simeon*, take up the Lord Jesus in your Arms, and sing, *Lord, now lettest thou thy Ser|vant depart in peace; for mine Eyes have seen thy Jesus here*.

I remember an Apparition of our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ, wherein he seems to have something of an *old man* upon him; 'tis said in Rev. 1. 1. *His Head and his ••irs were white like Wool, <◇> white as the Snow*. O that *old men*, that all of you, whose *heads* are *white* with Age, would he restless till you have a sight of Him.

The second Counsel.

With a *common* Knowledge of, *I entreat you, Fa|thers*, endeavour to get a *saving Interest* in, *him, that is from the Beginning*. O make sure of *that*, before the *end of your days* come upon you.

[Page 26](#) Consider, first, You cannot be far from the *end of your days* in this evil world. You may sadly look backward on the few days that have already *passed*, and as it were, *stolen*, from you; and you may then look forward, assuring of your selves, *I have not near so many years to Live, as those that have already gone from me like a tale that is told; it was but yesterday that I came into the world, and now before to morrow, I shall be gone out again*. It was the Emphatical Expression of the Apostle, in I Cor. 7. 29. *this I say, Brethren, the time is short, <◇> the Greek word carries it, the time is Fur/••••*.

d. you are like Mariners, just ready to *<◇>* shore. Even so, *this I say, Futhers, the Sail of <◇> is just furling with you; you are just putting into the harbour, where you shall step a shore on the <◇> of a long Eternity.* An old Grecian walking once very slowly, said unto a Stander by, *After this fashion I am stepping into the Grave;* and another old Grecian that felt his Ancles failing him, com|plain'd, *that death had bitten him by the Legs.* You cannot stir many steps, without many such admo|nitions of the Mortality, which you are near un|to. It can't be long, before you pass into your Eternal State; the *vital Ty* between your Spirits and your Bodies, will not much longer hold together; there are but a few Sands now left in the bottom of your *Glass*, and your *Light* is within one Inch of going out. You may say like Father *Isaac*, in Gen. 27. 1. *Behold, now I am old, and I know not the day of my death;* but you may also [Page 27](#) say, *since I am old, I do know that my Death cannot be many days off.* It was the Speech of as good an *old man*, as ever lived, in Josh. 23 2, 4. *I am old and stricken in Age; behold this day I am going the way of all the Earth.* If you are *old*, I am sure you are going. *Young men may Dy, but old men must;* and I am to tell you about the day of your *Death*, as the Prophet speaks about the Day of the Lord, *It is near, it is near, and it •asteneth greatly.*

Consider Secondly, The *End* of your Days, will be but the *beginning* of your never-ending Miseries, if you dy without a saving Interest in *Him that is from the Beginning.* 'Tis none o•t he *that is from the Beginning*, who can deliver you from the woes and plagues that will never have an end. We are told in I Thes. 1. 10. It is Jesus *who delivers from the wrath to come;* without an U|nion to Him, that *wrath* will come upon you, and after it is already *come*, it will be still *to come*, there will be more of it still *to come* throughout, Eternal Ages. You that are near to your *Death*, are as near unto the *Worm that never dyes*, and unto the *Fire that never shall be quenched*, if a speedy Con|version prevent it not. It is a dreadful word in Joh. 8. 24. *Ye shall dy in your sins.* Be not so thick of Hearing in this your old Age, as to be deaf unto this Warning of God; If you do not quickly *get out of your sins* by a closure with the Lord Jesus Christ, you *I dy in them;* but so to *Dy* is to dy under the formidable Curse of the Om|nipotent [Page 28](#) God, and it is to *Dy* exposed unto the Vengeance of Eternal Fire. Poor *old man*, Thou hast already seed many bitter dismal doleful days, and had thy Heart often broken with those *Evil Days;* but be assured, all the past black Hours of thy life are but the *beginning of sorrows;* if thou dost not immediately get an Interest in *Him that is from the Beginning.* If an *old man* don't get out of *old Adam* before he die, he will find an *old Hell* prepared for him; and this also circumstanced with very dreadful Aggravations. How many *sins* does a man commit in one Fifty or Threescore Years! But *old men*, if you are still out of Christ, the God of Heaven remembers all your *old sins*, as

fresh as if they had been done but this very morning. Our Lord said of some that were Dead and Damn'd many years before, in Joh. 10. 8. *They ARE Thieves*. Even so, the *old man* out of Christ *IS* in the account of God, the same sinner that once he *was*; it may be said of him, as once it was of some, *He is not purged from his old sins*. But what a prodigious load of sins then lies upon such an *old man*, to sink him into the Sulphureous Abyss of Hell! Hence 'twas said in Isa. 65. 20. *the Sinner an hundred years old, shall be Accursed*. It is promised as a great blessing, to live near an *hundred years*; but if a man be a *Sinner* at that Age, his Age will be but a *Curse* unto him, he shall have cause to wish that he had never seen such an Age as that. Such a wretched *old man* must not only perish, but also go down to the Pit with [Page 29](#) heavier Loads of Confusion and Vexation than those that had not lived so long; that as 'twas said of one, *It had been good for that man, he had never been born*; so it may be said of this man, *It had been good for him, he had never lived half so many years in the world*. When he is Roaring in the Fiery Vaults below, *I am tormented in this Flame!* he will add this Lamentation & Execration thereunto, *Why dyed I not from the Womb? why did I not give up the Ghost when I came out of the Besly?* It was of old given, as a Resolve to the problem, *Quis miserrimus Senex egenus*. What is the *most miserable sight in the world?* Answer, *an old man in want; an old man without bread*. But I'll tell you a far more miserable sight; and that is, *An Old man in sin; an Old man without Christ, an Old man without Grace; an Old man tumbling down into the pits of Eternal Desolation*.

Consider, Thirdly; It is not as yet altogether too late for you to *Begin* the work of getting a saving Interest in *Him that is from the Beginning*. 'Tis indeed a thousand pitties that you have thus long delay'd this work; which is, *the One thing Needful*. If you should now be brought home unto Lord Jesus Christ, you must bewayl your selves, like *Paul*, in I Cor. 15. 8. Alas, *I am as, one born out of due time*. But it is not *altogether too late!* 'Tis true, that the *Regeneration* of an *old man*; $\langle \diamond \rangle$ a thing very *improbable*; as it was said in Joh. 34. *How can a man be born, when he is old?* So may we fear, *How can a man be New-born, when he is [Page 30](#) old $\langle \diamond \rangle$?* When the *Devil* has had an old possession of •nd prescription for, an Immortal soul, it is not easy to cast him out; Sin and Lust has a *stronger Hold*. of an Old man, than of another. But yet it is not altogether *impossible*; it may be said unto the Christless old men in the Congregation, *There is yet Hope in Israel concerning you*. There is a *Door of Hope* yet kept open for you; and after all your multiply'd Iniquities and Abominations, *Yet return unto me, saith the Lord, and I will not cause my Anger to fall upon you*. As 'tis said, in Heb. •. 7. *To day, after so long a time, harden not your Hearts*. Even so, altho' you have slighted the Lord Jesus

Christ, *so long a time*; altho' you have been Disobedient unto the Calls of God, and unfruitful under all the means of good, *so long a time*; yet if now, *after so long a time*, you will come in unto the Saviour of your Souls, he will have mercy on you. The blessed Lord Jesus Christ is this Day making an Offer of *Righteousness and Strength and Life* unto us all, and the *old men* among us, as well as the rest are concerned in it. Our Lord once came unto one that seems to have been a pretty *old man*, and said unto him, as in Joh 5.6. *Jesus knew he had been a long time* ◇ , and said unto him, ◇ *thou be made whole?* Thus does our gracious Lord come unto those, *old men* among us, that have been a *long time* in the Calamities of their Natural Estate, and he says unto them, *Old man, shall I have thee, and heal thee and help thee? Old man, shall I be the Lord and Saviour of the Soul?* [Page 31](#) *I am willing to make thee happy, if thou wilt yet* ◇ *sent, before I shut the Door of mercy on thee.* O ◇ no means *Despair*, but *Accept*, of this Glorious Grace. Once the Devil told you, *'tis too soon* ◇ perhaps he now tells you, *'tis too late!* but believe not that *old Liar*, whether he speak fair or ha•d unto you. In the Primitive Times, there was one *Victorius* a very *old man*, converted unto Christia|nity; and the Church would not receive him for some time, for thought they, *old sinners do not* ◇ *thus to return unto God.* But he made his Conver|sion so apparent, that they sang Hymns about it in the Christian Assemblies, & it was every where proclaimed, *Old Victorius is become a Christian! old Victorius is become a Christian!* Even so, that shout may yet come to be made over the *oldest Unbeliev|er* here, *That old Sinner is brought home to the Lord Jesus after all.* We had in this Country, an In|stance of one, that was made a *New-creature*, af|ter he had spent an hundred years in the Tents of wickedness. But methinks, the *Tender* of a full *Pardon* to an *old Rebel*, should break the very hear• of him; O how can you now forbear making that Reply unto that merciful King, the *Lord Jesus, Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.*

Well then, let every ◇ man immediately Re|tire to think upon the rueful Necessities of a ne|ver dying Soul, just ready to fly away into the Re|gions of *Eternity*. Think on them, till you see your selves horribly perishing, in an incurable [Page 32](#) guilt, and blindness, and slavery, unless the Lord Jesus Christ become your *Surety for good*. Here|upon, with much Humility and Sincerity, and with a most unutterable *Agony*, resign your Souls into his blessed Hands, begging of him, and hoping in him, to do for *you*, all that which He does for any of his Chosen Ones for evermore; yea, for the more safety and sureness, renew this work, & keep doing so, till at your last Breath, you receive *the end of your Faith, even the Salvation of your Souls.*

If you had been converted unto the Lord Jesus many years ago, yet would you now see cause to complain with old *Austin, Lord, it was too late, when I first began to love thee!* O what haste ought you then to make, in returning now to the *Bishop of your Souls*, from whom you have been miserably wandering for so long a time?

It is a great over-sight in an *old man*, if he have not made his *Will*, and so disposed his Affairs that when he comes to *Dy*, he may have nothing *to do but Dy*.

•ut O see to it in the first place, that the first Article of your *Will* be well dispatched, & assured, by your *giving of your Souls unto the Lord Jesus Christ*.

The third Counsel.

Govern the little that remains of your Lives, [Page 33](#) by the *Rules of Him that is from the Beginning*. The Apostle tells *Old men*, in I Joh. 2. 7. *I wri• unto you an old Commandment, which ye had from the Beginning*. It becomes you to follow the wholesome Rules, which *He that is from the Begin/ning* has given you; inasmuch as they are *Old Commandments, which you have had from the Begin/ning*. Let me a little insist upon one of those *old Commandments* which you find in Tit. 2. 2. *That the Aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound, & Faith, in Charity, in patience.*

Behold six vertues, which all *Old men* should <◇> studious of.

The first *Vertue* that well becomes an *old man*, is that of *Sobriety*. The Greek word for this may bear an Allusion to those Ancient Sacrifices, which had no *Wine* used in them. An *Old man* should be no lover of *Wine*; or any Strong, inebriating, in|toxicating Liquors. If old *Noah* will be Drunk, he shamefully exposes his Nakedness to all Specta|tors. 'Tis very deplorable, to see how many *Old men*, degenerate into the worse-than-beastly Vice of *Drunkeness*, and this oftentimes after a long and a strict *Profession* of Religion. They often imagine (and often 'tis *but an Imagination*) that their Stomachs call for *Cordials*; and hereupon, first they *sip* now and then at a Cup, which quick|ly so far bewitches them, that they can swal|low down very scandalous quantities. They come to be never well, but when *Rhum* or *Sack* or some such poison is upon their palates, and they soon [Page 34](#) lose all that savour of Religion which would be their Glory. But what is the Word of the great God? It is, *Wo to the Drunkard!* It is, *The Drunkard shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*• O shun this destroying vice, *knowing the Terrour of the Lord*. For them that Stagger with Age, at the

same time to stagger with *Drink*; to see an *old* man Reeling, Spewing, Stinking with the excesses of the Tavern; 'tis too loathsom a thing to be mentioned without a very zealous Detestati|on. What Heart would not have bled at the fight of old *Lot* overtaken with Drink, and that after so many mercies as had been bestowed upon him? *Be sober*. But the word may also be ren|dred, *Be watchful*. Old men are prone to be *st•epy*; whatever your *Eyes* may be, yet let not your *Minds* be so. *Be watchful* against all the Assaults that a busy Tempter may make upon you. *Be watchful* unto all the Duties that the Most High God obligeth you unto. And be so *watchful*, that the *Last Enemy* may not surprize you at un|awares.

The second Vertue, that much adorns an *Old* man, is that of *Gravity*. The Greek word im|plies both *Majesty* and *Modesty*. An *old man* should keep up some *Authority* among his *Juni|ors*; and be able to say with him of old, *Men have hearkened and waited, and kept silence at my Counsel, if I laughed on them, they believed it not*. A trifling, & childish, & frolicksome sort of carri|age, all Buffoonry in an *old man*, is very disagree|able; [Page 35](#) it was old *Chrysoftoms* Expression, *That* ⟨◇⟩ *old man of a Juv•nile Conversation is extremely ti•diculous*. We cannot Reverence you, unless your *grave Looks*, as well as your *gray Hairs*, demand ⟨◇⟩ of us. But nothing is more Nauseous and Odious in an *old man*, than the Levity of Lasciviousness. For *old men* to talk bawdily and filthily, and for *old men* to discover that the cursed Fires of the• Youth are not yet extinguish'd in them, *Out upon it!* For those *Eyes* that are sunk into their Sock|ets, to be yet *full of Adultery* for those *Mouth•* that are going to be fill'd with earth, to be yet *full of Rotten Communication*; 'tis, how incongru|ous! An *old man* should (as one says) be glad that Age has delivered him from a *Mad-man* that once had power over him. *Unchastity* in any man renders him the *Abhorred of the Lord*; but in ⟨◇⟩ *old man* it is more peculiarly fulsome, nasty, and that which also renders him the *Abhorred of the Neighbourhood*. As the old *Eleazar* chose rather to Dy, than to eat forbidden Swines Flesh, a brutish Lust should be more abominable unto every old Professor.

The third Vertue that should set off an *old man*, is that of *Temperance*. The Greek word also sig|nifies *Discretion*. An *old man* should be a *wise man*; for, *no fool so bad as the old fool*. An *old man* should as the phrase imports, Keep his mind un|der Government; and restrain and repel inordi|nate Affections. *Mortification* is but proper for them that are just *ready to Dy*. *Be pruden••* ⟨◇⟩ ⟩ [Page 36](#)•ary in your whole Behaviour, and be *moderate* in ⟨◇⟩ your inclinations towards the *pleasures*, or the *profits*, or the *honours* of this

deceitful world. You know who said, *Among the Ancient is Wisdom, and  the length of days is Understanding.*

A fourth Vertue, necessary to an *old man* is *Or/thodoxy*. You must be *sound in Faith*. You are  be our Teachers, our Tutors; our Eyes are upon you for a *Tradition of the Faith once deliver|ed unto the Saints*. If you be wavering in any ••int of our *Faith*, it will cause *us* much more to •umble and stagger at it. You that have had the *Word of God* so long, should now at least be well ••red, and well settled in the principles of Chris|tianity; and not be tainted with any *Scepticism* or ••eresy. When we see an *old man* that leans up|on a *Reed*, we should not see, *A Reed shaken with the Word*. May you that are just upon Dying, not only be careful to Dy *in* the Truth, but be as ••dy to Dy *for* it, as that blessed old *Babylas*, who at Ninety Years of Age, going to his Martyrdome cry'd our, *Return to thy Rest, O my Soul, for the Lord has now dealt bountifully with thee.*

A fifth Vertue requisite in an *old man* is *Chari|ty*. You must be *sound in Charity*; that is, you must labour to *do all the good you can*. An *old ma*• should like old *Bradford*, *Be always doing of son Good, with Tongue, or Purse, or some other way*. Per|haps you have a long while been *Serving your Ge|neration*; yet you are to do a little more *Service*• and be *Serviceable* until you are by your Great [Page 37](#) Master called away. Husband well every minute of the *Little Time* that is left, by being alwayes employed for the good of them that shall come after you. Albeit your age may excuse you from *Serving* in civil or military Offices among your Neighbours, yet should you be *charitably* pursuing of their Good, as far as ever you can. There are especially two ways of *Doing good*, in which you may be very *Serviceable*. One is, by *charging* of us. Call us often before you, and lay the *Charge* of God upon us, *That we know and serve the God of our Fathers*. Another is, by *praying* for us. He much in *prayer* for the Rising Generation; and since you are past the doing of any thing in the *Field*, get into the *Mount*, that you may there procure for us the Salvations of the Lord. It was the Expression of our Venerable old *Eliot*, when he grew towards Ninety Years of Age; *E|very thing now fails me, I have nothing left; but I thank God, my Charity holds out still, that rather grows than fails*. That every old man were of such a *Spirit!*

A sixth Vertue required of an *old man* is *Pati|ence*. *Old men*, are often froward, & peevish, hard to please; you should lay aside that *Morosity*. One that calls his Book, *The old mans Physician*, has largely, luculently, pathetically represented the mischiefs which old men endure, by perturbations in their Minds. Bear *patiently* the Infirmities of that *Old Age* which you are now arriv'd unto. *Tully*

mentions an old man, who being Aged seven [Page 38](#) years above an Hundred, used still to say, *Nihil a eo quod Accusem Senectutem*; I see nothing in *old age* to be complained of. Be not then full of *complaints*; and grow not *wearry of Living*. Do not impatiently long for *Death*, not say with old *Elijah*, *It is enough, now, O Lord, take away my life*. Grow continually in your submission to the will of God, and under all your *Trials* call upon your selves as once the *Martyr* did, *Hold out, faith and patience, a little more, Heaven will quickly make amends for all*. These things does the *Apostle* speak to *Old Men*: But, I hope, the *old women* will take the pains to Read what follows: *Likewise that the aged women be of a Behaviour that becometh Holiness, not false Accusers, not given to much Wine, teaching that which is good; that they may teach the young women*. The good God make you all such *Mothers* in *Israel*.

The Fourth Counsel.

Endeavour now to live as those that are *just now going to Him that is from the Beginning*.

Wherefore,

First, Be sensible *of*, be affected *with*, the *change* that will immediately be made upon you. What is a *Senex*, but a *Seminex*: An *old man*, is half a *dead man*. It was the petition in *Psal. 90. 12. Teach us to Number our Dayes*. Let that *Sacred Arithmetic* be your *Exercise*; compute, *How few days of your Appointed Number can be still behind*. [Page 39](#) Be willing to hear of *Dying*; and not like ⟨◇⟩ *English Queen*, who cast a *Minister* ⟨◇⟩ of her *Favour*, for telling her in a *Sermon*, *That old time bad sprinkled his Meal upon her Aged Head*. Promise not your selves always, to rub out still ⟨◇⟩ *Lustre* of years more in the world; altho, one of the *Ancients* has told us, *Nemo tam Decrepitoe Senectutis est, ut non se putet unum adbuc Annum* ⟨◇⟩ *victurum*. Ever mark it, when you hear an *Old Man* brag how *strong* and *hale* he still is, and how likely to live at least, one dozen more of years, 'tis a thousand to one but that *Old Man* is within a few months of his unsuspected end. I pray; look often into your *Coffins*; and if you have no other *Monitors* of your *Mortality*, let your own *Children*, and your own *Bodies*, perform that *Office* for you. Perhaps you see your own *Children* becoming *Parents*, and the third and fourth *Generation* is arising from you. The fight of them gives no little *pleasure* unto the yet living *Ancestor*, who commonly proves, the *Older the Fonder*; but methinks it should give you a solemn *Warning* too, and cause you to Remember, *That you are now marching off apace*. You must needs also feel your crazy *Bodies* under daily and speedy *Approches* to a *Dissolution*.

*Non habitus, non ipse color, non gressus euntis,
Non species eadem que fuit dute manet.*

Will you take a short view of your picture, ⟨◇⟩ [Page 40](#) 'tis drawn by a Pencil of the Sanctuary, in the last lines of an aged and an able Preacher.

The *Sun*, the *Light*, the *Moon* & the *Stars* begin to be *Darkned* with you; that is, your parts are under a Decay, your Fancy, your Judgment, your Memory are now failing of you. Again, *The Clouds come one upon another after the Rain*; that is, you are troubled not only with con|continual *Defluxions*, but also with a vicissitude of returning and various Infirmities. Once more, *The Keepers of the House tremble*; that is, your Hands now shake and shrink, and must lean upon a staff. Wherewithal, *The strong men bow them|selves*; that is, your Thighs and Legs now buckle under you. And then, *The grinders cease, because they are diminished*, that is, your Teeth grow weak and few, and are almost all rotted out. Furthermore, *Those that look out of the Windows be Darkned*; that is, your eyes become Dim, and Clouds disturb the *visive powers* in them; but give then your thanks to God, that has of late years bestow'd the Invention of Glasses upon the world. Furthermore, *The two Leaves of the Door shall be shut towards the Street, with a falling of the sound of the Milstone*; that is, your mouths now have but little to do, and your Meals become tender sel|dom. Besides, there is *Rising at the sound of the Bird*; that is, you can't lie long asleep; nor sleep late in a Morning. Moreover, *The little musical Instruments are brought low*; that is, you become Deaf, and thick of Hearing. Likewise, there is [Page 41](#) a *tearing of that which is High, and a trembling as walking*; that is, you can't without some Diffi|culty go up a pair of Stairs, and are in danger of tumbling at every stone in the street. Herewith *be Almond-tree flourisheth*, that is, you have your leads as full of gray hairs, as the Almond-tree of white Flowers. Also, *the Grashopper is a urden*; or, as the word may be rendred, *the back|me*; that is, your Backs are so feeble that in•lead of carrying any thing else, they can ⟨◇⟩ ear themselves. In fine, *Desire fails*; that is, ⟨◇⟩ ⟩ Meats or Drinks, or the other Delights of hu|mane Life; all this is, because you are going to *the House where you are to dwell for ever*. All these things intimate that it can't be long before the *Silver Cord* of your spinal marrow will be *snap t••* or before the *Golden Bowl* of the Membrane that covers your Brain, will be *broken*; that it can't be|long before the *pitcher* of your Arterious Vein be crackt at the right ventricle of your heart, which is the *Fountain* from whence it fetches your blood into your Lungs; that it can't be long before the *Wheel* of your great Artery, be split at the left ventricle of your Heart, which is the Cistern whereby 'tis carried into and thorough that noble Bowel; in a word, that it can't be long, before the circulation of your Blood be fatally and for|ever

stop'd, and that Liquor of Life corrupt in a total stagnation of it. *Old men*, behold what symptoms are upon you, and seriously perswad• your selves, that your *Dust* will quickly return  [Page 42](#) *the Earth, as it has been there*, and your *Spirit shall Return unto God that gave it*.

Secondly, Believe that *till* your Change comes, you shall be sufficiently provided for, by *Him that •s from the Beginning*. 'Tis a meer paradox of *O/riginal Sin*, 'tis a *Mystery of Iniquity*, that the *Ol/der* men grow, they often grow the more *Earthly*, & the more *careful*. As 'tis hard to say whether the Greek Name for an old man, intimates one *Looking* to, or one *Loving* of the *Earth*; So, Old Men too much lay their *Hearts* where their *Heads* are going to be laid; *Solum unum hoc vitium adfert senect us homini•us: Attentiores sumus ad rem omnes, quam sat est*; the fear of want comes upon them; and they are then most anxious about living in the world, when they are just going out of the world. Hence they become infinitely *sparing* and *sor did*, and they scrape to lay up, without any Bounds. It is needless to bring *Augustin* for a Voucher, That *cum cuncta vitia in sene senescat sola Avaritia Juvenescit*. But, *Fathers*, your dishonour your selves. You are at this pains to hoard u• Legacies and Portions, for those that perhaps wil not thank you for them; and you fearfully dis|oblige the kind Providence of the Lord Jesus Christ. Said the Psalmist in Psal. 71. 17, 18. *O God, thou hast taught me from my youth; now also, when I am Old and Gray-headed, O God forsake me not*. Why, good Sir, you need not fear it. Who is it that has *fed* you from your Youth? & *cloath'd* you, from your Youth? and *kept* you, from your [Page 43](#) Youth? Why, the fame Lord will still provide for you. *He that is from the Beginning*, has look't after you hitherto *from the Beginning*; and will he leave you now! No, *He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*. The Philosopher said, Before *Old Age*, my care was to live well; but now under *Old Age*, all my care is to Dy well. And in|deed you have nothing else to take any *care* a|bout; let the promise encourage you to confine your Cares unto *Dying in the Lord*. 'Tis hor|rible to see with what a possession the Devil holds the Soul of many a poor *Old* man, when he has made them lay aside their dependance upon that unfailing promise of God. The very design of the Apostle in our Context here, is to correct the sin of *worldiness*, particularly in Aged Men. Let them that may have done with *Hopes*, have also done with *Cares* about the world.

Thirdly, Rejoice that *when* your Change comes, you shall go to the Enjoyments and Embraces of *Him that is from the Beginning*. Say with Aged *Paul*, in Phil. 1. 23. *I desire to Dislodge, and be with Christ, which is by far the best of all*. Death is a fort of a *Cloud* now before your Eyes; but there is a *Bright* as well as a *Dark* side of that Cloud. Look on it, not as a *Destroyer* of your *life*, but as a

Messenger of your Lord; it is but a Waggon that our *Joseph*, our *Jesus*, will shortly send for you, to fetch you thither, where you shall *behold his Glo/ry*: O be Ravished at the Thought of this, and *Rejoice in the Hope of the glory of God*. If it in any [Page 44](#) measure afflict you to think, what you are going *from*: then think joyfully, what you are going *to*. Think, that you are going *from* a World wherein your *Dayes* have been *few* and *ill*, and wherein you never can expect them to be otherwise a but think that you are going *to* a world of undisturbed Happiness, where there is *Fulness of joy in the presence of your Lord, and there are Plea/sures at his Right-hand for evermore*. Methinks *life* should become a matter of *patience*, while *a•ath* should be rather a matter of *Desire* with you, under the apprehension of the *Joy* that you are now To near unto. Methinks the Terrors of *Death* should be no more to you than they were to old Mr. *Dod*, who under a threatning Sickness being told, there was hope of his *Life*, reply'd, *A/lass, this is just as if a weather-beaten Marriner ar/riv'd unto his Haven, should be told he must put out to Sea again*. My Fathers, how can you forbear lon|ging to be in the Fruition of Him that has *loved you, and washed you from your Sins, in his own Blood!*

Fourthly, Let all the little spot of time between this and your Change, be wholly spent in a *Com/munion* with *Him that is from the Beginning*. An *Impartial Reflection* will give you to see that you have lost a world of *time*, since you first came in|to the world; and how much ought this to fill you with an unalterable Resolution that you will well Husband the little inch of *time* which yet re|ains. As 'twas said in *Eph. 5. 16. Redeem the <◇> because the days are evil*; to you I say, *Redeem [Page 45](#) the time because your days are ending*. O spend it all in a most close and sweet *Communion* with your blessed Saviour; and as *Israel* made more way to|ward *Canaan* in a year or two at last than they did in forty years before; so do you towards *Hea/ven* in this reduced Age; and procure that Com|mendation, *Thy last works are more than the first*. It is required of an *old* woman, in I Tim, 5. 5•*she continues in Supplications and Prayers night and day*. So should an *old* man abound in *Supplications to God night and day, in Meditations on Christ night and day, in preparations for Death night and day*• 'Tis convenient that you should now Retreat and Retire from the business of the world, and that the best part of your time should be taken up •o serious Devotions. You should now more than ever engage in such a *walk*, as you may expect like *Elias* to be snatched up into eternal Glory from Let not a *day* now pass you without many salleys of your Souls towards a sublime Acting of many *Graces* in it; and let not a *night* come upon you• without renewing your *peace* with God, and your *close* with Christ. Get near to him, keep near <◇> him, dwell always in him. You have one foot in the *Grave*; where should the other be, but in *Hea/ven*? Let your whole *talk*, and

your whole *walk*, be full of Heaven, and Initiate your selves as much as you can, at the Employments of that Heaven, where I now commit you into the Blessed Arms of Him *that is from the Beginning*.

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The Dedication of The YOUNG MANS Glory:

To the Praying and Private Meetings of YOUNG PEOPLE in BOSTON.

More especially to two or three such Assemblies, in the North-part of the TOWN.

IT was an Observation long since made by a Re|nowned Ancient, *That* our Lord Jesus Christ •ave the most sensible and pathetick manifestati|ons of his *Love* to the *Youngest* of his Disciples; and it is a common temper in the Owner of eve|ry Orchard, more particularly to take notice of a new *Fruits* appearing on a young •ree, then of much larger Quantities on a Tree of longer stan|ding: It becomes *me* therefore to acknowledge it with a singular Affection, that there are in this poor Town so many scores of *young* persons, who having taken upon them a more serious profession of Religion, do endeavour to quicken & strength|en one another in it, by *meeting* together for the <◇> of Devotion every week; especially in [Page 47](#) the *Evening* after the *Sabbath*, which is a spot of time too meanly and vainly and impertinently • not to say *perniciously*, spent by multitudes in the midst of us. I count it not the smallest Happiness of my life that I have been for perhap • more <◇> a dozen years acquainted with some of those use|ful Meetings; as having in them had more than a little of my *Education*, and my *Preparation*, for my public Ministry. The sense of my Obligations to them, has caused me some while ago to ask their Acceptance of a little Book, Entituled, *Early Piety Exemplify'd*, and intended in a particular manner for *their* Edification; and for the same cause it is, that I now put into their hands another little Dis|course, recommending unto them, *A victory over the Wicked One*; 'tis because I am desirous that in their Journey Heaven-wards, they may not prove like young Travellers, that at first gallop furiously, but soon *tire*, and come *late* or *lame* home at last; and that while they are upon the Road, they may not be *thrown backwards by the Serpent in the way, the Adder in the path* waiting for them.

Brethren, I can from a troublesome Experience tell you, that when once you come to *Renounce* the *Service* and (as then you must) *oppose* the *Interest* of the Devil, he will quickly persecute you with his unwearied *Molestations*; and you

are yet in too good terms with him, if you do not already find him, *You Adversary going about like • Roaring Lion*, When *Sampson* was entering upon the work of God, <◇> was not long before the *Lion* Roar'd on him, [Page 48](#)

For my own part, I mourn bitterly to think, that I have done so *little* towards Destroying and Con|founding the *Kingdom* of the *Devil*; for which, the writing and spreading of Books is none of the least Expedients; but *something* I have done; and the *Wicked One*, has like a *Dragon*, been spitting *Fire* at me for it. While I was preparing for the Press, one of those little Books which I have sent abroad, the *Devil* from the mouth of a possessed person, in the Audience of several standers by, threatned me with much *Disgrace* for what I was about.

Whereupon *presently* and *ever-since*, those great Agents of the Devil, the modern leaders of the poor deluded *Quakers*, have in one Pamphlet after another been loading of me with most viru|lent and malicious Reproaches, in hopes, *That some will stick*; but the dirt they cast happily proves like that of *Oysters*; it more *cleanses* than *defiles*, The same disturbance, that was given to the De|vil by that little Book, I am willing should arise unto him from all the rest of my poor composures; and I suppose he will have it from *This*, which *particularly* treats him as our *Enemy*, and *professedly* pursues a *victory* over him. This (which was once a) *Land of Uprightness*, now is not without some people in it, than which I believe, the *Devil* has not more devoted and resolved *Vassals* in all his Territories; people that have sinned *against*, until they have sinned *away*, all the *strivings* of Gods Holy Spirit, and that are now *full of all frau|dulence and craftiness, and the Enemies of all Righ|teousness*. [Page 49](#) I

do expect that if their *father* can have his will, *these* will quickly be inspired with a rage that will vent it self a thousand ways against all my poor Endeavours to annoy that Wicked One. And since, 'tis especially by *Printing of Sermons* that I labour to give most provocation to the De|vil, 'twill be no more surprise to me, if I find the Devil assaying by the *Printing of Slanders* to take his Revenges on me; than it was to a man so much better and greater than my self, as *Athana|sius*, to read the Libels of a wicked Generation a|gainst him,

wherein as the Historian tells it, *Cades, Adulteria, Furta, quicquid Atrox confingi poter a • sancto Viro objiciebantur*; all manner of *Devilism*, was by the Devil forged of that good man; but as 'twill be my Honour herein to endure no other *Buffetings* than what have been bestow'd upon th•• best of men, so I have already published, in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth pages of the Discourse which God helped me to make at our last *Anniversary Election*, all the Answer that I count it worth while to give unto whatever Ca|lumnies a buisy Devil may go to afflict me with.

I mention this rather to alarm *you*, than to comfort *my self*, and I advise you that if the Devil now assault you with various *Temptations*, to divert you and

seduce you from the good ways which you are now walking in, you would not think strange of the trial, as though some strange thing happened unto you. My

Dear Brethren, go out [Page 50](#) hold out, persevere; I would say to you as Austin said unto his, when $\langle \diamond \rangle$ Roman Empire became Christian, *I pray don't think the Devil is $\langle \diamond \rangle$ Christian yet.* And let me never be so unhappy at no see the Lion fetching away out of my Flocks, any of the Lambs which I am to be feeding of. Part of your Food is now laid before you;

by your unworthy Pastor, *Cotton Mather.*

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THE YOUNG MAN'S Glory. OR, A Wreath of Graces for the Head of YOUTH.

I John II. XIII.

I write unto you, YOUNG MEN, because ye $\langle \diamond \rangle$ overcome the Wicked One.

THAT we have the Word of God $\langle \diamond \rangle$, $\langle \diamond \rangle$ a thing to be with many Thanksgivings ascribed unto the Grace of God; everlasting Praises are due from us to, Him, that has written the great things of his Law. And one Expression of our gratitude unto Him for it, $\langle \diamond \rangle$ be for us to count our selves therein written un|to; to judge our selves as much concerned $\langle \diamond \rangle$ the Scripture, as if it were a Letter with our Names [Page 52](#) in the superscription of it. But that we may not give the least way to a contrary, and a culpable inadvertency, the Holy Spirit of God has particularized in his Addresses, and apply'd himself unto the several Ages of men. 'Tis unto young men, that we now see an inspired Apostle writing; and unto pious, gracious, Christian young men; such young men as all men may behold a pattern in. A very glorious Attainment is here acknowledged in such young men as believe in and belong to, the Lord Jesus Christ; and the Expression is adapted unto that condition which young men are naturally ambitious of. We read in Prov. 20. 29. *the glory of young men is their strength:* 'tis that which they value themselves upon. The age of young men is accomodated unto wrestling, and fighting, and such Athletic Exercises, and their Humour is more than a little delighted in their victories over their Antagonists. Well, there is a cursed Enemy which all young men are to contend withal; which Enemy is the Devil, called here by the name of, *the Wicked One;* and godly young men are so happy as to have the upper-hand of this wicked Enemy, they prevail and prosper in their Encounters with him. Behold then this Doctrine for our present Meditations.

DOCTRINE.

The Wicked One is an Enemy, which 'tis the singular and special Honour of Religious Young Men to be-victorious over.

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Proposition 1.

We are to look upon the *Devils* as a *Wicked One*. That there are *Devils* in the world, is unquestionable to all but those absurd *Sadduces*, that say, *seeing is believing*, and will *believe* nothing but what they *see*. And yet if even *seeing* would convince them, after their contemning of the Scriptural Evidence which may be read in Jude 6. and Mat. 18. 16. and Luc. 4. 33. and many other places, we have in a manner *seen* such Beings as *Devils* are. That is, we have seen such preternatural operations in some *Enchantments* and *Possession* among us, as could never have been without the Existence of *certain spiritual and rational Substances, as are full of all Wickedness against God, and enmity against man*. Would you know what a *Devil* is? The Apostle gives a description of him, in Eph. 6. 12. *a spiritual wickedness, that is, a wicked Spirit*. Hideous Drove of those *wicked Spirits*, being *fallen Angels*, are made prisoners within the Atmosphere of that Earth which we walk upon $\langle \diamond \rangle$ the *High-places* of our *Air*, are, as the Apostle intimates, the Receptacles of those *wicked Spirits*. But now,

First, we may look upon all the *Devils* as ONE. On what account? Briefly, altho' as to their *Induction* they are *several*, yet they are *One* for their *Unanimity*. It is their *agreement* and *union* in mischief, on the score of which they are to be called *One*.

[Page 54](#) The *Devils* are *many* for *Number*; their *Troops* amount unto many *Regions*. We read in Luc 8. 30. about a *Legion* of them, that kept a *Garrison* in one single person; though a *Legion* contained perhaps twelve thousand and five hundred in it. Very probably there are far more *Devils* than men in the world; and they swarm like the *Frogs of Egypt* in every one of our *Chambers*. Yet are they *one* in their *design*, *one* in their *Interest*; they make as it were *one* grand: *Enemy of Mankind & one mystical body of Wickedness*. They have their *Devilish Confederacies*, and are *not divided among themselves*: there are no *Mu...es*. in the *Armies of Hell*, for want of pay: nor do they complain of *hard Marches*, tho' they are always compassing of the *Earth*. They have *one* *Commander* over them; for there is a *Government*; a *Monarchy* in the *infernal Regions*, the *Commander* whereof is called in *Mat. 12. 24. Belzebub, the Prince of Devils*. They have a *grand Segniour* among them; *one* of peculiar *Dignity* and *Influence*; this *chief Devil* we may call *the Devil*; but in the same

term we likewise comprehend all the *Slaves*, and *Officers*, and *Emissaries* of that Hellish Tyrant.

Secondly, We may also look upon the Devils as a Wicked *One*. The Greek word here notes one who *takes pains* to do amiss. [*ponēfos* from *po/nos*] That is properly a *Wickedness*; to do an ill thing, with *counsel* and *study*, and *labour* in the doing of it; this is just like the Devil indeed! it is *•ard*, in I. Pet. 5. 8. *He walks about, seeking whom he* [Page 55](#) *may devour*. The Devil is called, a *wicked one*, partly as an object for our *batred*; it is to provoke *<◇>* detestation of him, our indignation at him. As *the Holy One*, is a Name of *honour*, so, the *wicked one* is for a name of *hatred* set before us. He is also called a *wicked one*, partly, as an object for our *contempt*. Tho he be like a *Lion*, yet he has not *Righteousness* to make him as *bold as a Lion*. *Wickedness* is accompanied with *Weakness*; as one says, it would put a mettle into a Coward to fight with such a *wicked one* as the Devil is.

Proposition II.

The Devil, who is an Enemy to *all* men, is to *young* men a peculiar Enemy.

That the Devil is the Enemy of us *all*, is a thing very sensible unto us; and his *power* is called in the sacred Oracles, *the power of the Enemy*. If you ask, *how* the Devil is our Enemy, the Answer is obvious; he is our *Accuser*, and he is our *Destroyer*. The Devil does every day *accuse* us; 'tis his character, Rev. 12. 10. *the Accuser of our Brethren which accuses them before God, day & night*. There is a *Court* some-where kept in the *invisible world*, at which the Devils prefer as many complaints as they can against us; it is in this *Court* that they represent us as doing the *things for which the wrath of God should come upon the Children of Disobedience*. The Devil would also very fain *destroy* us; as he urged against a good man, in Job 1. 11. *put forth* [Page 56](#) *thin • Hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh*. The Devils pray and plead, like so many *Atto•nies*, that a *Judgment* may be granted against us all; & they are not satisfy'd unless they themselves be made the *Executioners* thereof.

If you ask, *why*, the Devil is our Enemy, the Reply is likewise easy; 'tis from his malignant *spite* at *God*, and *spleen* at *man*: The Devils can|not endure that the Name of God should be own|ed in the world; now 'tis our priviledge that we both do the *Service* of God, and bear the *Image* of God; but because the Devil would be in the Throne of God, therefore he is unwilling that God should have any *Children* or *Subjects* upon the face of the Earth. Moreover, the Devils cannot brook it, that any should be above them; as 'tis intima|ted, that *pride was the condemnation of the Devil*. Because he sees man *Saved*, and himself

Damned; man Advanced, and himself Degraded; hence he will do us all the Hurt he can.

But he that is thus an Enemy to *all* men, is to *young* men, more eminently so. As the Apostle speaks to *Christians*, thus I may to *young* men, in I Pet. 5. 8. *The Devil is your Adversary; young men, the Devil is remarkably ambitious to make a prey of your precious and immortal Souls. The Devil is an Abaddon and Apollyon; for to give him his due, to him does appertain the Name, which the Apocalypse justly puts upon a great Son of his. But young men do most of all find him such an one; that as our Lord said unto young Peter, in Luc 22. < ... > Page 57* 31. *Behold, Satan hath desired to have you. So may it be said unto young persons, Behold, Satan is peculiarly desirous to have you in his ravenous, devouring Jaws. The Devil goes ranging, raging, roaring about the world; and young men are those whom he is most concerned for the catching and spoiling of. Some have observed, That most of the Temptations recorded in the Scripture, still fell upon younger men. Be sure the Tempter falls foul upon them with a particular eagerness, and energy. And this for two causes.*

'Tis first, because the Devil sees a great *likelihood* of prevailing on *young* men. Young men have much *matter* in them, for the *Devil* to work upon; there is much *folly* in *young* men, 'tis said in Prov. 7. 7. *I beheld among the simple ones, discerned among the youths, a young man void of Understanding: there is much vanity. in young men, 'tis said in Ecl. 11. 10. Youth is vanity. Now the Devil beholds the natural folly and vanity of young men, as a very agreeable Tynder, for the sparks of his insinuations to fall upon. He thinks with himself, This rash young man will suspect none of my hooks and snares; now will he consider his latter End. He thinks, This wild young man will take me at my word and never consider the Chambers of death, which I am bringing him unto. For this cause he sets upon young men with greater expectation; and hence usually with greater frequency and industry than he does assault other Ages. The Lusts of young men after those three baits of the Devil, pleasures, profits, Page 58 grandeur, are more lively and stirring; and hence a particular activity of Hell shall be bestowed upon them.*

Secondly, 'Tis because the Devil sees a great *advantage* in prevailing on *young* men. The gain[ing] of *young* men thereunto, is a thing most signally useful to the *Kingdom* of the Devil. It se[cur]es the *Kingdom* of the Devil in their own Souls. If men are converted unto God, it is usually in the *morning* of their days, if they do not then ga[th]er the *Manna* of Christ and Grace, 'tis a thou[sand] to one but they miss of it for ever. God says in Eccl. 12. 1. *Remember thy Creator in the days of thy Youth; and the devil knows, that if the Creator be not then*

Remembred, it is likely that he I be *forgotten* for ever. The *strong armed* one is very studious to get and keep a *strong hold* in the Soul of a *young man*; as being sensible, that in *Age*, it will be harder to cast him out. We read in the Gospel about a very *painful Dispossession*; but this was the reason of it, Marc. 9. 21. *This evil spi|rit came unto him of a child*. If the devil make sure of a wretched sinner, till his *youth* he over, 'twill not be easy to eject him; every *new Act* of sin, has given him a *new hold* of the Soul. The Devil haunts the soul of a *young man*, giving interrupti|on to all the motions of the blessed Jesus, & how|ling, *What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before our time?* But Alas, if the Devil been't shaken off, before *the time* that age grows upon *us*, he will [Page 59](#) ordinarily defie the holy Spirit upon *him*; and he will have a confidence that any *blind* and *lame* De|vils will be strong enough to maintain the Castle, against our glorious *David*. It also promotes the *Kingdom* of the Devil among their neighbours *Young men* have a special fitness for the Devils •••usiness; they lay themselves out with more ser|•our, and more success; they keep more compa|ny, and so they diffuse their poison further, than can be said of other people. When that *Nebu|chadnezzar* had work to be done, we find in *Dan.* 1. 4. he will have *young men* brought before him, *skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge*. Thus the furious *Nebuchadnezzar* of Hell, singles out *young men*, that *their skill* and *their wit*, and *their vigour* help to carry on his Affairs, the more effec|tually. Good old *Austin* therefore said unto a young Gentleman, *Diabolus cupit abs te ornari*; the devil would be glad if such Accomplishments as yours might be employed for him.

From this 'tis, that all *young men* may have their hearts aking to think, how much they are exposed unto the devil; as 'twas cry'd unto that Champion. *The Philistines be upon thee* Sampson; so may it be alarm'd into the ears of young men, *The Philistines of Hell are your peculiar Enemies, O young men, and those Enemies are upon you every day*.

Proposition III.

Religious *young men* have the *honour* to be victo|rious [Page 60](#) over the *Devil*; some and such *young men* have the *honour* that unto them it may be said, *Ye have overcome the Wicked One*.

First, That Religious *young men* are victorious over the devil, is evident from the *instances* of the *victory*. To instance a little,

First, Religious *young men* there are who over|come the devil, in respect of the general and na|tural *Estates* which they are escaped from. What in the

condition of them that continue in their un|regenerate Estate? Alas, 'tis that of *Band-slaves*, and *Captives* to the devil. It may be said of un|renewed Sinners, as in a 2 pet. 2. 19. *They are o|vercome and brought into Bondage*; and it may be said of them, as in 2 Tim. 2. 26. *They are taken Captive*, (and as it were carried away *alive*) *by the Devil at his will*. The devil has conquered all unrenewed Sinners, and he does horribly lead them, act them, rule over them; he is a sort of a *Prince* and a *God* unto them. But when a Sinner is Converted, he is brought out of this miserable state; he is, according to that in Acts. 26 18. *Turned from the power of Satan unto God*. The devil does not any longer domineer over a Sinner, that is *born again*; he gets rid of his former *Task/masters*, like *Israel* escaped from *Pharaoh* and his Armies. Now 'tis the priviledge of some *young* men, that they are thus brought home to God. We read of one that could say in I King. 18. 11. *I fear the Lord from my youth*; now to *fear* the Lord is to *fight* the devil, with a blessed victory indeed. [Page 61](#)

There have been young *Josiahs*, that have *sought the Lord while they were yet young*; there have bin young *Davids*, that have had God for their *Hope*; their *Trust*, their *Teacher* from their *youth*; and there have been young *Samuels*, that have been *waiting* on God, and *bearing* from him, in their early days As one says, *Wisdom, gravity, pru|dence, temperance, are not always confined unto them, that have wrinkled faces, furrowed Brows, dim eyes, palsey hands, leaning on a Staff*. So may we say of this divine *victory*.

Secondly, Religious *young* men there are, who overcome the devil, in respect of the particular *Trials* that are made upon them. The devil makes these and those particular Batteries upon *young* men; he says, *I'll now trip up the heels of this young man*, and immediately applies all his Engines to draw the poor *young* man into some *abominable thing*. The devil is conquered in such Encounters, when he can't proceed and prevail in them; 'tis said in Jam. 4. 7. *Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you*. The Devil is meerly over|come, when a tempted Soul, silences his Banterers, with saying like our Lord, *Get thee behind me Satan*, or as *Job* answered a Fool, *Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh*. As on the other side, when *David* sends for a Mistriss, when *Peter* denie•• his Master, when *Confessors* come to Recant th•• Cause of God, then the Devil gets the day, and goes with flying colours out of the Field. But it is the priviledge of some *young* men, that they [Page 62](#) come off well in their spiritual Combates. We read of such a *young* man in Gen 39. 9. who be|ing sollicitated unto sin, vanquish'd and extinguish'd the sollicitation, by answering. *How shall I do this wickedness, and sin against God?* There are *young* men that won't be gull'd by the proposals of the Devil; but know how to fli•ht them and scorn them all, and with an holy bravery, make him weary of tendring them. Some *young* men are before all the Devils of *Hell*, as young

Jeremiah was before those of *Earth; Defenced Cities, Iron Pillars, Brazen Walls; the devils fight against them, but cannot prevail against them.*

Secondly, That it is a singular and special *Ho/nour* unto *young men* to be thus victorious, is evident from the *qualities* of the *Enemy*. It is said in *Prov. 16. 32, He that rules his own spirit, is better than he that taketh a City;* and indeed there have been those great *Plunderers* and *Murderers*, whom we call *Conquerors*, in the world, that have *taken Cities*, when they could not subdue the passions & Phrensies of their own *Spirits*.

Fortior est qui se, quam qui fortissima vincit Moenia—

But what is it then to be *Conquerors* over those vast throngs of *Spirits* which assail us from the world *which is not seen, and is Eternal?* Indeed the victory is not purely *our own*, it is said in *Rom. 8. 37. We are more than Conquerors, through him that* [Page 63](#) *has lived us.* Nevertheless, the *victory* becomes *ours*, because *he that hath loved us*, makes us *active* in it; the *Lord of Hosts* employ's the hands of the young *David* when 'tis He Himself that lays the *G•liah* of Hell sprawling on the ground before us; and the victory makes for our *Honour*.

Young men, have you overcome the Wicked One  *Then.*

First, you have overcome a *potent Enemy*. 'Twas said in *Judg. 14. 18. What stronger than a Lion*  *But you have been too hard for a stronger Lion, than that which Roared upon Sampson of old. Tho' they say, The Lion is not so fierce as he is pain/ted, I am sure, 'tis impossible to paint or speak what a Lion the Devil is.*

The Devils have us at a mighty disadvantage, upon this account; it is said in *Eph.6. 12. We fight not against flesh and blood, but against principa/lities & powers, and spiritual wickednesses;* the De|vils are *spiritual*, and that renders them very *pow/erful*; they can *smite* us when we can't *see* them; they can attack us & surprise us, by undiscoverable stratagems. Add unto this, That the devils which fall upon us, may say, as they said in that poor man of old, *We are many;* and these *many* devils have our hearts on their parts; there is in us a *party* for them. 'Tis a piece of most Heavenly Gallantry to overcome such an *Enemy*.

Secondly, You have overcome a *subtle* *Enemy*. He has those things that are called in *2 Cor. 2. 11. His Devices.*

[Page 64](#) There are above twenty names put upon the Devil in the Scripture; and not a few of them are forch'd from his *Deceitfulness*. Hence particu|larly, this *Father of Lies*, is called in Rev. 12. 9. *The old Serpent*; he has not only the *paw* of the *Lion*, but also the *head* of the *Serpent*, and he has *wiles* as well as *darts* to molest us with. The de|vils have the *experience* of more than five thousand years to furnish them with skill; and you know who says *Multitude of years teaches Wisdom*. How easily might these old *Souldiers* out-wit us a com|pany of raw, new, unexperienced little Folks, that are *but of yesterday, and know nothing!* how many *••ricks*, and *Arts* have they to manage their mali|cious Intreagues withal? For such a cunning *Ene/my* to be overcome is wonderful!

Thirdly, you have overcome a *restless* Enemy. 'Tis said of him in I Pet. 5. 8. *He goes about*. Like his eldest Son, *Cain*, he is *A Vagabond*: he gave that account of himself, in Job 1. 7 *I came from going to and from the Earth*. But it is to trepan and rume us, that he goes about. This Prince goes in *progress*, rides a *Circuit* through his whole Dominions to see how his business is carried on• and all his Vassals are also travelling in the prose|cution of this devilish business. No *Beasts* of prey do toil with such a painful, watchful, inde|fatigable Industry, as the Devils do for the ruine of Souls; they lull others *asleep* what they can, but they never can take any *sleep* themselves; I may say of them, *They wonder up and down for* [Page 65](#) *Souls, and grudge if they be not satisfy'd*. For such a busy *Enemy* to be overcome, how great a thing is it!

It remains that *I entreat the younger men as Bre|thren*, upon such Articles as these.

Application.

1. Brethren, do not by any means continue the *Slaves of the Wicked One*. You do not, you can|not *conquer* the Devil, as long as the Devil shall *command* you.

Young men; There are too many of you, that are to this day in the *Devils* Vassalage; and that have the curse of *C•am* upon you, to be the *Ser|vant• of servants*. Let me tell you plainly, fairly, faithfully, who among you, are yet the *Slaves of the Wicked One*.

I am to tell you, That all *wordly* young men, are among those miserable slaves. The Devil i• called in Joh 12. 31. *The Prince of this world*: Wherefore you *young men*, that are meerly set up|on *this world*; you that for the sake of *this world*, neglect God and Christ, and your own Souls; you that follow after no Riches, no Delights, no Ho|nours, but what *this world* affords; alas, the De|vil,

altho' he be but a chained *Prisoner*, is yet the *Prince* whom you yield the most Absolute Obedi|ence to.

I am, again, to tell you, That all *Ignorant young* men, are under this wretched Slavery. The [Page 66](#) Apostle expresses <◇> Col 1. 13. *God has deliver|ed us <◇> power of darkness, and hath transplan|ted us into the Kingdom of his dear Son.* Therefore you *young* men that are yet in darkness; you that are ignorant of God and Christ, whom to know <◇> *Life eternal*: you that are ignorant of the evil that is in sin, which is an *evil• and a bitter thing*; be assured, that the *Prince of darkness* is the Ruler of you•••undone Souls.

I am once more, to tell you, that all *unconverted* young men are under this woful Slavery. To all that are not born from above, belongs the Descrip|tion in Eph. 2 2: *They walk• according to the prince of the power of the Air.* Young men, don't you *walk* as the Devil would have you to *walk*? if the devil say, *Live without prayer, and without Christ and without God*; an unconverted young man lives accordingly. If the devil say, *Go and be wild and <◇> and mad with <◇> cu••antons*; an unconverted young man does accordingly. If the devil bid such a *young* man to scoff and puff at all the means of his good; there will be no withholding of him. Ah! poor *young* man; it may be said of you, as in Joh. 8. 44. *Ye are of your father [& Ma|ster] the devil, and the Lusts of your father you do.* The *Tyrannical Ceremonies* which he has enjoyed upon his wretched, woful *Vassals* discover what a *Tyger* your Master is; horrible *pilgrimages, whip|pings, cuttings, t••stings*, and miserable Tortures we know to be the devotions of the poor Pagans whom the devil is yet a Leader to; read *Purch <◇> [Page 67](#)* pilgrims, and be astonished. Yea, this Tyrant will be not content unless the very *life* and *blood* of men be sacrificed unto him. 'Tis well known what was done this way among the cursed *Atheni|ans* of old; and among the *Romans* afterwards. The poor Heathen could fall into no calamity, but presently there must be found men among them to be made *Katharmata* for a publick Expiation. The King of *Moab* must after the *Phaeni•ian* manner make a sacrifice of his own Son, and so must King *Ahaz* do no less than burn the Chil|dren of his Bowels; the Devil has been a devou|r|ing *Moloch* to the world. Behold what your Ma|ster is! But, ye inconsiderate youths, what will become of you, if you continue thus *Enslaved*? Briefly, all the blows, and all the plagues, that fall upon the *Devils*, must also fall upon your unhappy Souls. Your doom at last will be that, in Matth. 25. 41. *Depart ye cursed, into everlasting fire, pre|pared for the Devil and his Angels.* As, the *Devil and his Angels*, thus the *Devil and his Vassals*, must be together punished in *Everlasting Fire*. In the *Day of the Lord* that shall *burn as an Oven*, the Lord

Jesus Christ will say to the impenitent young man, *since you like so well to be with the Devil, you shall now go and be with him* for ever.

O consider of it, and follow this one Counsel, *Change your Service*. Young men, are you not *old* enough to be bound *•n•o* some *Service* that may be for your future and endless benefit? Behold, such a *Service* I shall now set before you. I pray, [Page 68](#) have the *Service* of the Devil; he is an *bard ma|ster*, and you shall have no wages from him, un|less eternal vexation and confusion. 'Tis a bad counsel sometimes given unto *young men*, that they should *Run-away from their masters*; but as to *this* master, 'tis a good counsel, O *Run away* from him. You *beat* him, if you *leave* him. Wherefore Tear and Break your Covenant with Satan, for he has made you *his own*, by *Covenant* as well as *Conquest*. Had you written and signed such a Covenant in your *Blood*, as the monstrous Witches use to do, there were yet room for the annulling of it; how such then may that which is *less Explici•*, be La|mented, Repented, Nullify'd? Well then, repair to that Rightful and Righteous Lord, unto whom you ow all manner of *Service*; Repair to God in Christ, and say as in Isa. 26. 13. *O Lord our God, other Lords besides thee, have had dominion over us, but by thee only will we make mention of thy Name*. Even so, say unto him,

Lord, I have hitherto been a Slave of the Devil, and I mourn to think that so much of my youth has been lost in this unhappy Slavery; but behold I now return to my glorious Creator and Redemer; Lord, I desire that I may, Tresolve that I will, for the time to come, approve my self thy Servant, wholly devoted unto thy Fear for ever.

O that such blessed *Indentures* were now made between the God of Heaven and the young peo|ple here.

II. Having so shaken off the Tyranny of the [Page 69](#) *Wicked One*, then, *young men*, endeavour to *overcome* him, in all your particular Encounters with him; endeavour, that the Devil may find you too *strong* for him, when-ever he shall make his bloody *As/saults* upon your Souls.

There are two things that I am now to set be|fore you: the first is, *In what* you *should* be; the second is, *By what* you *may* be, victorious over the Wicked One.

First, IN WHAT? There are many things; *wherein* you should overcome the Devil. In gene|ral, I would only say,

Let not the Devil overcome you, when he *tempts* you to any sin whatever; and especially to the sins which *your age* is more peculiarly dispos'd unto. Whenever the Devil urges you to an evil thing, rebuke and repel his

Temptations, with such an Answer as our Saviour once gave unto him, in Mat. 16. 23. *Get thee behind me Satan.* Courageously, reply, *Satan, have done, and, Satan, be gone!* and make him *turn his bark upon you*, by turning of yours upon *him*. But there are some sins ⟨◇⟩ which, *your age* is more eminently inclined, an• by which 'tis most of all endangered. I pray, let *These* be the Objects of your more undoubted *victory*, and therefore of your more solicitous *watchfulness*. It was the Advice of the Apostle to that young man, whom old *Chrysostom* I remember, very justly styl'd, *a wonderful youth*, in 2 Tim 2. 22. *Flee youthful lusts.* As there are the Lusts of every *place*; the Prophet notes it about the *Chaldeans*, they were a Page 70 *bitter and hasty and furious people*; and the Apostle notes it about the *Cre•tans*, they were a people grievously given to *Lying*: the Levity of *France*, the Haughtiness of *Spain*, the Revengfulness of *Italy*, and the Drunkenness of *Germany*, has been the Remark of us *English-men*, who perhaps give too great I••ences of all those vices. Thus there are likewise the ⟨◇⟩ of every *Age*; and *youth* has its particular ⟨◇⟩, which are called in Job 13. 26. *The Reproach of our youth.* *Young men*, 'tis in and by *these* Lusts, that the De|vil will have the most likely Lo•• for the throw|ing of you; O that you may be ⟨◇⟩ to us here! Indeed, the best E••ght with these, is a •light from them; here, ⟨◇⟩; these are the Ene|emies whereof the *Captain of our Salvation* has gi|ven us that word of Command, *Fl••!* But what are they? what be the *Names* of them?

First Overcome the Devil, when he Tempts you to the *youthful* sin of *Evil-company keeping*. Where may you look to see a Carnal *young man*? The wise men has told us, in Prov. 7. 7. *I behold among the simple o••s, I discerned among the youths, a young man.* The Devil would fa•• de••cy young men, into the Knots, and Bo••s of what they call, *Good Fellowship*; he would perswade them to *Mer/ry-Meetings*, and link them with such Associates as will Drink and Drab and Game, and be infinitely wicked, and help to drown one another in perdition. But when you are thus tempted, by the *De|vil*, forget not the caution of your Saviour, My Page 71 *Son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.* If you have been seduced into a Society and Intimacy with ungodly persons, •magine that you hear that Counsel from on High unto you, *Depart from the Tents of those wicked ones,* ⟨◇⟩ *you perish in all their sins!* and that you hear that Thunder of Heaven over you, *A Companion of Fools shall be destroyed* I Think with your selves, whether you would be willing to spend your Eternity with such Compagnions; and whether it be not convenient for you ⟨◇⟩ to say, *Depart from me, ye evil-doers, for I will ⟨◇⟩ the Commandments of my God!* unto those wild Creatures, unto whom the Lord Jesus will one day say, *Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting Fire?* O let not the Devil cause you now to be

Familiar with the Robbers and the Cut-throats of your Souls; and with those of whom your Death-bed Groans will be, *Lord, gather not my soul with such unhappy sinners.*

Secondly, Overcome the Devil when he tempts you to the *youthful* sin of *Uncleanness*. It is a passage relating probably to the young men of *Sodom*, in Job 36. 14. *They dy in youth, their life is among the unclean.* The *Uncleannesses* into the Quagmires whereof young men too often plunge themselves, to use the Apostles cleanly language, 'tis a shame *to speak of them.* 'Tis a monstrous and a cursed *wantonness*, wherein young people too often indulge themselves; and some things that are counted the parts of a gentile breeding do but cast oyl into the Hellish Flames of that *wantonness*: I mean parti|culars [Page 72](#) *promiscuous Dancings*, against which the faithful Servants of God in all Ages have born their vely zealous Testimonies. The Apostles in Rom. 13 13. and in I Pet. 4. 3. condemn that which we translate *Rioting* and *Revel•ing*, and they joyn it with *Uncleanness*; now the most accurate and re|nowned Criticks in the Greek Tongue, affirm *Dan/cings* to be intended by the word that is used there. Hence *Chrysos•om* calls a *Dance*, a *Diabolical pra/ctice*; and says, *The Devil is one of the Company where 'tis* ◇ }. *Austin* made no stick to say, *The miserable Dancer Knoweth not, that as many paces as he makes in Dancing, so many steps he takes to Hell.* And the Ancients with one mouth call a *Dance*, a *work of Satan*, which all Baptised persons are bound unto the *R•nu••iation* of. Yea, whole Councils and Synods in the primitive Times have bitterly stigmatized *promiscuous Dancings*; and in later Ages the *Wal/denses* declaimed against them as, *The processions of the Devil.*

The Reformed Churches in *France* made this an Article of their Discipline, *Dancing is to be suppres|sed, and those who take the liberty to dance, after they have been several times admonished, shall be Excommu|nicated.* The Reformed Churches of *Holland* have made it an Article of theirs, *They that go to dances shall be Reproved; and if after divers Admonitions they persist, they are to be Excluded from Communion.* And whole Armies of Protestant and Judicious Divines have spent their *Arrows* upon this Debauching Le|•ity. Yea, a ◇ Papist, having the devotion of [Page 73](#) a *Dnixelius* has not stuck to say, *A dance is a Ring, whereof the Devil is the Center, and all his Angels the Circumference.* Yea, a civil Pagan, having the dis|cretion of a *Cicero* has plainly said, *It is only for a Drunkard, or a Madman to be a Dancer.* I desire young people to come away from all *promiscuous dancings*, lest the same Devils which usually fetch away alive one of the Crew in the Dances of our *Indians*, do as terrible a thing to your Immortal souls. But herewithal,

Avoid all *Uncleanness* whatsoever; and particularly, beware of having light thoughts about some sorts of *Uncleanness* wherein many young people have been so infatuated as to excuse themselves. There are abominable *self-pollutions* which many that would be loath to commit other kinds of *Un/cleanness*, look upon as little, venial, easy *peccadillo's*; albeit these are the *Effeminacies*, whereof we are assured, in I Cor. 6. 9, 10. They that live in them, *shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*. O study a spotless and gracious *chastity*; make not your hearts the *Ovens* that have the impure Flames of Hell constantly flaming there; if an *unclean* Devil would solicit you to any Filthiness, reply upon him as the young *Joseph* did, *How shall I do this micked/ness, and sin against God?* and with the famous young *Nicetas*, even spit your very Tongues in the face of any that shall urge you to throw your selves into the *deep ditch*, into which they fall that are *abhorred of the Lord*.

Thirdly, Overcome the De`vil, when he tempts [Page 74](#) you to the *youthful* sin of *Drunkenness*. 'Tis a sharp *Irony* in the Speech of the Wiseman to the young man, Eccl. 11. 9. *Rejoice, O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the days of thy youth*. And the Devil perswades many a foolish young man, to think or act, as if this were a liberty in *good earnest* allow'd unto him. Alas, how common is it for young persons to be at merry Bouts, and there to disguise themselves by a sin so much worse than *Beastly*, that the very *Bruits* themselves cannot be frequently or easily compelled into it! But I beseech all young people to beware of this pernicious vice, from which I had almost said, *None returns to take hold on the path of life*. The careful Father that heard his young Son was given to *Gaming* and *Whoring*, and some such things, yet encouraged himself with hopes that *Age would Cure* him: but when he heard he was become addicted un|to *Drunkenness*, with despair he cry'd out, *Nay then, I have no hope concerning him*. Dili|gent Enquires have been able to find but one or two Notorious Drunkards in an Age, made so|ber men; *Drunkenness* is *Vitium maximo adhe/ventia*; it is rare that any leave it off; see deut. 21. 18, 19, 20, 21. The devil gains and keeps a strange hold of men, by this Iniquity; and hence those Barbarous Nations which have not our liquid ways of Intoxication, yet have o|ther modes of drunkenness; by which the devil retains his possession of them. But O Remem|ber [Page 75](#) the *Reckoning* that is to come *at the last!* Of *Drunkenness* we are told in Prov. 23. 32. *At the last, it bites, it stings*; and indeed how should it o|therwise? for it breaks not *one*, but *all* of the Commandments; *Ebrietas in se culpas complectitur omnes*. Hence, how many Drunkards have *at the last* roared out, *Ale-houses are Hell-houses!* Know it, that *at the last*, you shall *for every cup of pleasure here* (as one expresses it) *receive a gallon of Wo*. Let all young people take up a just prejudice against this *youthful*, but *woful* vice; and bear in mind that word of God in Isa 28. 1.

Wo to Drunkards. Young men, 'twill bring a *wo* upon your *Nanes*; your *Credit* irreparably falls and breaks every time you Reel with Drink. 'Twill bring a *wo* upon your *E|states*; they'l be quickly melted at the Tavern, and you must be left without both *Friends* to as|sist you and *Cloaths* to cover you. 'Twill bring a *wo* upon your *Bodies*; *Crudities* and *Obstructions* that are the parents of all Diseases, are the hasty off|spring of this Excess. But above all, 'twill bring a *wo* upon your *Spirits*; 'twill befot the *Reason* with a foaming *madness*; 'twill enflame the *Con|sotence* more than if you had swallo'd flaming *Sulphur*; 'twill plunge the *Soul* into intollerable and interminable Miseries. 'Tis a thousand to one, but you may *dy Drunk* like *Ammon* and *Elab* at last, if you *live* so, and yet I can hardly say you *live*, inasmuch as you are *dead while you live*. 'Tis a profane and lying Speech sometimes used, *That a drunken man gets no Harm*; we often see such wo|ful [Page 76](#) creatures *drowned*, which is indeed but a pro|per vengeance on them, for a *Drunken* is an old English word for a *drowned* man. Yea, sometimes we see them also horribly *burned* unto Death; scarce two weeks are past si•ce we saw two such Tragical Accidents. However, the irreclaimable Drunkard cannot escape the *vengeance of eternal Fire*, he must be Tormented for-ever in those Fires, from whence his vain and sad cries will be continually going up, *O for a drop of w•er to cool•ry longue!* We pity that King who of old lost a *Kingdom* for a cup of *drink*; but the drunkard will do a more la|mentable thing; he loses a *Soul* for a cup of *drink*, a loss which the *gain of the whole world* would not compensate; and he procures himself a *ba••shm•ht* and an exclusion from *the Kingdom of Heaven for ever*.

Fourthly, Overcome the devil, when he tempts you to the *youthful* sin of *Haughtiness*. We read concerning a *Novice*, in I Tim. 3. 6. there is dan|ger *least being lifted up with Pride, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil*. Truly, *young people* are but *Novices*; whatever good they have or do, they are *but newly come to it*; it will be a wonder if the devil do not look them, as he did *Rehoboam* into Ruine, by their *Pride*, unto which they are too naturally disposed by their self-igno|rance and their small experience. In many Obses|sions we see the devil <◇> *lymp•nizing* the *Bodies*, which he has <◇> > into; he swells them most unreasonably. But O let not the devil cause [Page 77](#) you to *swell* with any proud Apprehensions of your selves; be not proud of your own Abilities, your own Excellencies, your own performances; but let a most humble *modesty* accompany your whole Behaviour. The Devil will trip you into some grievous *fall*, when once he has got you *lifted up with pride*. But, there is also a more childish kind of *pride*, which the airy minds of young people, are too prone unto; and that is, *A pride in Appa|rel*. There is a certain flant of Gayety and Vanity in Attire, wherein young people do too often ma|nifest their inward inclinations to Extravagancies; and sometimes they go

so far as to transgress the *seventh Commandment* in it. We that are *Protestants* may blush to read what rebukes the graven sort of *Roman Catholics* themselves have bestow'd upon such Exorbitancies. One of them has writ ten a whole Book of Reprehensions to *Naked Breasts and Shoulders*; and others of them have published whole Discourses, *Contre les vains Ornaments de femmes*, against the *vain Ornaments of the Female Sex*. Young People, would you have *Ornament's*. The Apostle says in I Pet. 5. 5. *Be Adorned with Humility*; Humility it self is represented there as the most comely knot of *Ribbons* in the world. Let your *Garments* not want any Decency, but let your *vertues* be your chiefest Ornaments. [study I pet. 3. 3, 4, 5.] To use the Expressions of an Ancient; I pray, ponder, *whence you came*; that will make you *blush*; ponder, *what you are*; that will make you *sigh*; ponder, *where you go*; that [Page 78](#) will make you *shake*. Mortify your *Pride* with all humbling Thoughts; and be able to say with young *David*, in Psal. 131. 1. *Lord, my Heart is not haughty; nor mine eyes lofty*.

Fifthly, Overcome the Devil, when he tempts you to the *youthful sin of Inconsiderateness*. It is mentioned as the rashness of many a *young man*, in Prov. 7. 23. *He is as a Bird hastning to the snare, and he knows not that it is for his life*. How few young persons are there, that ever trouble themselves about, *wherefore's?* and *what if's?* and the greatest consequences? For the most part they put none of their concerns into *Ballances*, and they come under that reproof, *My people do not consider*.

But let young people now *consider*, that the God of Heaven is uttering over them such a wish as that in Deut. 32. 29. *O that they were wise, that they would consider their latter end?* We read about a young *Isaac*, that it was his manner, to *walk in the Fields for Meditation*. O that young persons were so *wise*, as to Retire and *Consider* upon the circumstances of their Souls! Retire and *look upward*; consider *who* made you, and *what* he has prepared for you, If you seek Him. Retire, and *look downward*; consider the Everlasting *Fire* and the Never-dying *worm*, which is reserved for the Torture of all impenitent Unbelievers. Retire, and *look backward*; consider the sin in which you were *born*, and the many Follies and Errors which you have *lived* in. Retire, and *look forward*; consider the *death*, and the *Judgment*, and the *Eternity*, into which you are [Page 79](#) hastening apace every day. Retire, and *look inward*; consider, whether you have yet made your *peace* with God, and whether you are yet arriv'd unto a blessed *Union* and *Communion* with the Lord Jesus Christ. Let every young person become like that *Ephraim*, and that *Prodigal*, whom in the Bible we find considerably bemoaning of themselves. If the Devil offer you at any time a *B••t*, presently consider whether some cruel *Hook* be not covered

with it; and be able to say like that *young Saint*, in Psal. 119. 59. O Lord, *I thought on my ways, and I turned my feet unto thy Testimonies.*

Sixthly, Overcome the Devil, when he tempts you to the *youthful* sin of *Apostasy*. Of many young persons may that complaint be made, in *Hos.* 6. 4. *your Goodness is as the morning cloud, and as the early Dew it goeth away.* 'Tis not unusual for persons in their *youth* to have many Convictions on their minds; they have some troubles, *O what shall I do to be Saved?* and they have some wishes, *O that I may dy the death of the Righteous:* But what comes of all? They frequently vanish like the *morning cloud*, any the *early Dew*; <◇> these people never could be really *young Saints*, yet from being seemingly such, they become *old* <◇>, as a wretched Proverb has expressed it; and this is from the Seduction of that *old Devil*, who is himself the first and worst Apostate that ever was. But, *young men*, if you have lest off any of your old sinful ways, tremble to return like a *D*•• to that vomit, like a *Swine* to that quagmire, any more. Let not [Page 80](#) the *foul Spirit* which will cause you to *leave off the thing that is good*, Renew his Interest in you; it will quickly render you *seven times worse than you were* <◇>. Tremble at forsaking of those Devotions and Societies whereat you have sometimes had your *Hearts burning* within you; Tremble at Embracing any more those Abominable things, which you have pretendedly given a bill of *Divorce* unto; such *B*••*ksladings* will •ndanger your hearing that voice from Heaven, which thunderstruck the miserable *Sp*•• upon his *Apostasy*, *Hence! Hence! thou vile Apostate! and carry away the Sentence of thy Eternal Damnation in thy Soul!* Forget not that word of the Lord Jesus, in *Luc.* 9. 62. *No man having put his hand to the Plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of Heaven.* And forget not that word of the Lord Jesus, in *Heb.* 10. 38. *If any man draw back my Soul shall have no pleasure in him.*

Lastly, Overcome the Devil, when he tempts you to the *youthful* sin of *Mispending precious time*. We are told of some young men, in *Job.* 32. 2. *In whom old age is perished*, or, as it may be rendered, *In whom time is perished.* Little do the most of young people know or weigh the worth of *Time*; it lies like a dead Commodity on their hands, and because they have so much of it they contrive that monstrous thing which they call, *pastime*, to get it off. But God forbid, that you should any more allow your selves in such a transcendent madness, as the ill husbandry of *Time*. O this invaluable [Page 81](#) Jewel! *Time!* this Treasure, the *Enjoyment* whereof is of all things the most uncertain, this Treas|ure, the *Improvement* whereof is of all things the most important; be no more spendthrifts of it; but be always either doing or getting of some good while you have *time* by the Forelock. *Young people*, you reckon upon a *long*

time; but you must *reckon again*. It has been said, *The old man has death before his-Face, but the young man has death behind his back*; Death may be as near to you, as to your Grand-father. Besides were you to live unto Gray-hairs, how fast will one year after another slip away! no *Post*, no *Ship*, no *Eagle*, moves with such velocity. Be assured, let the *Devil* tell you what he will, it wont be long before your *time* will all be flown away; I may say as in I Cor. 7. 29. *The <◇> is short*. But when this time is gone there will be two dismal issues of your mispending it. First, *you* must be *accountable*; it is a warning of Heaven to every young man, *Know thou, that God will for this bring thee into Judgment*. The great God will make that solemn demand, *What have you done with the time that I lent you?* And then also, *i*• will not be *recoverable*; what the Wiseman says o•*Love*, may be said of this, when once 'tis gone from us, *If a man would give all the substance of his House for it, it would utterly be contemned*. There tho' we cry never so bitterly, *Lord, Lord, for a little of the time that we have lost*, no tears of <◇> will fetch back one hour of it. Wherefore, that much of your little *Time*, say of every day •aga|zin•[Page 82](#) used of a fair day, *'Tis pity such a day should be lost*; squander none of your life away in *Diversions* whol|ly impertinent: prize your *Time* now, as you will when 'tis just expiring; and follow the Divine Counsel in Eph. 5. 15. *Walk not as Fools, but as Wise, Redeeming of the Time*.

These are some of the things *In what* you are to overcome the Wicked One.
But,

Secondly, BY WHAT? And in general, the direction for us, is that of the Apostle, in Eph. 6. 11. *Put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the De/vil*. For a *B•lt*, let the *truths* of God, be un|to you as the *girdle of your Loins*; and unto the knowledge of divine *Truths*, add *Sincerity of Heart* and *Integrity of Life* before the Lord. For a *Breast-plate*, put on *Righteousness*; preserve the *vitals* of your inner-man harmless by a thorough work of Sanctification, and a *Conscience void of offence towards God and Man*. For a pair of *Shoes*, go to the Gospel, which declares and settles a *peace* between God and us; that the *Counsels* and *Comforts* thereof, may prepare us for all our *Trials*! For a *shield*, hold up your *Faith* against the *venemous darts* of Hell that may be hurled at you; let that put you under the conduct of the Lord Jesus, and be to you the *Evidence of things not seen*. For an ••*delmet*, get a *lively Hope* that you shall be *saved* or ever; and hereby let your *Heads* be guarded a|all•t all hard thoughts of God: and of his *Grace*:

[Page 83](#) This is a *defensive Armour* against the Devil, which better befits every young person, than that of *Saul* did the young *David* of old. But there is

one *offensive weapon*, with which we are to manage our Combate against the Devil; and there are two *Stratagems* to be annexed thereunto.

In short, there are two particular Directions, for our Encounters with the *Wicked One*; and the quoting of two Texts may lay them sufficiently before us.

The first proper Direction for us, is that in Eph. 6. 17. *Take the Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.* Compare our Context, I Joh. 2. 14. If young men would *overcome the wicked one*, they must have the *word of God abiding in them*.

The Bible is a *spiritual sword* shaped and formed by the Inspirations of the *Eternal Spirit*; and for a Conflict with the *Infernal Spirit*, it is a *sword* whereof I may say as *David of Goliath's*, *There is none like it*. When the blackest and fiercest of all the devils made an Onset upon our blessed Saviour, and this with all the three Batteries which he once fatally overthrew the first *Adam* withal, how did our Lord *overcome the wicked one*? It was by replying upon him, *It is written*, and by holding up against him the *Scripture* of God. It is remarkable that all the *swords* or *words* used by our Lord for the *overcoming* of the devil were fetched from that one Book of *Deuteronomy*; but how rich a Magazine [Page 84](#) may the whole Bible then be unto us?

Let all young people then study the Word of God; we read in Psal 119. 9. Of a *young man* thus cleansing of his way. There was once a young Gentlewoman, that before she was *Nine years old* could say, all the New Testament by *Heart*. O that all young persons would every day seriously and pensively Read the Bible, till their Hearts were become, as *Jerome* call'd his Friends, *The Libraries of the Lord Jesus Christ*, Young people, see that you become ready at *Scripture*; and learn to Fence with a sentence of *Scripture* against all the passes that the devil is making at you. All the *Commandments*, all the *Promises*, all the *Threatnings* of the Bible, will be like so many *swords all-edge*, for your service against the *wicked one*. Let the devil see, that you bear in mind what is *written* in Eccl. 11. 9, in Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. and other such awful places. These *Writings* will be more terrible to the Devil, than the Hand-writing on the wall, was to the *Babylonian* Emperour; such is his *Antipathy* to them, that if you thus *Resist the Devil*, *he will flee from you*.

The second proper Direction for us, is in Mat. 26. 41. *Watch and Pray, that ye enter not into temptation*.

When the Devil is busy with us, 'tis by these two Duties that we may overcome him and his Temptations.

First, *Be watchful*. Or, in *Solomons Dialect*, *Be fearful*. Here, quite contrary to what is in other Warfares, The best *Souldier* is he that *feareth al/way* [Page 85](#) *ways*. Be always on your guard; and continually suspect that the *wicked one* has an *ill design* upon you. Be so watchful, as to keep an Eye upon the *Season* which the devil may be most likely to make an *Hour of temptation*. Is it with you a time of *Security*? Are you grown formal, flighty, weary in Religion? Are your Graces in a slumber? Then wake presently; if you ben't now very watchful, the Devil will serve you, as the Watchmen did the *sleepy Soul*, in Cant. 5. 7. *Smite you, wound you*. Or, are you very confident of your selves? are you ready to say, *I shall never be moved*? Then also wake presently; for if you be not now watchful, the de|vil will break your bones, as much as he did pre|sumptuous *Peters*, when our Lord said unto him, in Luc. 22. 31. *Satan has desired to have you*. Or, Is it with you a time of *prosperity*? Are you *Out/wardly* under the smiles of God? Do Riches and Honours come in upon you? Be sure the Devil will now have a blow at you, if you be not very watchful: this was wise *Agurs* apprehension. For this cause 'tis said in Prov. 1. 32. *The prosperity of Fools shall destroy them*; it furnisheth the Devil with opportunities. When we have an high Sail, he will try to overset us. Or, are you *Inwardly* hap|py in the Light of Gods Countenance? Have you newly been *sealed* with Assurances of his Favour? Be sure you shall now also find that the Devil will not let you alone. When *Paul* had been in Rap|tures, we find in 2 Cor. 12. 7. he is not long free from the *Buffetings of the Devil*. If we have been [Page 86](#) in the Mount with God, it is well if you been't quickly pushed upon breaking both Tables of the Law. And yet also perswade your selves that in a time of *Adversity* too, you shan't be free from *Temptation*: He that fell upon our Lord, *when he was hungry*, will fall upon us *when we are troubled*. You had now need beware lest you either *despise the chastening of the Lord*, or *faint, when rebuked of Him*; for you will be shrowdly tempted unto both of these.

Be so watchful as likewise to mind the *Subject* which the devil visits with his Temptations. 'Tis the *Heart*, that the devil falls upon; wherefore, as the wise man says in Prov. 4. 25. *Keep they heart with all diligence*. Be vigilant about the *tempers & postures* of your own hearts, take notice of the *Bi/•ss* which is upon them. Know what part you are most *vulnerable* in; and be not like those to whom our Saviour said, *Ye know not what spirit you are of*. That part of your disposition, which like a *Dlilah*, is most likely to betray you into the hands of the hellish *Philistines*, be most exact in your observations of; and let not the devil therein circumvent you, and entangle you.

Finally, Be watchful as to keep always alive within you; *a sense of the Love of God in Christ*. That is the *peace* of which we are told in Phil. 4. 7. *It shall keep*

our hearts; 'tis a military word, To keep as in Garrison. O get a relish of the divine Love in the Mission and Passion of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in our admission to the saving benefits [Page 87](#) thereof; this will be a sort of a garrison for our Souls, and free us very much from the disturbance of our Temptations; it will not be easy for the devil now to disturb the serenity and satisfaction, and holy inclinations of our minds. If we begin at any time therefore to lose the lively sense of this Love, be so watchful as immediately to recover it; and so, tho' the Archers of Hell may sorely grieve us, yet like young Joseph, we may have our Bow abide in strength.

Secondly, *Be prayerful; and like Paul, beseech the Lord thrice. He that would be little in Temptation, let him be much in Supplication. When the devil is galling of you, do like those Warriours in <◇> Chron. 5. 20. Cry to God in the Battel. Keep continually praying unto God, that he would gird you with strength unto your Battels, and subdue, under you the Devils that rise up against you. The Trumpet of Gideon did not more fright the Midianites, than your prayers will the Devils that are vexing you. The woful day wherein the Devil gave poor Ori/gen such a bloody overthrow, was a day wherein his prayers had not been carefully enough attended. The best posture to fight the Devil in, is upon our knees. There was a woman once in this Land, very strangely possessed with divers devils who would audibly speak within her, while her self knew nothing of it; these Devils very audibly spoke of divers schiess they would inflict upon her, but <◇> they made this answer to one another. Ah! <◇> runs to the Rock, she runs to the Rock! and they [Page 88](#) could not here her there. Why, see to it, that by your daily prayers you Run to the Rock; a Dove in the clefts of that Rock, will be defended against all the Vultures of Hell that would seize upon it. But unto Prayer, joyn a true Faith in the Blood of Christ; look upon that as the meritorious and also as the exemplary cause of all your Successes against the Devil. A filly Papist, will sign himself with a Cross, that the devil may have no power over him. Behold, the right way of signing our selves with the Cross. Encourage our selves from the view of the Lord Jesus hanging there.*

And let this be accompanied with a strong Faith in the Grace of Christ. Let that be the Fountain from whence we derive all our strength against the devil. A good woman troubled by a devil, said unto him, *Satan, don't meddle with a poor silly woman; but if thou hast any thing to say, speak it unto my Advocate, the blessed Jesus, and see whether he cannot answer thee.* O let us beg the Lord Jesus to give us a little of that Grace, by which he did himself once heat the devil here; and let us hope in Him us in that Redeemer, *Who knows how to succour the Tempted.*

The Dedication of, The little Childs Lesson.

To the CHILDREN Dwelling in the North-part of BOSTON.

VERY terrible and sorrowful are the *Pre/sages* which many Learned, Holy, Thinking Men have had about the State which they have suspected *New-England* as running apace into. One of our Seers hath long since in publick writings told us, *The Gospel, I fear, is going, the Lord Jesus is departing from these Coasts.* Another of our Watchmen foretold it a great while ago unto us, *That God would punish the wantonness of this people, with a sad loss, and want, of Able Men.* And a third of our Shep|herds, did not stick to tell us many years ago, *I am verily afraid such a dismal night is towards us* [Page 90](#) *and such sore Afflictions, that the Lord will fill the hearts of all that shall be saved in those days with such Anguish of Spirit, as never more in the worst days of our Eore-fathers.* These and many more such as these, have been the dark thoughts which our *Fathers* have had concerning our condition; and our Hearts are wonderfully hard, if we tremble not at the late and large steps of Providence towards the fulfilment of such Pre|dictions upon us. But among all the *deadly Symptoms* which threaten us with a speedy Ru|ine, there is none more ghastly, than the ig|norance, the wildness, the lewdness found in so great a part of the *Rising Generation.* Multi|tudes of our *Children* are very much *Un-Catechised*, as to the principles, and sadly *Unnur/tured* and *Ungoverned* as to the practices of Christianity. Our Children are miserably both *neglected* and *indulged*; tho' *too much* be made of them, in gratifying of their *unruly wills*, nevertheless *too little* is made of them in pro|viding for their *immortal souls*; and, *some of you have no • the Knowledge of God; I speak this to the shame* of your ungodly Tutors. It was the last and worst of all the *Egyptian* plagues, That a *Child* was *dead* in every house. But may it not now be reckoned among the *New-English* Ones, that in so many Houses all the *Children* are *dead in trespasses and sins*, & have their *Eyes* closed and muffled by a most unhappy *Ignorance.* 'Tis *This* that of all our [Page 91](#) *dismal Omens* looks blackest upon us; and it should awaken the vigorous endeavour of every sensible *Christian* to prevent that woful *Degene/racy* in which *There will arise another Generation that know not the Lord*; and by which the God of our *Fathers* will be so provoked at us as to say with the expence of all his Arrows upon us; *What shall I do unto thee? What shall I do unto thee?*

Here was the consideration that produced the little Discourse, which I now put into the hands of *Children*, and especially of *those* Children which are the

Lambs; that I have received a special charge from the Lord Jesus Christ about the *Feeding of*. Our Saviour, *in a certain place*; hath intimated, That *His little Children* have the Angels of Heaven marvelously concerned about them; be sure those *Mintsters* forget the denomination of *Angels* put upon us in the Oracles of God, that have not their very hearts within them working and yearning towards the *Little Children* that are under the watch of their Ministry. For my own part, I must be impatient until I see the *little children* here so well instructed, that a *Papist*; or which is much what one, a *Quaker*, shall be as unable to seduce them, as the *Jesuits* were to corrupt the well educated Children of the *Waldenses* when they were sent among them; and until I see also the *Little Children* here as forward in all Piety, as the Well-informed Children of the Ancient Jews were in [Page 92](#) the Law of *Moses*, the six hundred and thirteen Precepts whereof they had by heart before they were thirteen years of Age.

My dear Children, when *Pharaoh* could not hinder the people of God from going to serve the *Lord* in the *Wilderness*, he still objected against their therein having the company of, *their little Ones*; this is the desire, this the design which the Devil, is here with great fury managing; that so he may have his long enjoyed *America*, all return into his bloody hands. But you have now before you, some of our cares to engage our *Little Ones* with us, in the Service of our God; O that the *Little Ones* among us, might become greatly solicitous, *to know the God of our Fathers, and serve Him with a perfect hearts, and a willing mind*. It raised surely some Agony in the mind of *David*, when there befell him the disaster, whereof he afterwards gave that Report, *Thy Servant kept his Fathers Sheep, and there came a Lion and took a Lamb out of the Flock*. In like manner, when I understand that any of *you* are ignorant, or naughty and vicious Children, methinks I see the horrid *Lions* of Hell, fetching some of my poor *Lambs* away, and how shall I answer it, if I do not *go out after them!* The following pages are some of my Essays to pluck you out of your Eternal Perdition; and I hope you will read them seriously, frequently, very profitably. I have personally with more private [Page 93](#) Addresses, notwithstanding the toyl of my public *Employments*, treated with many scores of you; I have seen the *tears*, and heard the *vows*, with which many of you have declared, *That you would be the Servants of God as long as you live*; and I shall be a witness against you, if after this you be of them *who draw back*. But I do now before all the world, renew my Applications to you for your *early Repentance* and *Obedience*. Hence as I have studied in a *Sermon* to touch your *Affections*, I have laboured also to help your *Understandings*, by a *Scriptural Catechism*, annexed thereunto; and tho' I am far from not encouraging any of you to prize and learn those, excellent *Catechisms* which are now commonly

used among us; yet I was willing to offer you *one* more, because it pretends to these few little Singularities.

First, The *Answers* are all of them, the *express words* of sacred Scripture; which have in them a force beyond the *purest words* of any Writing else. And

now also, you are at once taught with case not only to *Assert*, but also to *Confirm* all the Doctrines of the Christian Religion. Besides, the *Answers* are for the most part *short*, and not seldom explained in the *Questions*, to which they do belong; and as for the younger of you, I have distinguished a few of them by *little Stars*, that you may single out *them*, to begin the charging of your infant-Memories therewithal. More over, there is in so brief a sheet as

this, perhaps [Page 94](#) a fuller Collection of *Divine Subjects* for you to be acquainted withal, than I have yet seen in so small a Room; and whoever lives to Preach upon *each* of the Texts quoted here, may, therein go over, *An entire body of Theology*. I now leave you in the *Arms* of the Lord Jesus, *The great Shepherd of the Sheep*, that he may *seed you, and lead you to the Fountains of Living, Water for-ever/more. Amen*; My dearest Children; and I pray, do you also say, *Amen! Amen!*

Cotton Mather.

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THE LITTLE CHILDS LESSON.

I John II. XIII.

I write unto you, Little Children, because ye have known the Father.

BEhold the Aged, Beloved, Inspired Apostle *John*, applying himself to Christians of all Ages; wherein, as it has been observed long since, *Dat •ui{que} or <> qua •psi con/venient*, he speaks things marvellously conveni|ent and agreeable to them all. The *last* Subjects of the Apostolical Address, are the *least* that can be written unto; namely, *Little Children*; for even among *such*, there may sometimes be found the true *knowledge* of God. Our holy *John* thought himself concerned in the Charge, which •e had overheard the Lord giving unto <> a little before he left the world, *Feed my Lambs <> [Page 96](#)* and accordingly he does here take a most pater|nal and pathetick notice of the *Lambs*, in the Flock of the Lord Jesus; indeed the Greek word in our Text, rendred *Little Children*, car|ries *Feeding* In the Notation of it. We have before us the Attainment of devout and pious *Children*, in the School of the Lord Jesus Christ; it is, *They have known the Father*; by which *Fa|ther*,

is meant the God of Heaven. *Little Children* scarce know any man or thing so soon as they know their *Father*; nor are they so fond of any man or thing as they are of their *Father*. Now 'tis the prerogative of some *little Children* to know the great God, as their *Fa/ther*; yea, to *love* Him, and *serve* Him as their *Father* too, which is implied in the *know/ing* of Him. This therefore is the Doctrine to be remembred by you *little Children*, that are now before the Lord.

DOCTRINE.

It is the particular priviledge of gracious Little CHILDREN, to Know the Almighty God, as an Heavenly Father to them.

Lo• the Ensuing Propositions give Right Thoughts about this matter to us.

Propositin I.

The God of Heaven is a *Father* to graci|ous [Page 97](#) our *little Children*. Religious *Children* when they are sitting perhaps upon the knee of an Earthly *Father*, may remember that there is a|nother *Father*, whom they belong unto; namely, *A Father which is in Heaven*.

But in what Respects may gracious *little Children* call God, *Their Father*.

First, Gracious *little Children* may look upon God as their *Father*, in respect of *Creation*; for indeed all *Creatures* thus have Him, for their *Fa/ther*. 'Tis intimated in Job 38. 28. He is the *Father of the Rain, and of the Dew*. But he is es|pecially thus a *Father* unto all *Spirits*; it is said, in Heb. 12. 9. *He is the Father of Spirits*; and thus the *Angels*, are styled, *The Sons of God*. Hence *man* also, every *man* may say unto God, *our Father*; we all owe unto God, our *Production* and *Original*; and, as the Apostle *Paul* speaks in the words of the Greek Poet, *Aratus*; in Acts 17. 18. *We are his Offspring*. Thus, *little Children* should betimes be sensible of this, *I am newly come out of the hands of the great God; it is God that made me, and shap'd me, and bestow'd my life and my Being on me*.

Secondly, Gracious *little Children* may look upon God as their *Father*, in respect of *Suscept/on*; He *undertaketh* for them. God owns a *Pa/ternity* unto gracious *little Children*, by *underta/king* of their *Patronage*. Indeed, there is a con|tract and a consent of them concerning it <◇> they desire of God, that he would Undertake the Of|fice [Page 98](#) of a *Father* for them; and they say to him, as in Isa. 63. 17. *Doubtless, thou art our Father*. They see that their natural *Fathers* cannot Re|lieve all their *wants*, and Remove all their *woes*, and

prevent all their *fears*; and hence the glorious God, upon an humble Request of theirs, becomes concerned as a *Father* for them. 'Tis $\langle \diamond \rangle$ especially, when they have no other *fathers* to look after them; 'tis said of God, in Psal. 69. • *He is a father of the fatherless*. When gracious little Children are left as *Orphans* in a wide and a wild world, they may assure themselves, *My best father is yet alive; tho my father do for sake me, yet the Lord will take me up*.

Thirdly, Gracious *little* Children may look up|on God as their Father, in respect of *Adoption*. God in his free grace, accounts them his Children, through the *Sonship* of the Lord Jesus Christ; & thus, as 'tis said in Joh. 1. 11. *They have power to be called the Sons of God*. Gracious little Children are *united* unto Him that is the Saviour of the World. As *young* as they are, the Almighty Lord of Lords, and King of Kings counts them *old* enough to be married unto Himself. In the Ancient, Eternal, Well-ordered *Covenant of Re/demption*, the Lord Jesus Christ was made a publick person, representing of all his chosen Ones; he was thus constituted by an *Eternal Agreement* between God and Him; and gracious little Children say their *Amen*, to that Agreement; those little $\langle \diamond \rangle$ put themselves under the *wing* of [Page 99](#) the Lord Jesus Christ, and cry unto him, *O be our Surety for good*. Now Christ and they are *one*; the *Reck'ning* of God from all Eternity, and the *Spirit* of God in fulness of Time, hath made them so; and thus these little Children become the Children of the great God. For the Name of God is, *The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*; the Word of God is, *He shall, cry unto me, Thou art my Father*. It now follows, that all gracious little Children arrive unto that Advancement, in Rom.8.16.1 •, *Children of God, and joint Heirs with Christ*. Now they have a *New Name* upon them, and the Lord Jesus now speaks unto them in such Heart-breaking terms as those, *My Father is your Father, and my God is your God*.

Fourthly, Gracious *little* Children may look up|on God as their *Father*, in respect of *Regeneration*. 'Tis the preheminance of all Converted persons; that they are *Born again by the Word of God*. But who is their *Father*? We are told in John 1. 13. *They that believe, are born of God*; and there are some *little Children* to be found among true Believers. These are not by *generation* the Children of God; for thus God is a *Father* only to the Lord Jesus Christ. But they are by *Regeneration* so. The Almighty God says to the Lord Jesus Christ as *Jacob* to *Joseph* of old, *Thy Sons shall be mine*. But as for little Children that are brought home to God, by the *Renewing of the Holy Ghost*, these are the Children of the Lord Jesus Christ; they are call'd in Isa. 53. 10. The *Seed* of that Lord • [Page 100](#) they are born of him, and *born twice* perhaps within one seven years.

Proposition II.

Gracious *little* Children endeavour to *Know* God, as thus an Heavenly *Father* to them.

But what is implied in this *Knowledge*?

First, Gracious *little* Children would not be without the saving and sincere *Knowledge* of God. They *know* the truth of that in Joh. 17 3. *This is Life Eternal, to know the only true God*; they *know* the truth of that in Prov. 19. 2. *For the Soul to be without knowledge, it is not good*. And this awakens them to seek the *Knowledge* of God, with such *cares* and *cries* as the Wise man in the *Proverbs* advised his Children unto. Gracious *little* Children complain of themselves, as *he* did of old, in Prov. 30. 3. *I have not the knowledge of the Holy*; and so they become willing to learn; they are willing to learn what *God is*, what His Three *Persons*. and what His Infinite *Perfections* are; they are willing to learn what He *does* in the *World*, as Creating and Preserving of all things; and as Redeeming his Elect; they are willing to learn what He *says* in the *Word*, what Mysteries, what Histories, what Commandments, what Promises, and Threatnings He has therein set before us. They think that without some *Knowledge* of these things they must grind like *••mpson* with his Eyes put out by Hellish *Phi/listines*; [Page 101](#) and they tremble at such a Doom as that, in Isa. 27. 11. It is a people of *no Under/standing*; *wherefore he that made them, will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no Favour*. There is no need of whipping them to their *Catechisms*; to be learning of *them*, is as Pleasant and welcome an Exercise unto these Children, as any that they can be put upon.

Secondly, Gracious little Children would not be without an assured *Knowledge*, that in the furthest and the sweetest sense, God is indeed a *Fa/ther* to them; they would have an Assurance of their being *Adopted* and *Regenerated* by the Lord. They look upon God, as the best *Father* in the World; and as the son of *Jesse* sometimes could say, in I Sam. 18. 23. *Seemeth it unto you a light thing to be a Kings Son-in-law?* So 'tis not a *light thing* in the Opinion of these, to become the Children of that God, who is a *great King*, and whose *Name is Dreadful*. Gracious little Children are sensible, that they have been the children of wrath, and the Children of *Hell*, and that while they were in their sins they have had the Devil for their *father*; but when they read the eighth Chapter to the *Romans*, they count it a thing of *inex/pressible* importance for them, to get into the *li/berty of the Sons of God*. It affects them to see how the children of men are divided, in 1 Joh. 3. 10. Either *the children of God*, or the *children of the Devil*; and they can by no means bear to con|tinue the children of so black a

father as the De|vil [Page 102](#) is. Hence they do most heartily, readily, cheerfully close with the motions which the Son of God makes unto them; and as it is said in Gal 3. 26. *Ye are all the children of God, by faith in Jesus Christ;* so, these Children do by *faith* accept of the Lord Jesus Christ as offered unto them in the Gospel; 'tis the language of their Souls, *Blessed Lord Jesus, be thou mine, and let me be Thine; <◇> thou bestow Righteousness, and grace, and life upon me; and let me be for Thee and not for another.*

Thirdly, Gracious little Children study to pay unto God the *Acknowledgements* which are due unto a *Father*, yea, unto an *Heavenly Father*. The Carriage of Children to a *father* is imitated in their Department before the Lord. And,

First, They place on God, the *Affection* which is due unto a *father*. A *father*, is a Name all made up of *love*. As the *fatherly love* of God unto gra|cious little Children is very marvellous; for thus 'tis said in 1 Joh 3. 1. *Behold, what manner of love, the Father has bestow'd upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God!* So the *Filial Love* of these Children unto *God*, is likewise, *Behold, what man/ner of love!* They love none so much as *God*, but tho' they love their *fathers* more than all Creatures, yet they love their *God* with greater out-goings of their little Souls.

Secondly, They pay to *God*, the *Reverence* which is due unto a *father*. They dare not therefore <◇> rude, saw•y, impudent, in the special presence [Page 103](#) of the Lord; nor Talk, nor Sport, nor Sleep, when they should be worshipping of Him. 'Tis the voice of *God* in Mal. 1. 6. *A son honoureth his father; if then I be a Father, where is my Honour?* Gracious little Children give unto their God the *Honour* of a *father*; if they speak of *God*, it is in a most humble, serious, awful strain, they will not say, *O God*, or, *O Lord*, or say, *God bless me*, and, Lord *bless me*, with a frothy, carnal, heedless interjection; if they speak to *God*, it is with an exceeding veneration: while they are at prayer, they compose themselves unto a very di|lligent Attention and Intention of Soul; once more, if they hear from *God*, they set themselves as in the sight of him, who is *greatly to be feared and had in Reverence*; while they are in the As|semblies where the Word of *God* is Preach'd un|to them, they would not use the least wildeness for a thousand worlds.

Thirdly, They yield to *God* the *submission* which is due unto a *father*. They will by no means dis|pute the will of *God*, but render a most full, pro|found, absolute Obedience thereunto. Our Lord Jesus could say unto *God*, as in Luc. 22. 42. *Fa|ther, not my will, but thine be done;* and gracious little Children will herein say after that *Holy Child Jesus*. As for the will of *God* in his *Pre|cept*,

they are very ready to *do* it; they say, *Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do;* and they *do* whatsoever they understand he does *bid*; they would fain do, *The thing that good* ⟨⟩ *and what the Lord* Page 104 *has required of them.* As for the will of God in his *Providence*, they are very ready to *bear* it; they say *The will of the Lord be done!* and they bear what strokes, what pains, what sorrows, his *Rod* may lash them with; so they *are subject unto the father of Spirits, and live.*

Fourthly, They have a *Dependance* on God as *Children* on a *Father*. Gracious Children are *praying* Children, they won't easily let a day pass them without *praying* to God, and they go unto God as unto a *father* in their prayers. There was a very little Child whose prayers were so frequent and so fervent, that a Neighbour which discovered them cryed out, *The prayers of that Child will sink me to the bottom of Hell.* Gracious little Children will *pray* at such a rate as to condemn the *prayer l•ss* lives of all the Neighbourhood.

But how is that? briefly,

Gracious little Children, will use to pray with *Boldness*. As a Child will go *boldly* to his Father upon all occasions; thus will these Children be ever now and then coming to *God*, and as the Apostle speaks in Heb. 4. 16. *Come boldly to the Throne of Grace.* When they see the infinite Majesty and Purity of *God*, they do with much fear approach unto Him; but when they see, that *God* is their *father*, this does again encourage them. They been't loth to go tell this *father* of theirs, what they all, in all of their Distresses; no, they go to *God*; and cry, *Abba, father!* and in *all things make known Requests unto God.*

Page 105 Again, gracious little Children, will use to pray with *Comfort*. These Children are *comfortably* perswaded of success in their Cryes to *God*, as Children in theirs unto a Father; and they ar|gue at that rate, in Mat. 7. 11. *If ye, being E|vil, know how to give good gifts unto your Chil|dren, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven.* As Luther would say, *That word, my Father, used by a praying Saint, all the Rhe|torick and Eloquence in the world could never e|qual it.* Thus, these, when they say unto *God, my father*, they promise themselves that no good thing shall be deny'd unto them. Since *God* is their Father, they expect that their Fa|ther will Pity them, that their Father will coun|sel them, that their Father will supply them; and make them happy for-ever.

Fifthly, They have a *Resemblance* of *God*, ⟨⟩ *Children* of a Father: gracious Children ⟨⟩ like their *father*; and are as the Apostolical ex|pression has it,

in Eph. 5. 1. *followers of God as dear Children*. Yea, they are not ⟨◇⟩ *Pictures*, which may have something of the ⟨◇⟩ and feature in them, but they are Chil|dren that will *talk* and *walk* just like their ••|ther. Thus our Lord says in Luc. 6. 35. ⟨◇⟩ and do •like to *God*, and you shall be the children of the *Highest*. In short, what is grievous to *God* is grievous also to gracious little Children, that, have his Image on them. These Children are grieved at *their own sins*, because *God* is grieved at them. When *Casar* saw an intimate [Page 106](#) ⟨◇⟩ of his, among the Murderers, that were as|saulting of him, he most bitterly cry'd out, *What, my Child among them!* Thus a Child whose heart *God* has touched, thinks with himself, *If such an one as I sin, it will be as if a Child should go to stab his Father;* and so it *stabs* him at the heart in|deed, when he sees how many sins he has Offend|ed the great *God* withal. These Children are al|so grieved at the *sins of others*, because *God* is grieved at them. It is related of *Croesus*, that he had a *dumb Son*; which Son seeing a Souldier about killing of his Father, he was in such an A|gony, that tho' he never spoke before, yet now he spoke, and shriek'd, *O don't you kill my father!* Thus, if a Child belonging to *God*, see any body profane and wicked, it is as if he saw one ⟨◇⟩ at his Father; he is in a just passion at it, and ⟨◇⟩, *O don't serve my Eternal father so!* If any ⟨◇⟩ of his play-mates, or school-mates, go ⟨◇⟩ do any naughty thing, he will zealously ⟨◇⟩ them for it. In a word, These gracious Children, are loth to do any thing that may ⟨◇⟩ displeasing to such a Father as the blessed *God*. If such a Child be tempted unto *Sab|bath-breaking* he thinks, *What shall I dishonour my father so as to take the Devil for my play|••* ⟨◇⟩ ! If he be tempted unto Cursing, Swear|ing, Lying, or the calling of wicked Names, he ⟨◇⟩, *No, my Heavenly Father does cast Chil|dren into those flames where they shall not have a* ⟨◇⟩ *of water to cool their Tongues, for such crimes* [Page 107](#) *as these!* He abhors all that is contrary to the thrice-Holy-God.

Proposition III.

It is the *peculiar priviledge* of gracious little Children thus to know the Almighty God.

These three things are to be affirmed.

First, There are *some* little Children, that *have* and *own*, *God*, for their *Father*. Such a Child might *Samuel* be; of whom we find in I Sam. 3. 1. that while he was a Child, *he Ministred unto the Lord*; he kept *waiting* on *God*, and *servng* of *God*, in his House continually; and had a most intimate Communion with

him there. Such a Child might also *David* be; who was able to say in Psal. 22. 9. *Thou didst make me Hope when I was upon my Mothers Breasts; thou art my God from <◇> Mothers Belly; he speaks, as if before he had <◇> weaned,* there had been some *hope* and some *fau••* on *God*, beginning to dawn in his little Soul. And such a Child seems *Timothy* to have been <◇> unto whom 'twas said in 2 Tim. 3. 15. *From <◇> Child thou hast known the Scriptures;* he was in <◇> very Infancy acquainted with the mind of the great God. The Father of *Origen* took him to be such a Child, when he would kiss the breast of the lovely youth while he lay asleep, as a young *Temple* to the Eternal Spirit of God. Some *little* Children have been so devoted unto God, as to prove the most Eminent *Witnesses* and *Confessors* [Page 108](#) *for him; the bloody Papists butchered four hun/dred such precious Infants at once among the Waldenses long ago. When the Noble Ro••anus was Martyr'd, in one of the Primitive Percuti/ons, a little Child but seven years old, bravely suffered with him, for asserting the Christian Religion, which (said the child, unto his furious Persecutors) I learnt of my christian Mother, with whose Milk I suck'd it in. Yea, many children then accompanied their courageous Parents, in re/ceiving the Crown of Martyrdom. And certain/ly, those were very well disposed little children, who in the horrible Marian Dayes, came about the Martyr Lawrence; as he was dying in the flames, & •ry'd out, Lord, strengthen thy servant & keep thy pro/mise! Lord, strengthen thy servant, and keep thy Promise.*

Moreover, some worthy men, have made Col|lections, of Histories, concerning *little* children, that have given wonderful Instances of an *Early Piety* before they left the world. The Excellent *Janeway*, has done excellently well this way, in his *Tokens for Children*, which little Books, I most af|fectionately Recommend unto the perusal of <◇> you all. He tells of one child admirably wrought <◇> upon by the grace of God, when between two <◇> and three years old. He writes of a Boy remar|kable for Devotions, which dy'd at the age of twelve years, and being, in his lingring sickness, •old of a fair Estate which he might live to enjoy, bravely answered, *I had rather have the Kingdom [Page 109](#) of Heaven, than a thousand such Inheritances! I desire to dy, that I may go to that.* He writes of ano|ther, which having walked with God from the fourth to the twelfth year of his Age, then dy'd, professing, *This is a most wicked world, it is indeed good to live with my Parents, but it is better to love in Heaven.* He writes of a Girl also remarkable for Devotions, which being converted unto God, when eight or nine years old, not long after dy'd in the midst of incredible. *Raptures*, wherein she cry'd out, *Oh! If you knew what Christ were! Oh! If you had but one tast of his infinite sweetness, you would a thousand times rather go to Him, than stay in this wicked world•• I would not*

for ten thousand and ten thousand worlds part with my Interest in him; or go back from the everlasting Joys which I am now near unto. He writes of another brought home to God, when between four or five years old; which would sometimes be thinking, *O* they doing, that are already in Heaven! and being last smitten with the marks of the *Plague* out upon her, she cryed out, *Behold, God marked me, for one of his own; the Lord has told me, that I am one of his dear Children* several other such Examples, have been Record|ed; not only by that man of God, but also by Mr. *White*, Mr. *Ness*, Mr. *Bidbank*, and sundry o|ther such holy Men.

Yea, and the place where our selves do live, hath not been without such *Examples*; and those; of both Sexes. Unto such as have been already [Page 110](#) Published, it were easy to add many more.

To *Male-children*, I might particularly mention one who at the age of *twelve* years, among other expressions of an unusual *seriousness* and *gravity*, wrote from his Lodging at *Cambridge* to his Fa|ther in *Dorchester*,—These very syllables.

'Tho I am thus well in my *Body*, yet I question whe|ther my *Soul do prosper as my Body doth*; for I perceive yet to this very day, little *growth* in grace; and this makes me question, whether *grace* be in mine heart, or no. I feel also daily great *unwillingness* to good Duties, and the great ruling of *Sin* in my heart; and that God is angry with me, and gives me no *Answer to my prayers*, but many times he even throws them down as dust in my face; and he does not grant my c•ntinual Requests, for the *spiritual blessing of the s•s•ning of my hard heart*. And in all this, I could yet take some Comfort; but that it makes me to wonder, what God's *secret Decree* concerning me, may be. For I doubt whether God is ever wont to deny grace and mercy to his *chosen*, (tho' uncalled) when they feek un|to him by prayer for it; and therefore seeing he does thus deny it to me, I think that the reason of it is most like to be, because I belong not to the Election of Grace. I desire you, that you would let me have your prayers, as I doubt not but I have them; and rest.

your Son, *Samuel Mather*.

[Page 111](#) This was he, whom twenty years afterwards, all *Ireland* had a Blessing in; contradicting that Needless Proverb, *soon ripe, soon rotten*.

To *Female Children*, I might mention, *Ann Greenough*, the Daughter of Mr. *William Greenough* Deceased; who left the world, when she was but about five

years old, and yet gave astonishing Discoveries of a Regard unto God and Christ & her own Soul, before she went away: When she heard any thing about the Lord *Jesus Christ*, she would be strangely transported and ravished in her Spirit at it; and had an unspeakable Delight in *Catechising*. She would put strange *Questions* about eternal things, and make *Answers* her self that were extremely pertinent. Once particularlly she asked, *Are not we dead in Sin?* and presently added, *But I will take this way, the Lord Jesus Christ shall make me alive.* She was very frequent and constant in *secret prayer*, and could not with any patience be interrupted in it. She told her gracious Mother, *That she there prayed for her!* and was covetous of being with her Mother, when she imagined such Duties to be going forward. When she fell sick at last of a Consumption, she would not by any sports be diverted from the Thoughts of *Death*, wherein she took such pleasure that she did not care to hear of any thing else. And if she were asked, *whether she were willing to dy?* she would still cheerfully Reply, *Ay, by all means, that I may go to the Lord Jesus Christ.*

[Page 112](#) Indeed-sundry *such* little Children, have there been among us; but now, as he that heard a story of *two* faithful Friends, presently said, *I would I were a third with them!* So, I hope every one of the *little* Children that have seen these Examples, will say, *O that I may be a third! O that I might be like one of these happy Children!* But,

Secondly, There are *few* little Children, that have an own God for their Father. Indeed, those *few* little Children, that are descended of Believing Parents, have the same *God* that their Parents have chosen both for themselves & theirs, until they are *old* enough to *revoke* or to *renew* the choice; the Children are included in what their Parents *do*, and *have*, until they can stand upon their own Legs; and at what age that is, our God has not, that I remember, expressly spoken; which ought therefore to hasten the cares of little Children, about their own Salvation. Hence we read concerning the children of Believers in I. Cor. 7. 14. *They are holy;* God accepts them, & regards them, as consecrated unto himself. But of those little Children that are come to a Capacity of acting *deliberately* and *rationally* about Eternal Matters, how few are there that carefully say, *Let God be a father to me!* We may with a special Reference to *little* Children speak in such terms as those, in Psal. 14. 2,3. *The Lord looked down from Heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God; they are all gone aside, they are all-together become* [Page 113](#) *filthy; there is none that doth good, no, not one.* Even so, 'tis a rare thing, an hard thing, among *little* Children, to find so much as *one* that has an awful *Respect* unto all the *Commandments of God*. About the generality of little Children, it may be complained as in Jer. 4. 22. *they are sottish Children, and*

they have no understanding, they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge • or it may be complained as in Isa. 1. 4. *A seed of evil Doers, children that are corrupters, they have forsaken the Lord.* I confess, there is < ◇ > and then a Child which has the *Seeds* of grace • odged in its Infant Soul, and less or more sprouting forth▪ according to various Temptations; but, how few do ever throughly turn to God until their *Childhood* be all expired!

Thirdly, Very glorious is the *priviledge* of those *Little Children*, that have and own God, for their Father. 'Tis a glorious *priviledge* to be Interested in the *fatherly* Regards of the great God; but so these gracious little Chil|dren are.

'Tis their *priviledge*, that God has the *Love* of a Father for them. As 'twas said of a du|tiful and a towardly Child, in Gen. 44. 20. *His father loved him;* unspeakably and infinite|ly more loving is the *love* of God unto all gracious little Children. A father loves his *Children* more than all his *Riches* in the world • and so does God love these Children more than the whole world besides; unto such a [Page 114](#) Child, the great God says with a peculiar Em|phasis as in Isa. 43. 4. *I have loved thee!*

'Tis their *priviledge*, that God has likewise the *pity* of a *Father* for them. When a Child is in *sickness*, or *distress*, the heart of a father even yearns towards it. But the heart of God moves with a more compassionate pity towards gracious little Children in all their Troubles; thus 'tis said in Psal. 103. 12. *As a Father pities his Chil|dren,* < ◇ > *the Lord pities them that fear him.* He feels < ◇ > sorrows with a most *parental Sympathy*; and if at any time he Chastise them with necessa|ry Afflictions, he says upon it, *My Bowels are troubled for them, I will surely have mercy upon them.*

'Tis moreover their *priviledge* that God has the *pardon* of a *Father* for them. A Father will bear with many *Infirmities* in his Children; but God passes by more far away in gracious little Chil|dren. Tho' they desire to do and be better, yet they are attended with many daily *childish weak|nesses*; but then our God says, in Mal. 3. 17. *I will spare them as a man spareth his own Son, that serveth him.* Yea, if thro' Temptation they fall into *grosser Scandals*, nevertheless when they come to loath and judge themselves for their mis|carriages, the Lord will be as ready to forgive them, as *David* was to forgive his *Rebellious*, but Relenting *Absalom*.

Once more, 'tis their *priviledge*, that God makes the *provision* of a *Father* for them. Chil|dren [Page 115](#) shall not *want*, so long as they have a Li|ving and a Tender *Father*, able to look after them. But God will provide for gracious *little*

Children, after a manner which *Eye has not seen, Ear has not heard, and heart has not conceived*. We are told in Psal. 34. 10. *They that fear the Lord, shall not want any good thing*. These belong to the Family of the Almighty God; and, *Their Heavenly Father knows what things they have need of*. He will furnish them with all suitable mercies both Temporal and Eternal.

Finally, 'Tis their priviledge, that when they make any allowable *prayers*, God like a *Father* will hear them all. If Children go to a *Father* for any convenient thing, 'tis but, *Ask and Have*; much more is the blessed Access and Success which gracious little Children have in their Supplications to the Lord. Of their prayer, we may say as in Prov. 15. 8. 'Tis his *Delight*. God propounds to them, *Children, what do you want? What would you have? Children, when shall I do for you?* And he *delights* to see them, spreading their Ails before him. Tho' their prayers are but like the *Chat/terings* and *Lispings*, of Children, yet the Lord says concerning them, *Let me hear thy voice, for it is sweet*; their prayers make a most Heavenly Me|lody in the Ears of the Eternal God.

Behold, ye pious little Children, what <◇> you are priviledged with! And yet <◇> for your *Everlasting Comfort*, that it is an <◇> *Father*, who will do for you such things <◇> . [Page 116](#) The best *Father* else may leave you *Fatherless*, and ••en you will sit wishing in your solitary hours, <◇> *that it were with me, as in months past, when my Father was alive!* But you are now priviledged with a *Father* worth infinitely more than ten thousand of any that can be taken from you. It was the encouragement of the Psalmist, in Psal. 27. 10. *When my Father, and Mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up*. 'Tis an allusion to the Journeys of *Israel* thro' the Wilderness; when the three first Squadrons were passed on before, the fourth and last Squadron were to gather up the sick, and the weak, and the same, that had been left behind. Thus, tho' thy Father be mar|ched away, and has left thee a shiftless little crea|ture here, yet the Lord, he is thy *Father* still, and he will *take thee up*.

But for the brief Improvement of these things.

Application.

1. Let all *Parents* endeavour that their *Chil/dren* may be those gracious Ones which may *know* God for their *Father*. Methinks, you that are the *Fathers* of these poor little Creatures, if you had any *bowels* in you, should be concerned that they may have an *Heavenly Father*, to do that which you ••sire, but, cannot *perform* for them. Let me <◇> Name of God, lay before you two or three <◇> > •••estions to be thought upon.

⟨◇⟩ have you no *Kindness* for your poor chil|dren [Page 117](#) 'Tis by *your* means, that they are now born defiled, depraved, horribly polluted, with *Original Sin*, and fearfully perishing under the wrath and curse of God; and what amends will you make 'em, for this infinite wrong? It was the law for a man that had wounded another, in Exod. 21. 19. *He shall cause him to be thoroughly healed.* And will you do nothing towards *healing* those prodigious wounds, which your Falls have caused your Children to lie bleeding under? Your poor Children, can you endure to see them star|ving, burning, dying before your Eyes? but thus they are till by Conversion they are become *gracious little Children*. We read in Lam. 4. 3. *Even the Sea-monsters draw out the Breasts, they give suck to their young ones.* If you will do nothing for the Souls of your poor Children, you are worse than the cruellest *Sea-monsters* in the world.

Secondly, Have you no Regard for Gods *Com|mand* and *Glory*? Why, the Immortal God, who *made* your *children* has committed them into your Hands, and said, as the Princess of *Egypt* unto the Mother of *Moses*, *Here, take this Child, Nurse it for me, and I'll give thee thy wages.* 'Tis the charge which God has given you, about your Children, in Eph. 6. 4. *Bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord.* And this is the way to propagate and continue the *Service* of God, unto after-generations; you that make it not your study, to see your Offspring become *gracious little Children*, are willing that God [Page 118](#) could never have any honour in the world, after this Generation shall be expired.

Thirdly, Have you no Regard for your own *Credit* and *Comfort*? It is said in Prov. 23. 24. *The father of the Righteous shall greatly Rejoyce:* Truly, if you had *gracious little Children*, you might, you would *Rejoyce* exceedingly. Which of you had not rather have a *Joseph* than an *E|sau*, for his Age to lean upon? And when you leave your *Children*, or your Children leave *you*, how much would you give to have just *Hopes*, of having their Company in the sweet *Joyes*, of the Third Heaven for-ever? Besides, it will be a blessed mark upon your Souls, it will be a sign that you are among the Children of *Abraham*, if you *Command your Children to keep the way of the Lord.*

Would you be informed then, what you may do for your poor Children? Do you ask, as *Manoah* of old, *How shall we order the child, and what shall we do unto him?* There are four things by which you may save the Souls of your little Children; yea, there are five things to be obser|ved, that God may be a *Father* to them.

The first thing necessary for your poor Chil|dren, is, your *Authority*. 'Twas said in Lev. 19. 3. *Ye shall fear every man, his Mother and his Fa|ther*; the *Mother* is first mentioned, because that she commonly first loses her *Authority*. Look to it, that you keep up a *Fear* of you, in the hearts of your Children, and make them <◇> to [Page 119](#) *Refuse* any fit thing that you shall *Enjoy*n upon them.

Another thing necessary, is, your *Instruction*. 'Twas the Report of the *Wise-man*, in Prov. 4. 3, 4. *I was my Fathers Son, he taught me also*; and without this he had never prov'd so *wise a man*. Let your Children be most frequently, se|riously, exactly *Catechised*; and let your Admo|nitions teach them, how they should *think*, how *pray*, and how *live*, before the Lord.

A Third thing necessary, is, your *Inspection*. As our Lord asked His Houshold, in Joh. 16. 31. *Do ye now Believe?* So, do you ask your Children, what their *Experience*, and what their *Behaviour* is; penetrate as far into their Circumstances, as that you may assist them against their Difficulties.

A Fourth necessary thing, is your *Example*. Re|solve like him, in Psal. 101. 2. *I will walk within my House with a perfect heart*. It is no rare thing to find it of the Son, *He did according to all, that his Father did*. Let your Children see by your *Piety* and *Charity* and *Zeal*, how they may please God; and never expose, like disguised *Noah*, your *Nakedness*, unto them. And unto all these things add your *Prayer*; your fervent and constant *prayer*, to God. *Pray with* your Children; and let not your Houses be liable to that hideous Thunder-clap, in Jer. 10. 25. *Pour out thy Eury on the Families that call not on thy Name*. A dole|ful Meeting must you have with your Children in another world, If you there have them article [Page 120](#) at this rate against you, *Lord, if this Bloody Fa|ther of mine had learnt me to acknowledge thee, I had never come to this place of Torment*. But pray for your Children too; and be like those who, in Mat. 19. 13. *brought little children unto Jesus* O carry them to God in Christ, with your im|portunate Cries, *That* He would heal their spi|ritual Diseases; *That* He would cast every evil Spirit out of them; and *that* according to His promise, He would *circumcise their Hearts to fear His Name for ever*.

H. But then, *My little children, of whom I tra|vel in Birth again, until Christ be formed in you*; I pray, let it be your endeavour to be those gra|cious Ones, which God may be an Heavenly *Fa|ther* unto. 'Tis impossible to express, how willing, how ready, the Lord is to be the *Father* of you all. He has already been a *Father* to ma|ny thousands of such as *you*; and there are doubtless more *little Children* in Heaven, even in the *Fathers House*, than there are persons of any other Age. How much may *this* encourage you; but in the mean time, consider,

my dear Children, consider what your condition is. A *Little Child* once became a very *holy Child*, and being asked the reason of it, he said, *Why, I was t'other day in the burying-place, and there I saw a Grave shorter than any self.* Truly, if you'll repair to the *Graves* among us, you'll see many an one of your own Dimensions <◇> <◇> [Page 121](#) young as you are, you are *old* enough to Dy; the *Lambs-skin* is in the Market as well as the *Sheep's*. But O consider what will then become of your never-dying Souls, if you have not before then made sure of an Interest in God as a *Father* for you. What a terrible thing will it be for you to be then clap'd up in *chains of Darkness* among black Devils against the *Judgment of the Great Day!* When the *Last Judgment* comes upon the world, who shall then appear before the dreadful Tribunal of the Lord Jesus Christ? It is said in Rev. •0. 12. *I saw the Dead, small and great stand before God;* the *smallest* of you all must then have a Sentence of *Weal* or *Wo* passed upon you; a Sentence that will fix you in your state, for infinitely more than as many millions of Ages as the Ocean has drops of water in it.

But, I again say, consider what will become of you, if God be not as a *Father* concerned for you. You cannot then escape the *Vengeance of eternal Fire*, which Fire hath millions of small *Chips*, as well as of great *Logs*, horribly burning in it.

My Children, consider what has been set before you, and immediately turn it all into most *importunate Supplications*. We read, That when *little Children* were carried unto the Lord Jesus Christ, *He Blessed them;* how much [Page 122](#) more will He *bless* those *little Children* that <◇> *themselves* go unto Him! Go then unto the Lord; go daily, go seriously, go heartily unto him, and beg of him, *Lord, be thou a Father to me, and help me to be as one of thy Children for-ever.*

You may remember that when *little children mock'd the Prophet*, there came two *Bears* which devoured some scores of them. To slight the *Counsels*, is in a manner to mock the *Prophets* of the Lord Jesus; and you will become a prey to *Devils* that are worse than *Bears*, if you are guilty of that Impiety. 'Tis my wish for *you*, that you may so hearken to the Messages of Heaven, us to be the *Joy* and *Care* of Holy Angels all your *Dayes*. *Come, ye Children, hearken to me,* <◇> <◇> *I have Taught you the Fear of the Lord.*

FINIS.

Page 1 • 1. 23. r. *Barzillai*. p. 15. 1. 9. f. gra|cious r. glorious. ibid. 1. 14. f. Omnipotence • Omnipresence. P. 40. 1. 26. r. and seldom. P. 42. 1. 20. r.

Senescant. P. 53. l. 26. r. Individua|tion. P. 59. l. 16. r. might help. P. 85. l. 18.
r. outwardly happy. *ibid.* l. ult. f. we r. you. P. 59. l. 1. r. the Attempts of the
Holy Spirit.